

The Arabian Nights Entertainments Volume 1

Anonymous

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by Anonymous

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The Arabian Nights
Entertainments;

Consisting of

One Thousand and One Stories,
Told by The Sultanness of the Indies,

To Divert the sultan from the execution of a bloody vow he had
made to marry a Lady every day, and have her cut off next
morning, to avenge himself of the disloyalty of his first
sultanness, &c.

Containing

An accurate account of the customs, manners, and religion, of the
Eastern nations.

In Two Volumes.
Vol. I.

1813

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Epistle Dedicatory,

To

The Right Hon. The Lady Marchioness D'o,
Lady of Honour to the Duchess of Burgundy.

Madam,

The great kindnesses I received from M. de Guilleragus, your illustrious father, during my abode at Constantinople some years ago, are too fresh in my mind for me to neglect any opportunity of publishing what I owe to his memory. Were he still alive, for the welfare of France, and my particular advantage, I would take the liberty to dedicate this work to him, not only as my benefactor, but as a person most capable of judging what is fine, and inspiring others with the like sentiments. Every one remembers the wonderful exactness of his judgment;--the meanest of his thoughts had something in them that was shining, and his lowest expressions were always exact and nice, which made every one admire him; for never had any man so much wit and so much solidity. I have seen him, at a time when he was so much taken up with the affairs of his master, that nobody could expect any thing from him but what related to his ministry, and his profound capacity to manage the most knotty negotiations; yet all the weight of his employment diminished nothing of his inimitable pleasantness, which charmed his friends, and was agreeable even to those barbarous nations with whom that great man did treat. After the loss of him, which to me is irreparable, I could not

address myself to any other person than yourself, Madam, since you alone can supply the want of him to me; therefore it is that I take the boldness to beg of you the same protection for this book that you was pleased to grant to the French translation of the seven Arabian stories that I had the honour to present you.

You may perhaps wonder, Madam, that I have not since that time presented them to you in print; but the reason of it is, that when I was about putting them to the press, I was informed that those seven stories were taken out of a prodigious collection of stories of the like sort, entitled "One thousand and one nights." This discovery obliged me to suspend the printing of them, and to use my endeavours to get that collection. I was forced to send for it from Syria; and have translated into French this first volume being one of the four that were sent me. These stories will certainly divert you, Madam, much more than those you have already seen. They are new to you, and more in number; you will also perceive, with pleasure, the ingenious design of this anonymous Arabian, who has given us these stories after the manner of his country, fabulous indeed, but very diverting.

I beg, Madam, your acceptance of this small present which I have the honour to make you; it is a public testimony of my acknowledgment of the profound respect with which I am, and shall for ever be,

Madam,

Your most humble and most obedient servant,

Galland.

Preface

There is no occasion to prepossess the reader with an opinion of the merit and beauty of the following work. There needs no more but to read it to satisfy any man, that hitherto nothing so fine of this nature has appeared in any language.

What can be more ingenious than to compose such a prodigious quantity of pleasant stories, whose variety is surprising, and whose connexion is so wonderful? We know not the name of the author of so great a work; but probably it is not all done by one hand; for how can we suppose that one man alone could have invention enough to make so many fine things?

If stories of this sort be pleasant and diverting, because of the wonders they usually contain, these have certainly the advantage above all that have yet been published; because they are full of surprising events, which engage our attention, and show how much the Arabians surpass other nations in compositions of this sort.

They must also be pleasing, because of the account they give of

the customs and manners of the eastern nations, and of the ceremonies of their religion, as well Pagan as Mahometan, which are better described here than in any author that has written of them, or in the relation of travellers. All the eastern nations, Persians, Tartars, and Indians, are here distinguished, and appear such as they are, from the sovereign to the meanest subject; so that, without the fatigue of going to see those people in their respective countries, the reader has here the pleasure to see them act, and hear them speak. Care has been taken to preserve their characters, and to keep their sense; nor have we varied from the text, but when modesty obliged us to it. The translator flatters himself, that those who understand Arabic, and will be at the pains to compare the original with the translation, must agree that he has showed the Arabians to the French with all the circumspection that the niceness of the French tongue and of the times require; and if those who read these stories have any inclination to profit by the example of virtue and vice which they will here find exhibited, they may reap an advantage by it that is not to be reaped in other stories, which are more fit to corrupt than to reform our manners.

Approbation.

I have read, by order of my Lord Chancellor, this manuscript, and find nothing in it that should hinder its being printed.

(Signed)
Fontenelle.

Paris, October 4. 1706.

Arabian Nights Entertainments.

The chronicles of the Susanians, the ancient kings of Persia, who extended their empire into the Indies, over all the islands thereunto belonging, a great way beyond the Ganges, and as far as China, acquaint us, that there was formerly a king of that potent family, the most excellent prince of his time; he was as much beloved by his subjects for his wisdom and prudence, as he was dreaded by his neighbours because of his valour, and his warlike and well-disciplined troops. He had two sons; the eldest Schahriar, the worthy heir of his father, and endowed with all his virtues. The youngest, Schahzenan, was likewise a prince of incomparable merit.

After a long and glorious reign, the king died; and Schahriar

mounted his throne. Schahzenan being excluded from all share of the government by the laws of the empire, and obliged to live a private life, was so far from envying the happiness of his brother, that he made it his whole business to please him, and effected it without much difficulty. Schahriar, who had naturally a great affection for that prince, was so charmed with his complaisance, that, out of an excess of friendship, he would needs divide his dominions with him, and gave him the kingdom of Great Tartary: Schahzenan went immediately and took possession of it, and fixed the seat of his government at Samarcande, the metropolis of the country,

After they had been separated ten years, Schahriar, having a passionate desire to see his brother, resolved to send an ambassador to invite him to his court. He made choice of his prime vizier for the embassy, sent him to Tartary with a retinue answerable to his dignity, and he made all possible haste to Samarcande. When he came near the city, Schahzenan had notice of it, and went to meet him with the principal lords of his court; who, to put the more honour on the sultan's minister, appeared in magnificent apparel. The king of Tartary received the ambassador with the greatest demonstrations of joy, and immediately asked him concerning the welfare of the sultan, his brother. The vizier, having acquainted him that he was in health, gave him an account of his embassy. Schahzenan was so much affected with it, that he answered thus:--"Sage vizier, the sultan, my brother, does me too much honour; he could propose nothing in the world more acceptable; I long as passionately to see him as he does to see me. Time has been no more able to diminish my friendship than his. My kingdom is in peace, and I desire no more than ten days to get myself ready to go with you; so that there is no necessity of your entering the city for so short a time; I pray you to pitch your tents here, and I will order provisions in abundance for yourself and company."

The vizier did accordingly; and as soon as the king returned, he sent him a prodigious quantity of provisions of all sorts, with presents of great value.

In the mean while, Schahzenan made ready for his journey, took orders about his most important affairs, appointed a council to govern in his absence, and named a minister, of whose wisdom he had sufficient experience, and in whom he had entire confidence, to be their president. At the end of ten days, his equipage being ready, he took his leave of the queen, his wife, and went out of town in the evening with his retinue, pitching his royal pavilion near the vizier's tent, and discoursed with that ambassador till midnight. But willing once more to embrace the queen, whom he loved entirely, he returned alone to his palace, and went straight to her majesty's apartment; who, not expecting his return, had taken one of the meanest officers of the household to her bed, where they lay both fast asleep, having been in bed a considerable while.

The king entered without any noise and pleased himself to think how he should surprise his wife, who, he thought, loved him as entirely as he did her; but how strange was his surprise, when, by the light of the flambeaus, which burn all night in the apartments of those eastern princes, he saw a man in her arms! He

stood immovable for a time, not knowing how to believe his own eyes; but finding it was not to be doubted, How! says he to himself, I am scarce out of my palace, and but just under the walls of Samarcande, and dare they put such an outrage upon me? All! perfidious wretches, your crime shall not go unpunished. As king, I am to punish wickednesses committed in my dominions; and, as an enraged husband, I must sacrifice you to my just resentment. In a word, this unfortunate prince, giving way to his rage, drew his scimitar, and, approaching the bed, killed them both with one blow, turning their sleep into death, and afterwards taking them up, threw them out of a window into the ditch that surrounded the palace.

Having avenged himself thus, he went out of town privately as he came into it; and returning to his pavilion, without saying one word of what had happened, he ordered the tents to be struck, and to make ready for his journey. This was speedily done, and before day he began his march, with kettle-drums and other instruments of music, that filled every one with joy, except the king, who was so much troubled at the disloyalty of his wife, that he was seized with extreme melancholy, which preyed upon him during his whole journey.

When he drew near the capital of the Indies, the sultan Schahriar, and all his court, came out to meet him; the princes were overjoyed to see one another; and alighting, after mutual embraces, and other marks of affection and respect, they mounted again, and entered the city, with the acclamations of vast multitudes of people. The sultan conducted his brother to the palace he had provided for him, which had a communication with his own by means of a garden; and was so much the more magnificent, for it was set apart as a banqueting-house for public entertainment, and other diversions of the court, and the splendour of it had been lately augmented by new furniture.

Schahriar immediately left the king of Tartary, that he might give him time to bathe himself, and to change his apparel; and as soon as he had done, he came to him again, and they sat down together upon a sofa or alcove. The courtiers kept a distance, out of respect; and those two princes entertained one another suitably to their friendship, their nearness of blood, and the long separation that had been betwixt them. The time of supper being come, they ate together; after which they renewed their conversation, which continued till Schahriar, perceiving it was very late, left his brother to his rest.

The unfortunate Schahzenan went to bed; and though the conversation of his brother had suspended his grief for some time, it returned upon him with more violence; so that, instead of taking his necessary rest, he tormented himself with cruel reflections. All the circumstances of his wife's disloyalty represented themselves afresh to his imagination in so lively a manner, that he was like one beside himself. In a word, not being able to sleep, he got up, and giving himself over to afflicting thoughts, they made such an impression upon his countenance, that the sultan could not but take notice of it, and said thus to himself: "What can be the matter with the king of Tartary, that he is so melancholy; has he any cause to complain of his reception? No, surely; I have received him as a brother whom I

love, so that I can charge myself with no omission in that respect. Perhaps it grieves him to be at such a distance from his dominions, or from the queen, his wife: Alas! if that be the matter, I must forthwith give him the presents I designed for him, that he may return to Samarcande when he pleases.' Accordingly, next day Schahriar sent him a part of those presents, being the greatest rarities and the richest things that the Indies could afford. At the same time he endeavoured to divert his brother every day by new objects of pleasure, and the finest treats, which, instead of giving the king of Tartary any ease, did only increase his sorrow.

One day, Schahriar having appointed a great hunting-match, about two days journey from his capital, in a place that abounded with deer, Schahzenan prayed him to excuse him, for his health would not allow him to bear him company. The sultan, unwilling to put any constraint upon him, left him at his liberty, and went a hunting with his nobles. The king of Tartary, being thus left alone, shut himself up in his apartment, and sat down at a window that looked into the garden. That delicious place, and the sweet harmony of an infinite number of birds, which chose it for a place of retreat, must certainly have diverted him, had he been capable of taking pleasure in any thing; but, being perpetually tormented with the fatal remembrance of his queen's infamous conduct, his eyes were not so often fixed upon the garden, as lifted up to heaven to bewail his misfortune.

Whilst he was thus swallowed up with grief, an object presented itself to his view, which quickly turned all his thoughts another way. A secret gate of the sultan's palace opened all of a sudden, and there came out at it twenty women, in the midst of whom marched the sultanness, who was easily distinguished from the rest by her majestic air. This princess, thinking that the king of Tartary was gone a hunting with his brother the sultan, came up with her retinue near the windows of his apartment; for the prince had placed himself so that he could see all that passed in the garden without being perceived himself. He observed that the persons who accompanied the sultanness threw off their veils and long robes, that they might be at more freedom; but was wonderfully surprised when he saw ten of them to be blacks, and that each of them took his mistress. The sultanness, on her part, was not long without her gallant. She clapped her hands, and called out Masoud, Masoud, and immediately a black came down from a tree, and ran to her in all haste.

Modesty will not allow, nor is it necessary to relate, what passed betwixt the blacks and ladies. It is sufficient to say, that Schahzenan saw enough to convince him that his brother had as much cause to complain as himself. This amorous company continued together till midnight and having bathed all together in a great pond, which was one of the chief ornaments of the garden, they dressed themselves, and re-entered the palace, by the secret door, all except Masoud, who climbed up his tree, and got over the garden-wall the same way as he came.

All this having passed in the king of Tartary's sight, it gave him occasion to make a multitude of reflections. How little reason had I, says he, to think that no one was so unfortunate as myself? It is certainly the unavoidable fate of all husbands,

since the sultan, my brother, who is sovereign of so many dominions, and the greatest prince of the earth, could not escape it. The case being so, what a fool am I to kill myself with grief? I will throw it off, and the remembrance of a misfortune so common shall never after this disturb my quiet. So that, from that moment, he forebore afflicting himself. Being unwilling to sup till he saw the whole scene that was acted under his window, he called then for his supper, ate with a better appetite than he had done at any time after his coming to Samarcande, and listened with pleasure to the agreeable concert of vocal and instrumental music that was appointed to entertain him while at table.

He continued after this to be of a very good humour; and when he knew that the sultan was returning, he went to meet him, and paid him his compliments with a great deal of gaiety. Schahriar at first took no notice of this great alteration, but expostulated with him modestly, why he would not bear him company at hunting the stag; and, without giving him time to reply, entertained him with the great number of deer and other game they had killed, and what pleasure he had in the sport. Schahzenan heard him with attention, gave answers to every thing, and being rid of that melancholy which formerly over-clouded his wit, he said a thousand agreeable and pleasant things to the sultan.

Schahriar, who expected to have found him in the same condition as he left him, was overjoyed to see him so cheerful, and spoke to him thus: Dear brother, I return thanks to Heaven for the happy change it has made on you during my absence; I am extremely rejoiced at it; but I have a request to make to you, and conjure you not to deny me. I can refuse you nothing, replies the king of Tartary; you may command Schahzenan as you please; pray speak, I am impatient to know what you desire of me. Ever since you came to my court, replies Schahriar, I found you swallowed up by a deep melancholy, and I did in vain attempt to remove it by diversions of all sorts. I imagined it might be occasioned by reason of the distance from your dominions, or that love might have a great share in it; and that the queen of Samarcande, who, no doubt, is an accomplished beauty, might be the cause of it. I do not know if I be mistaken; but I must own that this was the peculiar reason why I did not importune you upon the subject, for fear of making you uneasy. But, without my being able to contribute any thing towards it, I find now, upon my return, that you are in the best humour that can be, and that your mind is entirely delivered from that black vapour which disturbed it. Pray do me the favour to tell me why you were so melancholy, and how you came to be rid of it.

Upon this, the king of Tartary continued for some time as if he had been in a dream, and contrived what he should answer; but at last replied as follows: You are my sultan and master; but excuse me, I beseech you, from answering your question. No, dear brother, said the sultan, you must answer, I will take no denial. Schahzenan, not being able to withstand these pressing instances, answered, Well, then, brother, I will satisfy you, since you command me; and, having told him the story of the queen of Samarcande's treachery, this, says he, was the cause of my grief; pray judge whether I had not reason enough to give myself up to it.

Oh! my brother, says the sultan, (in a tone which showed that he had the same sentiments of the matter with the king of Tartary,) what a horrible story do you tell me! How impatient was I till I heard it out! I commend you for punishing the traitors who put such an outrage upon you. Nobody can blame you for that action: it was just; and for my part, had the case been mine, I could scarce have been so moderate as you, I should not have satisfied myself with the life of one woman; I verily think I should have sacrificed a thousand to my fury. I cease now to wonder at your melancholy. The cause of it was too sensible, and too mortifying, not to make you yield to it. O heaven! what a strange adventure! nor do I believe the like of it ever befel any man but yourself. But, in short, I must bless God, who has comforted you; and since I doubt not but your consolation is well grounded, be so good as let me know what it is, and conceal nothing from me. Schahzenan was not so easily prevailed upon in this point as he had been in the other, because of his brother's concern in it; but, being obliged to yield to his pressing instances, answered, I must obey you then, since your command is absolute; yet am afraid that my obedience will occasion your trouble to be greater than ever mine was. But you must blame yourself for it, since you force me to reveal a thing which I should have otherwise buried in eternal oblivion. What you say, answers Schahriar, serves only to increase my curiosity. Make haste to discover the secret, whatever it may be. The king of Tartary, being no longer able to refuse, gave him the particulars of all that he had seen of the blacks in disguise, of the lewd passion of the sultanness and her ladies; and, to be sure, he did not forget Masoud. After having been witness to those infamous actions, says he, I believed all women to be that way naturally inclined, and that they could not resist those violent desires. Being of this opinion, it seemed to me to be an unaccountable weakness in men to make themselves uneasy at their infidelity. This reflection brought many others along with it; and, in short, I thought the best thing I could do was to make myself easy. It cost me some pain indeed, but at last I effected it; and, if you will take my advice, you shall follow my example.

Though the advice was good, the sultan could not take it, but fell into a rage. What! says he, is the sultanness of the Indies capable of prostituting herself in so base a manner? No, brother, I cannot believe what you say,--unless I saw it with my eyes: yours must needs have deceived you; the matter is so important, that I must be satisfied of it myself. Dear brother, answers Schahzenan, that you may without much difficulty. Appoint another hunting-match, and when we are out of town with your court and mine, we will stop under our pavilions, and at night let you and I return alone to my apartment. I am certain that next day you will see what I saw. The sultan, approving the stratagem, immediately appointed a new hunting-match; and that same day the pavilions were set up at the place appointed.

Next day the two princes set out with all their retinue; they arrived at the place of encampment, and staid there till night. Then Schahriar called his grand vizier, and, without acquainting him of his design, commanded him to stay in his place during his absence, and to suffer no person to go out of the camp upon any occasion whatever. As soon as he had given this order, the king of Grand Tartary and he took horse, passed through the camp

incognito, returned to the city, and went to Schahzenan's apartment. They had scarce placed themselves in the same window where the king of Tartary had seen the disguised blacks act their scene, but the secret gate opened, the sultanness and her ladies entered the garden with the blacks, and she having called upon Masoud, the sultan saw more than enough to convince him plainly of his dishonour and misfortune.

O heavens! cried he, what indignity! what horror! Can the wife of a sovereign, such as I am, be capable of such an infamous action? After this let no prince boast of his being perfectly happy. Alas! my brother, continues he, (embracing the king of Tartary,) let us both renounce the world; honesty is banished out of it; if it flatter us the one day, it betrays us the next; let us abandon our dominions and grandeur; let us go into foreign countries, where we may lead an obscure life, and conceal our misfortune. Schahzenan did not at all approve of such a resolution, but did not think fit to contradict Schahriar in the heat of his passion. Dear brother, says he, your will shall be mine; I am ready to follow you whither you please; but promise that you will return, if we can meet with any one that is more unhappy than ourselves. I agree to it, says the sultan, but doubt much whether we shall. I am not of your mind in this, replied the king of Tartary; I fancy our journey will be but short. Having said this, they went secretly out of the palace by another way than they came. They travelled as long as it was day, and lay the first night under the trees; and getting up about break of day, they went on till they came to a fine meadow upon the banks of the sea, in which meadow there were tufts of great trees at some distance from one another. They sat down under those trees to rest and refresh themselves, and the chief subject of their conversation was the lewdness of their wives.

They had not sat long, before they heard a frightful noise, and a terrible cry from the sea, which filled them with fear; then the sea opening, there rose up a thing like a great black column, which reached almost to the clouds. This redoubled their fear, made them rise speedily, and climb up into a tree to hide themselves. They had scarce got up, till, looking to the place from whence the voice came, and where the sea opened, they observed that the black column advanced, winding about towards the shore, cleaving the water before it. They could not at first think what it should be; but in a little time they found that it was one of those malignant genie that are mortal enemies to mankind, and always doing them mischief. He was black, frightful, had the shape of a giant, of a prodigious stature, and carried on his head a great glass box, shut with four locks of fine steel. He entered the meadow with his burden, which he laid down just at the foot of the tree where the two princes were, who looked upon themselves to be dead men. Meanwhile the genie sat down by his box, and opening it with four keys that he had at his girdle, there came out a lady magnificently appavelled, of a majestic stature, and a complete beauty. The monster made her sit down by him; and eying her with an amorous look, Lady (says he) nay, most accomplished of all ladies who are admired for their beauty my charming mistress, whom I carried off on your wedding-day, and have loved so constantly ever since, let me sleep a few moments by you; for I found myself so very sleepy, that I came to this place to take a little rest. Having spoken thus, he laid down his

huge head on the lady's knees; and stretching out his legs, which reached as far as the sea, he fell asleep, and snored so, that he made the banks to echo again.

The lady, happening at the same time to look up to the tree, saw the two princes and made a sign to them with her hand to come down without making any noise. Their fear was extraordinary when they found themselves discovered, and they prayed the lady, by other signs, to excuse them; but she, after having laid the monster's head softly down, rose up, and spoke to them with a low but quick voice to come down to her; she would take no denial. They made signs to her that they were afraid of the genie, and would fain have been excused. Upon which she ordered them to come down, and, if they did not make haste, threatened to awake the giant, and bid him kill them.

These words did so much intimidate the princes, that they began to come down with all possible precaution, lest they should awake the genie. When they came down, the lady took them by the hand, and going a little farther with them under the trees, made a very urgent proposal to them. At first they rejected it, but she obliged them to accept it by her threats. Having obtained what she desired, she perceived that each of them had a ring on his finger, which she demanded of them. As soon as she received them, she went and took a box out of the bundle, where her toilet was, pulled out a string of other rings of all sorts, which she showed them, and asked them if they knew what those jewels meant? No, say they, we hope you will be pleased to tell us. They are, replies she, the rings of all the men to whom I have granted my favour; There are full fourscore and eighteen of them, which I keep in token to remember them; and asked yours for the same reason, to make up my hundred. So that, continues she, I have had a hundred gallants already, notwithstanding the vigilance of this wicked genie, that never leaves me. He is much the nearer for locking me up in this glass box, and hiding me in the bottom of the sea; I find a way to cheat him for all his care. You may see by this, that when a woman has formed a project, there is no husband or gallant that can hinder her from putting it in execution. Men had better not put their wives under such restraint, if they have a mind they should be chaste. Having spoken thus to them, she put their rings upon the same string with the rest, and, sitting down by the monster as before, laid his head again upon her lap, and made a sign for the princes to be gone.

They returned immediately by the same way they came; and when they were out of sight of the lady and the genie, Schahriar says to Schahzenan, Well, brother, what do you think of this adventure? has not the genie a very faithful mistress? And do not you agree that there is no wickedness equal to that of women? Yes, brother, answers the king of Great Tartary; and you must agree that the monster is more unfortunate, and has more reason to complain, than we. Therefore, since we have found what we sought for, let us return to our dominions, and let not this hinder us to marry again. For my part, I know a method by which I think I shall keep inviolable the faith that any woman shall plight to me. I shall say no more of it at present, but you will hear of it in a little time, and I am sure you will follow my example. The sultan agreed with his brother; and, continuing

their journey, they arrived in the camp the third night after they left it.

The news of the sultan's return being spread, the courtiers came betimes in the morning before his pavilion to wait on him. He ordered them to enter, received them with a more pleasant air than formerly, and gave each of them a gratification; after which he told them he would go no further, ordered them to take horse, and returned speedily to his palace.

As soon as he arrived, he ran to the sultaness's apartment, commanded her to be bound before him, and delivered her to his grand vizier, with an order to strangle her; which was accordingly executed by that minister, without inquiring into her crime. The enraged prince did not stop here; he cut off the heads of all the sultaness's ladies with his own hand. After this rigorous punishment, being persuaded that no woman was chaste, he resolved, in order to prevent the disloyalty of such as he should afterwards marry, to wed one every night, and have her strangled next morning. Having imposed this cruel law upon himself, he swore that he would observe it immediately after the departure of the king of Tartary, who speedily took leave of him, and, being loaded with magnificent presents, set forward on his journey.

Schahzenan being gone, Schahriar ordered his grand vizier to bring him the daughter of one of his generals. The vizier obeyed; the sultan lay with her, and, putting her next morning into his hands in order to be strangled, commanded him to get another next night. Whatever reluctance the vizier had to put such orders in execution, as he owed blind obedience to the sultan his master, he was forced to submit. He brought him then the daughter of a subaltern, whom he also cut off the next day. After her, he brought a citizen's daughter; and, in a word, there was every day a maid married, and a wife murdered.

The rumour of this unparalleled barbarity occasioned a general consternation in the city, where there was nothing but crying and lamentation. Here a father in tears, and inconsolable for the loss of his daughter; and there tender mothers, dreading lest theirs should have the same fate, making the air to resound beforehand with their groans; so that, instead of the commendations and blessings which the sultan had hitherto received from his subjects, their mouths were now filled with imprecations against him.

The grand vizier, who, as has been already said, was the executioner of this horrid injustice against his will, had two daughters, the eldest called Scheherazade, and the youngest Dinarzade: the latter was a lady of very great merit; but the elder had courage, wit, and penetration, infinitely above her sex; she had read abundance, and had such a prodigious memory that she never forgot any thing. She had successfully applied herself to philosophy, physic, history, and the liberal arts, and for verse exceeded, the best poets of her times; besides this, she was a perfect beauty, and all her fine qualifications were crowned by solid virtue.

The vizier passionately loved a daughter so worthy of his tender affection; and one day, as they were discoursing together, she

says to him, Father, I have one favour to beg of you, and must humbly pray you to grant it me. I will not refuse it, answered he, provided it be just and reasonable. For the justice of it, says she, there can be no question, and you may judge of it by the motive which obliges me to demand it of you. I have a design to stop the course of that barbarity which the sultan exercises upon the families of this city. I would dispel those unjust fears which so many mothers have of losing their daughters in such a fatal manner. Your design, daughter, replies the vizier, is very commendable; but the disease you would remedy seems to be incurable; how do you pretend to effect it? Father, says Scheherazade, since by your means the sultan makes every day a new marriage, I conjure you, by the tender affection you bear to me, to procure me the honour of his bed. The vizier could not hear this without horror. O heavens! replies he, in a passion, have you lost your senses, daughter, that you make such a dangerous request to me? You know the sultan has sworn by his soul that he will never lie above one night with the same woman, and to order her to be killed the next morning; and would you that I should propose you to him? Pray consider well to what your indiscreet zeal will expose you. Yes, dear father, replies the virtuous daughter, I know the risk I run; but that does not frighten me. If I perish, my death will be glorious; and if I succeed, I shall do my country an important piece of service. No, no, says the vizier, whatever you can represent to engage me to let you throw yourself into that horrible danger, do not you think that ever I will agree to it. When the sultan shall order me to strike my poignard into your heart, alas! I must obey him; and what a dismal employment is that for a father? Ah! if you do not fear death, yet at least be afraid of occasioning me the mortal grief of seeing my hand stained with your blood. Once more, father, says Scheherazade, grant me the favour I beg. Your stubbornness, replies the vizier, will make me angry; why will you run headlong to your ruin? They that do not foresee the end of a dangerous enterprise can never bring it to a happy issue. I am afraid the same thing will happen to you that happened to the ass, which was well, and could not keep itself so. What misfortune befel the ass? replies Scheherazade. I will tell you, says the vizier, if you will hear me.

Fable.

The Ox, the Ass, and the Labourer.

A very rich merchant had several country-houses, where he had abundance of cattle of all sorts. He went with his wife and family to one of those estates, in order to improve it himself. He had the gift of understanding the language of beasts, but with this condition, that he should interpret it to nobody on pain of death; and this hindered him from communicating to others what he had learned by means of this gift.

He had in the same stall an ox and an ass; and one day as he sat near them, and diverted himself to see his children play about, him, he heard the ox say to the ass, Sprightly, O how happy do I think you, when I consider the ease you enjoy, and the little labour that is required of you! you are carefully rubbed down and washed; you have well-dressed corn, and fresh clean water. Your greatest business is to carry the merchant, our master, when he has any little journey to make; and, were it not for that, you would be perfectly idle. I am treated in a quite different manner, and my condition is as unfortunate as yours is pleasant. It is scarce day-light when I am fastened to a plough, and there they make me work till night, to till up the ground, which fatigues me so, that sometimes my strength fails me. Besides, the labourer, who is always behind me, beats me continually. By drawing the plough my tail is all flead; and, in short, after having laboured from morning till night, when I am brought in, they give me nothing to eat but sorry dry beans, not so much as cleaned from sand, or other things as pernicious; and, to heighten my misery, when I have filled my belly with such ordinary stuff, I am forced to lie all night in my own dung; so that you see I have reason to envy your lot.

The ass did not interrupt the ox, till he had said all that he had a mind to say; but, when he had made an end, answered, They that call you a foolish beast do not lie; you are too simple, you let them carry you whither they please, and show no manner of resolution. In the mean time, what advantage do you reap by all the indignities you suffer? You kill yourself for the ease, pleasure, and profit of those that give you no thanks for so doing. But they would not treat you so, if you had as much courage as strength.

When they come to fasten you to the stall, why do not you make resistance? why do not you strike them with your horns, and show that you are angry by striking your foot against the ground? and, in short, why do not you frighten them by bellowing aloud? Nature has furnished you with means to procure you respect, but you do not make use of them. They bring you sorry beans and bad straw; eat none of them; only smell them, and leave them. If you follow the advice I give you, you will quickly find a change, for which you will thank me. The ox took the ass's advice in very good part, and owned he was very much obliged to him for it.

Dear Sprightly, adds he, I will not fail to do all that you have said, and you shall see how I shall acquit myself. They held their peace after this discourse, of which the merchant heard every word.

Next morning betimes the labourer came to take the ox; he fastened him to the plough, and carried him to his ordinary work. The ox, who had not forgotten the ass's counsel, was very troublesome and untoward all that day; and in the evening, when the labourer brought him back to the stall, and began to fasten him to it, the malicious beast, instead of presenting his horns willingly as he used to do, was restive, and went backward bellowing, and then made at the labourer as if he would have pushed him with his horns; in a word, he did all that the ass advised him to. Next day the labourer came, as usual, to take the

ox to his labour; but, finding the stall full of beans, the straw that he put in the night before not touched, and the ox lying on the ground with his legs stretched out, and panting in a strange manner, he believed him to be sick, pitied him, and thinking; that it was not proper to carry him to work, went immediately and acquainted the merchant with it; who, perceiving that the ox had followed all the mischievous advices of the ass, whom he thought fit to punish for it, ordered the labourer to go and put the ass in the ox's place, and to be sure to work him hard. The labourer did so: the ass was forced to draw the plough all that day; which fatigued him so much the more, as he was not accustomed to that sort of labour; besides, he had been so soundly beaten, that he could scarcely stand when he came back.

Meanwhile the ox was mightily pleased; he ate up all that was in his stall, and rested himself the whole day. He was glad at the heart that he had followed the ass's advice, blessed him a thousand times for it, and did not fail to compliment him upon it when he saw him come back. The ass answered him not one word, so vexed was he to be so ill treated; but says within himself, it is by my own imprudence I have brought this misfortune upon myself; I lived happily, every thing smiled upon me. I had all that I could wish, it is my own fault that I am brought to this miserable condition, and if I cannot contrive some way to get out of it, I am certainly undone; and as he spoke thus, his strength was so much exhausted, that he fell down at his stall, as if he had been half dead.

Here the grand visier addressed himself to Scheherazade, and said, Daughter, you do like the ass; you will expose yourself to destruction by your false prudence. Take my advice; be easy, and do not take such measures as will hasten your death. Father, replies Scheherazade, the example you bring me is not capable of making me change my resolution; I will never cease importuning you until you present me to the sultan to be his bride. The vizier, perceiving that she persisted in her demand, replied, Alas, then! since you will continue obstinate, I shall be obliged to treat you in the same manner as the merchant I named treated his wife in a little time after.

The merchant, understanding that the ass was in a lamentable condition, was curious to know what passed betwixt him and the ox; therefore, after supper, he went out by moon-light, and sat down by them, his wife bearing him company. When he arrived, he heard the ass say to the ox, Comrade, tell me, I pray you, what you intend to do to-morrow, when the labourer brings you meat? What will I do? says the ox: I will continue to do as you taught me. I will go off from him, and threaten him with my horns, as I did yesterday; I will feign myself to be sick, and just ready to die. Beware of that, replies the ass, it will ruin you: for as I came home this evening, I heard the merchant, our master, say something that makes me tremble for you. Alas! what did you hear? says the ox; as you love me, hide nothing from me, my dear Sprightly. Our master, replied the ass, had these sad expressions to the labourer: Since the ox does not eat, and is not able to work, I would have him killed tomorrow, and we will give his flesh as an alms to the poor for God's sake; as for his skin, that will be of use to us, and I would have you give it to the currier to dress; therefore do not fail to send for the butcher.

This is what I had to tell you, says the ass. The concern I have for your preservation, and my friendship for you, obliged me to let you know it, and to give you new advice. As soon as they bring you your bran and straw, rise up and eat heartily. Our master will, by this, think that you are cured, and no doubt will recal his orders for killing you; whereas, if you do otherwise, you are certainly gone.

This discourse had the effect which the ass designed. The ox was strangely troubled at it, and bellowed out for fear. The merchant, who heard the discourse very attentively, fell into such a fit of laughter, that his wife was surprised at it, and said, Pray, husband, tell me what you laugh at so heartily, that I may laugh with you. Wife, said he, you must content yourself with hearing me laugh. No, replies she, I will know the reason. I cannot give you that satisfaction, answers he, but only that I laugh at what our ass just now said to our ox. The rest is a secret, which I am not allowed to reveal. And what hinders you from revealing the secret, says she? If I tell it you, answers he, it will cost me my life. You only jeer me, cried his wife; what you tell me now cannot be true. If you do not satisfy me presently with what you laugh at, and tell me what the ox and ass said to one another, I swear by Heaven that you and I shall never bed together again.

Having spoken thus, she went into the house in a great fret, and, setting herself in a corner, cried there all night. Her husband lay alone, and finding next morning that she continued in the same humour, told her she was a very foolish woman to afflict herself in that manner, the thing was not worth so much; and that it concerned her as little to know the matter, as it concerned him so much to keep it secret; therefore I conjure you to think no more of it. I shall still think so much of it, says she, as never to forbear weeping till you have satisfied my curiosity. But I tell you very seriously, replied he, that it will cost me my life, if I yield to your indiscretion. Let what will happen, says she, I do insist upon it. I perceive, says the merchant, that it is impossible to bring you to reason; and since I foresee that you will occasion your own death by your obstinacy, I will call in your children, that they may see you before you die. Accordingly he called for them, and sent for her father and mother, and other relations. When they were come, and heard the reason of their being called, they did all they could to convince her that she was in the wrong, but to no purpose: she told them she would rather die than yield that point to her husband. Her father and mother spoke to her by herself, and told her that what she desired to know was of no importance to her; but that could gain nothing upon her, either by their authority or entreaties. When her children saw that nothing could prevail to bring her out of that sullen temper, they wept bitterly. The merchant himself was like a man out of his senses, and was almost ready to risk his own life to save that of his wife, whom he loved dearly.

Now, my daughter, says the vizier to Scheherazade, this merchant had fifty hens, and a cock, with a dog that gave good heed to all that passed; and while the merchant was set down, as I said, and considering what he had best do, he sees the dog run towards the cock, as he was treading a hen, and heard him speak to him thus: Cock, says he, I am sure Heaven will not let you live long; are

you not ashamed to do that thing to-day? The cock, standing up on tip-toe, answers the dog fiercely, And why should I not do it to-day as well as other days? As you do not know, replies the dog, then I tell you that this day our master is in great perplexity. His wife would have him reveal a secret, which is of such a nature, that it will cost him his life if he doth it. Things are come to that pass, that it is to be feared he will scarcely have resolution enough to resist his wife's obstinacy; for, he loves her, and is affected with the tears that she continually sheds, and perhaps it may cost him his life. We are all alarmed at it, and you only insult our melancholy, and have the imprudence to divert yourself with your hens.

The cock answered the dog's reproof thus: What! has our master so little sense? he has but one wife, and cannot govern her; and though I have fifty, I make them all do what I please. Let him make use of his reason, he will speedily find a way to rid himself of his trouble. How, says the dog,, what would you have him to do? Let him go into the room where his wife is, says the cock, lock the door, and take a good stick, and thrash her well, and I will answer for it that that will bring her to her right wits, and make her forbear to ask him any more what he ought not to tell her. The merchant had no sooner heard what the cock said, than he took up a good stick, went to his wife, whom he found still a crying, and, shutting the door, belaboured her so soundly, that she cried out, "It is enough, husband, it is enough, let me alone, and I will never ask the question more." Upon this, perceiving that she repented of her impertinent curiosity, he forbore drubbing her; and, opening the door, her friends came in, were glad to find her cured of her obstinacy, and complimented her husband upon this happy expedient to bring his wife to reason. Daughter, adds the grand vizier, you deserve to be treated as the merchant treated his wife.

Father, replies Scheherazade, I beg you will not take it ill that I persist in my opinion. I am nothing moved by the story of that woman; I can tell you abundance of others to persuade you that you ought not to oppose my design. Besides, pardon me for declaring to you that your opposing me would be in vain; for if your paternal affection should hinder you to grant my request, I would go and offer myself to the sultan. In short, the father being overcome by the resolution of his daughter, yielded to her importunity; and though he was very much grieved that he could not divert her from such a fatal resolution, he went that minute to acquaint the sultan that next night he would bring him Scheherazade.

The sultan was much surprised at the sacrifice which the grand vizier made to him. How could you resolve, says he, to bring me your own daughter? Sir, answers the vizier, it is her own offer. The sad destiny that attends it could not scare her; she prefers the honour of being your majesty's wife for one night to her life. But do not mistake yourself, vizier, says the sultan; to-morrow, when I put Scheherazade into your hands, I expect you shall take away her life; and, if you fail, I swear that yourself shall die. Sir, rejoins the vizier, my heart, without doubt will be full of grief to execute your commands; but it is to no purpose for nature to murmur; though I be her father I will answer for the fidelity of my hand to obey your order. Schahriar

accepted his minister's offer, and told him he might bring his daughter when he pleased.

The grand vizier went with the news to Scheherazade, who received it with as much joy as if it had been the most agreeable thing in the world; she thanked her father for having obliged her in so sensible a manner; and, perceiving that he was overwhelmed with grief, she told him, in order to his consolation, that she hoped he would never repent his having married her to the sultan; but that, on the contrary, he should have cause to rejoice at it all his days.

All her business was to put herself in a condition to appear before the sultan; but, before she went, she took her sister Dinarzade apart, and says to her, My dear sister, I have need of your help in a matter of very great importance, and must pray you not to deny it me. My father is going to carry me to the sultan to be his wife; do not let this frighten you, but hear me with patience. As soon as I come to the sultan, I will pray him to allow you to lie in the bride-chamber, that I may enjoy your company this one night more. If I obtain that favour, as I hope to do, remember to awake me to-morrow an hour before day, and to address me in these or some such words: "My sister, if you be not asleep, I pray you, that till day-break, which will be very speedily, you would tell me one of the fine stories of which you have read so many." Immediately I will tell you one; and I hope by this means to deliver the city from the consternation they are under at present. Dinarzade answered, that she would obey with pleasure what she required of her.

The time of going to bed being come, the grand vizier conducted Scheherazade to the palace, and retired, after having introduced her into the sultan's apartment. As soon as the sultan was left alone with her, he ordered her to uncover her face, and found it so beautiful, that he was perfectly charmed with her; and perceiving her to be in tears, asked her the reason. Sir, answered Scheherazade, I have a sister, who loves me tenderly, as I do her, and I could wish that she might be allowed to be all night in this chamber, that I might see her, and bid her once more adieu. Will you be pleased to allow me the comfort of giving her this last testimony of my friendship? Schahriar having consented to it, Dinarzade was sent for, who came with all possible diligence. The sultan went to bed with Scheherazade upon an alcove raised very high, according to the custom of the monarchs of the east; and Dinarzade lay in a bed that was prepared for her, near the foot of the alcove.

An hour before day, Dinarzade, being awake, failed not to do as her sister ordered her. My dear sister, cries she, if you be not asleep, I pray, until day-break, which will be in a very little time, that you will tell me one of those pleasant stories you have read; alas! this may perhaps be the last time that ever I shall have that satisfaction.

Scheherazade, instead of answering her sister, addressed herself to the sultan thus: Sir, will your majesty be pleased to allow me to give my sister this satisfaction? With all my heart, answers the sultan. Then Scheherazade bid her sister listen; and afterwards, addressing herself to Schahriar, began thus.

The First Night.

The Merchant and the Genie.

Sir--There was formerly a merchant, who had a great estate in lands, goods, and money. He had abundance of deputies, factors, and slaves. He was obliged from time to time to take journies, and talk with his correspondents; and one day being under the necessity of going a long journey about an affair of importance, he took horse, and put a portmanteau behind him, with some biscuits and dates, because he had a great desert to pass over, where he could have no manner of provisions. He arrived without any accident at the end of his journey, and, having despatched his affairs, took horse again in order to return home.

The fourth day of his journey, he was so much incommoded by the heat of the sun, and the reflection of that heat from the earth, that he turned out of the road to refresh himself under some trees that he saw in the country. There he found, at the foot of a great walnut-tree, a fountain of very clear running water; and alighting, tied his horse to a branch of the tree, and sitting down by the fountain, took some biscuits and dates out of his portmanteau, and, as he ate his dates, threw the shells about on both sides of him. When he had done eating, being a good Mussulman, he washed his hands, his face, and his feet, and said his prayers. He had not made an end, but was still on his knees, when he saw a genie appear, all white with age, and of a monstrous bulk; who, advancing towards him, with a scimitar in his hand, spoke to him in a terrible voice thus: Rise up, that I may kill thee with this scimitar, as you have killed my son; and accompanied those words with a frightful cry. The merchant, being as much frightened at the hideous shape of the monster as at these threatening words, answered him trembling, Alas! my good lord, of what crime can I be guilty towards you, that you should take away my life? I will, replies the genie, kill thee, as thou hast killed my son. O heaven! says the merchant, how should I kill your son? I did not know him, nor ever saw him. Did not you sit down when you came hither, replies the genie? Did not you take dates out of your portmanteau, and, as you ate them, did not you throw the shells about on both sides? I did all that you say, answers the merchant; I cannot deny it. If it be so, replies the genie, I tell thee that thou hast killed my son, and the way was thus; when you threw your nut-shells about, my son was passing by, and you threw one of them into his eye, which killed him; therefore I must kill thee. Ah! my lord, pardon me, cried the merchant. No pardon, answers the genie, no mercy. Is it not just to kill him that has killed another? I agree to it, says the merchant; but certainly I never killed your son; and if I have, it was unknown to me, and I did it innocently; therefore I beg you to pardon me, and suffer me to live. No, no, says the genie,

persisting in his resolution, I must kill thee, since thou hast killed my son; and then taking the merchant by the arm, threw him with his face upon the ground, and lifted up his scimitar to cut off his head.

The merchant, all in tears, protested he was innocent, bewailed his wife and children, and spoke to the genie in the most moving expressions that could be uttered. The genie, with his scimitar still lifted up, had so much patience as to hear the wretch make an end of his lamentations, but would not relent. All this whining, says the monster, is to no purpose; though you should shed tears of blood, that shall not hinder me to kill thee, as thou killedst my son. Why! replied the merchant, can nothing prevail with you? Will you absolutely take away the life of a poor innocent? Yes, replied the genie, I am resolved upon it.

As Scheherazade had spoken these words, perceiving it was day, and knowing that the sultan rose betimes in the morning to say his prayers, and hold his council, Scheherazade held her peace. Lord, sister, says Dinarzade, what a wonderful story is this! The remainder of it, says Scheherazade, is more surprising; and you will be of my mind, if the sultan will let me live this day, and permit me to tell it you next night. Schahriar, who had listened to Scheherazade with pleasure, says to himself, I will stay till to-morrow, for I can at any time put her to death, when she has ended the story. So having resolved not to take away Scheherazade's life that day, he rose and went to prayers, and then called his council.

All this while the grand vizier was terribly uneasy. Instead of sleeping, he spent the night in sighs and groans, bewailing the lot of his daughter, of whom he believed that he himself should be the executioner: And as, in this melancholy prospect, he was afraid of seeing the sultan, he was agreeably surprised when he saw the prince enter the council-chamber, without giving him the fatal orders he expected.

The sultan, according to his custom, spent the day in regulating his affairs; and when night came, he went to bed with Scheherazade. Next morning, before day, Dinarzade failed not to address herself to her sister thus: My dear sister, if you be not asleep, I pray you, till day-break, which will be in a very little time, to go on with the story you began last night. The sultan, without staying till Scheherazade asked him leave, bid her make an end of the story of the genie and the merchant, for I long to hear the issue of it; upon which Scheherazade spoke, and continued the story as follows.

The Second Night.

When the merchant saw that the genie was going to cut off his head, he cried out aloud, and said to him, For Heaven's sake hold your hand! allow me one word, be so good as to grant me some respite; allow me but time to bid my wife and children adieu, and to divide my estate among them by will, that they may not go to law with one another after my death; and when I have done so, I will come back to the same place, and submit to whatever you shall please to order concerning me. But, says the genie, if I grant you the time you demand, I doubt you will never return. If

you will believe my oath, answers the merchant, I swear, by all that is sacred, that I will come and meet you here without fail. What time do you demand then, replies the genie? I ask a year, says the merchant; I cannot have less to order my affairs, and prepare myself to die without regret. But I promise you that this day twelve months I will return under these trees, to put myself into your hands. Do you take Heaven to be witness to this promise, says the genie? I do, answers the merchant, and repeat it, and you may rely upon my oath. Upon this the genie left him near the fountain, and disappeared.

The merchant, being recovered from his fright, mounted his horse, and set forward on his journey; and as he was glad, on the one hand, that he had escaped so great a danger, so he was mortally sorry, on the other, when he thought on his fatal oath. When he came home, his wife and children received him with all the demonstrations of perfect joy. But he, instead of making them answerable returns, fell a-weeping bitterly; from whence they readily conjectured that something extraordinary had befallen him. His wife asked the reason of his excessive grief and tears; we are all overjoyed, says she, at your return, but you frighten us to see you in this condition? Pray tell us the cause of your sorrow. Alas! replies the husband, the cause of it is, that I have but a year to live; and then told what had passed betwixt him and the genie, and that he had given his oath to return at the end of the year to receive death from his hands.

When they had heard these sad news, they all began to lament heavily; his wife made a pitiful outcry, beat her face, and tore her hairs. The children, being all in tears, made the house resound with their groans; and the father, not being able to overcome nature, mixed his tears with theirs; so that, in a word, it was the most affecting spectacle that any man could behold.

Next morning, the merchant applied himself to put his affairs in order, and, first of all, to pay his debts. He made presents to his friends, gave great alms to the poor, set his slaves of both sexes at liberty, divided his estate among his children, appointed guardians for such of them as were not come of age; and restoring to his wife all that was due to her by contract of marriage, he gave her, over and above, all that he could do by law.

At last the year expired, and go he must. He put his burial-clothes in his portmanteau; but never was there such grief seen, as when he came to bid his wife and children adieu. They could not think of parting, but resolved to go along and to die with, him; but, finding that he must be forced to part from those dear objects, he spoke to them thus: 'My dear wife and children,' says he, 'I obey the order of Heaven in quitting you; follow my example, submit courageously to this necessity, and consider that it is the destiny of man to die.' Having said these words, he went out of the hearing of the cries of his family; and, taking his journey, arrived at the place, where he promised to meet the genie, on the day appointed. He alighted, and setting himself down by the fountain, waited the coming of the genie with all the sorrow imaginable. Whilst he languished in this cruel expectation, a good old man, leading a bitch, appeared, and drew near him; they saluted one another, after which the old man says

to him, Brother, may I ask you why you are come into this desert place, where there is nothing but evil spirits, and by consequence you cannot be safe. To look upon these fine trees, indeed, one would think the place inhabited; but if is a true wilderness where it is not safe to stay long.

The merchant satisfied his curiosity, and told him the adventure which obliged him to be there. The old man listened to him with astonishment, and when he had done, cried out, This is the most surprising thing in the world, and you are bound by the most inviolable oath; however, I will be witness of your interview with the genie; and sitting down by the merchant, they talked together. But I see day, says Scheherazade, and must leave off; but the best of the story is yet to come. The sultan, resolving to hear the end of it, suffered her to live that day also.

The Third Night.

Next morning Dinarzade made the same request to her sister as formerly, thus: My dear sister, says she, if you be not asleep, tell me one of those pleasant stories you have read: but the sultan, willing to understand what followed betwixt the merchant and the genie, bid her go on with that; which she did as follows:

Sir, while the merchant and the old man that led the bitch were talking, they saw another old man coming to them, followed by two black dogs; after they had saluted one another, he asked them what they did in that place? The old man with the bitch told him the adventure of the merchant and genie, with all that had passed betwixt them, particularly the merchant's oath. He added, that this was the day agreed on, and that he was resolved to stay and see the issue.

The second old man, thinking it also worth his curiosity, resolved to do the like: he likewise sat down by them; and they had scarcely begun to talk together, when there came a third old man, who, addressing himself to the two former, asked why the merchant that sat with them looked so melancholy. They told him the reason of it, which appeared so extraordinary to him, that he also resolved to be witness to the result, and for that end sat down with them.

In a little time they perceived in the field a thick vapour, like a cloud of dust rising by a whirlwind, advancing towards them, which vanished all of a sudden, and then the genie appeared, who, without saluting them, came up to the merchant with his drawn scimitar, and taking him by the arm, says, Get thee up, that I may kill thee as thou didst kill my son. The merchant and the three old men being frightened, began to lament, and to fill the air with their cries.--Here Scheherazade, perceiving day, left off her story which did so much whet the sultan's curiosity, that he was absolutely resolved to hear the end of it, and put off the sultaness's execution till next day.

Nobody can express the grand vizier's joy, when he perceived that the sultan did not order him to kill Scheherazade; his family, the court, and all the people in general, were astonished at it.

The Fourth Night.

Towards the end of the following night, Dinarzade failed not to awake the sultanness. My dear sister, says she, if you be not asleep, pray tell me one of your fine stories. Then Scheherazade, with the sultan's permission, spoke as follows:

Sir, when the old man that led the bitch saw the genie lay hold of the merchant, and about to kill him without pity, he threw himself at the feet of the monster, and kissing them, says to him: Prince of genies, I most humbly request you to suspend your anger, and do me the favour to hear me. I will tell you the history of my life, and of the bitch you see; and if you think it more wonderful and surprising than the adventure of the merchant you are going to kill, I hope you will pardon the poor unfortunate man the third of his crime. The genie took some time to consult upon it, but answered at last, Well, then; I agree to it.

THE HISTORY OF THE FIRST OLD MAN AND THE BITCH.

I shall begin then, says the old man; listen to me I pray you, with attention. This bitch you see is my cousin, nay, what is more, my wife: she was only twelve years of age when I married her, so that I may justly say, she ought as much to regard me as her father, as her kinsman and husband.

We lived together twenty years without any children, yet her barrenness did not hinder my having a great deal of complaisance and friendship for her. The desire of having children only made me to buy a slave, by whom I had a son, who was extremely promising. My wife being jealous, conceived a hatred both for mother and child, but concealed it so well, that I did not know it till it was too late.

Mean time my son grew up, and was ten years old, when I was obliged to undertake a journey: before I went, I recommended to my wife, of whom I had no mistrust, the slave and her son, and prayed her to take care of them during my absence, which was for a whole year. She made use of that time to satisfy her hatred: she applied herself to magic, and when she knew enough of that diabolical art to execute her horrible contrivance, the wretch carried my son to a desolate place, where, by her enchantments, she changed my son into a calf, and gave him to my farmer to fatten, pretending she had bought him. Her fury did not stop at this abominable action, but she likewise changed the slave into a cow, and gave her also to the farmer.

At my return, I asked for the mother and child: your slave, says she, is dead; and for your son, I know not what is become of him: I have not seen him these two months. I was troubled at the death of my slave; but my son having also disappeared, as she told me, I was in hopes he would return in a little time. However, eight months passed, and I heard nothing of him, When the festival of

the great Bairam happened, to celebrate the same, I sent to my farmer for one of the fattest cows to sacrifice; and he sent me one accordingly. The cow which he brought me was my slave, the unfortunate mother of my son, I tied her, but as I was going to sacrifice her, she bellowed pitifully and I could perceive streams of tears run from her eyes. This seemed to me very extraordinary, and finding myself, in spite of all I could do, seized with pity, I could not find in my heart to give her the blow, but ordered my farmer to get me another.

My wife, who was present, was enraged at my compassion, and opposing herself to an order which disappointed her malice, she cries out, What do you do, husband? Sacrifice that cow, your farmer has not a finer, nor one fitter for that use. Out of complaisance to my wife, I came again to the cow, and combatting my pity, which suspended the sacrifice, was going to give her the fatal blow, when the victim redoubling her tears, and bellowing, disarmed me a second time. Then I put the mell into the farmer's hands, and bade him sacrifice her himself, for her tears and bellowing pierced my heart.

The farmer, less compassionate than I, sacrificed her; and when he flead her, found her nothing but bones, though to us she seemed very fat. Take her to yourself, says I to the farmer, I quit her to you; give her in alms, or which way you will; and if you have a very fat calf, bring me it in her stead. I did not inform myself what he did with the cow; but, soon after he took her away, he came with a very fat calf. Though I knew not that the calf was my son, yet I could not forbear being moved at the sight of him. On his part, as soon as he saw me, he made so great an effort to come to me, that he broke his cord, threw himself at my feet, with his head against the ground, as if he would excite my compassion, conjuring me not to be so cruel as to take his life, and did as much as was possible for him to do, to signify that he was my son.

I was more surprised and affected with this action than with the tears of the cow: I found a tender pity, which made me concern myself for him, or rather nature did its duty. Go, says I to the farmer, carry home that calf, take great care of him, and bring me another in his stead immediately.

As soon as my wife heard me say so, she immediately cried out, What do you do, husband? Take my advice, sacrifice no other calf but that. Wife, said I, I will not sacrifice him, I will spare him, and pray do not you oppose it. The wicked woman had no regard to my desire, she hated my son too much to consent that I should save him; I tied the poor creature, and taking up the fatal knife--Here Scheherazade stopped, because she perceived day-light.

Then Dinarzade said, Sister, I am enchanted with this story, which bespeaks my attention so agreeably. If the sultan will suffer me to live to-day, answers Scheherazade, what I have to tell you to-morrow will divert you abundantly more. Schahriar, curious to know what would become of the old man's son, who led the bitch, told the sultanness he would be very glad to hear the end of that story next night.

The Fifth Night.

When day began to draw near, Dinarzade put her sister's orders in execution very exactly, who, being awaked, prayed the sultan to allow her to give Dinarzade that satisfaction, which the prince, who took so much pleasure in the story himself, readily agreed to.

Sir, then, says Scheherazade, the first old man, who led the bitch, continuing his story to the genie, the two other old men, and the merchant, proceeded thus: I took the knife, says he, and was going to strike it into my son's throat, when, turning his eyes, bathed with tears, in a languishing manner towards me, he affected me so, that I had not strength to sacrifice him, but, let the knife fall, and told my wife positively that I would have another calf to sacrifice, and not that. She used all endeavours to make me change my resolution; but I continued firm, and pacified her a little, by promising that I would sacrifice him against the Bairam next year.

Next morning, my farmer desired to speak with me alone; and told me, I come, says he, to tell you a piece of news, for which, I hope, you will return me thanks. I have a daughter that has some skill in magic: Yesterday, as I carried back the calf which you would not sacrifice, I perceived she laughed when she saw him, and in a moment after fell a-weeping. I asked her why she acted two such contrary parts at one and the same time. Father, replies she, the calf you bring back is our landlord's son: I laughed for joy to see him still alive, and I wept at the remembrance of the former sacrifice that was made the other day of his mother, who was changed into a cow. These two metamorphoses were made by the enchantments of our master's wife, who hated the mother and son; and this is what my daughter told me, said the farmer, and I come to acquaint you with it.

At these words, the old man adds, I leave you to think, my lord genie, how much I was surprised: I went immediately to my farmer, to speak with his daughter myself. As soon as I came, I went forthwith to the stall where my son was; he could not answer my embraces, but received them in such a manner as fully satisfied me he was my son.

The farmer's daughter came: My good maid, says I, can you restore my son to his former shape? Yes, says she, I can, Ah! said I, if you can, I will make you mistress of my fortune. She replied to me, smiling, You are our master, and know very well what I owe to you, but cannot restore your son into his former shape, but on two conditions. The first is, that you give him me for my husband, and the second is, that you allow me to punish the person who changed him into a calf. For the first, said I, I agree to it with all my heart; nay, I promise you more, a considerable estate for yourself, independent of what I design for my son. In a word, you shall see how I will reward the great service I expect from you. As to what relates to my wife, I also agree to it: A person that has been capable of committing such a criminal action, deserves very well to be punished; I leave her to you; only I must pray you not to take her life. I am just going then, answers she, to treat her as she has treated my son. I agree to it, said I, provided you restore my son to me

beforehand.

Then the maid took a vessel full of water, pronounced words over it that I did not understand, and addressing herself to the calf, O calf, says she, if thou wast created by the almighty and sovereign Master of the world, such as you appear at this time, continue in that form: but, if thou art a man, and changed into a calf by enchantment, return to thy natural shape by the permission of the Sovereign Creator. As she spoke these words, she threw water upon him, and in an instant he recovered his first shape.

My son, my dear son, cried he immediately embracing him with such a transport of joy that I knew not what I was doing; it is Heaven that has sent us this young maid to take off the horrible charm by which you were enchanted, and to avenge the injury done to you and your mother. I doubt not but, in acknowledgment, you will take your deliverer to wife, as I have promised. He consented to it with joy; but, before they were married, she changed my wife into a bitch, and this is she you see here. I desired she should have this shape, rather than another less agreeable, that we might see her in the family without horror.

Since that time my son has become a widower, and gone to travel; and it being several years since I heard of him, I am come abroad to inquire after him; and not being willing to trust any body with my wife while I should come home, I thought it fit to carry her every where with me. This is the history of myself and this bitch, is it not one of the most wonderful and surprising that can be? I agree it is, says the genie, and, upon that account, I forgive the merchant the third of his crime.

When the first old man, Sir, continued the sultanness, had finished his story, the second, who led the two black dogs, addressed himself to the genie, and says to him, I am going to tell you what happened to me and these two black dogs you see by me, and I am certain you will say that my story is yet more surprising than that which you have just now heard; but when I have told it you, I hope you will be pleased to pardon the merchant the second third of his crime. Yes, replies the genie, provided your story surpass that of the bitch. Then the second began in this manner. But as Scheherazade pronounced these words, she saw it was day, and left off speaking.

O Heaven! sister, says Dinarzade, these adventures are very singular. Sister, replies the sultanness, they are not comparable to those which I have to tell you next night, if the sultan, my lord and master, be so good as to let me live. Schahriar answered nothing to that, but rose up, said his prayers, and went to council, without giving any order against the life of the Scheherazade.

The Sixth Night.

The sixth night being come, the sultan and his lady went to bed. Dinarzade awaked at the usual hour, and calling to the sultanness, says, Dear sister, if you be not asleep, I pray you, until it be day, to satisfy my curiosity; I am impatient to hear the story of the old man and the two black dogs. The sultan consented to it

with pleasure, being no less desirous to know the story than Dinarzade; and Scheherazade continued it as follows.

THE STORY OF THE SECOND OLD MAN AND THE TWO BLACK DOGS.

Great prince of genies, says the old man, you must know that we are three brothers, I and the two black dogs you see: Our father left each of us, when he died, one thousand sequins; with that sum we all entered into the same way of living, and became merchants. A little time after we had opened shop, my eldest brother, one of these two dogs, resolved to travel and trade in foreign countries. Upon this design, he sold his estate, and bought goods proper for the trade he intended.

He went away, and was absent a whole year; at the end of which, a poor man, who, I thought, had come to ask alms, presented himself before me in my shop. I said to him, God help you. God help you also, answered he, is it possible you do not know me? Upon this, I looked to him narrowly, and knew him. Ah, my brother! cried I, embracing him, how could I know you in this condition? I made him come into my house, and asked him concerning his health, and the success of his travels. Do not ask me that question, says he; when you see me, you see all. It would only renew my grief to tell you all the particulars of the misfortunes that have befallen me, and reduced me to this condition, since I left you.

I immediately shut up my shop, and, carrying him to a bath, gave him the best clothes I had by me; and examining my books, and finding that I had doubled my stock, that is to say, that I was worth two thousand sequins, I gave him one half. With that, said I, brother, you may make up your loss. He joyfully accepted the proffer, recovered himself, and we lived together as before.

Some time after, my second brother, who is the other of these two dogs, would also sell his estate. I and his other brother did all we could to divert him from it, but could not; He sold it, and with the money bought such goods as were suitable for the trade he designed. He joined a caravan; and took a journey. He returned at the end of the year in the same condition as my other brother; and I having gained another thousand sequins, gave him them, with which he furnished his shop, and continued to follow his trade.

Some time after, one of my brothers comes to me to propose a trading voyage with them; I immediately rejected their proposal. You have travelled, said I, and what have you gained by it? Who can assure me that I shall be more successful than you have been? They represented to me in vain all that they thought fit to prevail upon me to engage in that design with them, for I constantly refused; but they importuned me so much, that after having resisted their solicitations five whole years, they overcame me at last: but when we were to make preparations for our voyage, and to buy goods necessary for the undertaking, I

found they had spent all, and that they had not one farthing left of the thousand sequins I had given each of them. I did not, however, upbraid them in the least with it. On the contrary, my stock being six thousand sequins, I shared the half of it with them, telling them, My brothers, we must venture these three thousand sequins, and hide the rest in some sure place, that, in case our voyage be no more successful than yours was formerly, we may have wherewith to assist us, and to follow our ancient way of living. I gave each of them a thousand sequins; and keeping as much for myself, I buried the other three thousand in a corner of my house. We bought our goods; and, after having embarked them on board a vessel, which we freighted betwixt us three, we put to sea with a favourable wind. After a month's sail--But I see day, says Scheherazade, I must stop here.

Sister, says Dinarzade, this story promises a great deal; I fancy the rest of it must be very extraordinary. You are not mistaken, answered the sultaness; and if the sultan will allow me to tell it you, I am persuaded it will very much divert you. Schahriar got up, as he did the day before, without explaining his mind; but gave no order to the grand vizier to kill his daughter.

The Seventh Night.

When the seventh night drew near a close, Dinarzade awaked the sultaness, and prayed her to continue the story of the second old man. I will, answered Scheherazade, provided the sultan, my lord and master, do not oppose it. Not at all, says Shahriar; I am so far from opposing it, that I desire you earnestly to go on with it.

To resume the thread of the story, says Scheherazade, you must know that the old man, who led the two dogs, continued his story to the genie, the other two old men, and the merchant, thus: In short, says he, after two months sail, we arrived happily at a port, where we landed, and had a very great vent for our goods. I especially sold mine so well, that I gained ten to one; and we bought commodities of that country to transport and sell in our own.

When we were ready to embark in order to return, I met, upon the banks of the sea, a lady handsome enough, but poorly clad. She came up to me presently, kissed my hand, prayed me, with the greatest earnestness imaginable, to marry her, and take her along with me. I made some difficulty to agree to it; but she said so many things to persuade me that I ought to make no objections to her poverty, and that I should have all the reason in the world to be satisfied with her conduct, that I yielded. I ordered fit apparel to be made for her; and, after having married her according to form, I took her on board, and we set sail.

During the navigation, I found the wife I had taken had so many good qualities, that I loved her every day more and more. In the mean time my two brothers, who had not managed their affairs so well as I did mine, envied my prosperity; and their fury carried them so far as to conspire against my life; so that one night, when my wife and I were asleep, they threw us both into the sea.

My wife was a fairy, and by consequence, genie, you know well,

she could not be drowned; but for me, it is certain, I had been lost without her help. I had scarcely fallen into the water, till she took me up, and carried me to an island. When it was day, the fairy said to me, You see, husband, that, by saving your life, I have not rewarded you ill for your kindness to me. You must know that I am a fairy, and that, being upon the bank of the sea, when you were going to embark, I found I had a strong inclination for you: I had a mind to try your goodness, and presented myself before you in the disguise wherein you saw me. You have dealt very generously with me, and I am mighty glad to have found an opportunity of testifying my acknowledgment to you: But I am incensed against your two brothers, and nothing will satisfy me but their lives.

I listened to this discourse of the fairy with admiration. I thanked her as well as I could for the great kindness she had done me; but, Madam, said I, for my brothers, I beg you to pardon them; whatever cause they have given me, I am not cruel enough to desire their death. I told her the particulars of what I had done for them, which increased her indignation so, that she cried out, I must immediately fly after those ungrateful traitors, and take speedy vengeance on them; I will drown their vessel, and throw them into the bottom of the sea. No, my good lady, replied I, for the sake of Heaven do not so; moderate your anger, consider that they are my brothers, and that we must do good for evil.

I pacified the fairy by these words; and as soon as I had spoken them, she transported me in an instant from the island where we were to the roof of my own house, which was terraced, and disappeared in a moment. I went down, opened the doors, and dug up the three thousand sequins I had hid. I went afterwards to the place where my shop was, which I also opened, and was complimented by the merchants, my neighbours, upon my return. When I went to my house, I perceived two black dogs, which came to me in a very submissive manner; I knew not what it meant, but was much astonished at it. But the fairy, who appeared immediately, says to me, Husband, do not be surprised to see these two black dogs by you; they are your two brothers. I was troubled at these words, and asked her by what power they were so transformed. It was I that did it, says she, at least I gave commission to one of my sisters to do it, who, at the same time, sunk their ship. You have lost the goods you had on board, but I will make it up to you in another way. As to your two brothers, I have condemned them to remain five years in that shape. Their perfidiousness too well deserves such a penance; and, in short, after having told me where I might hear of her, she disappeared.

Now the five years being out, I am travelling in quest of her; and as I passed this way, I met this merchant, and the good old man that led the bitch, and sat down by them. This is my history, O prince of genies, do not you think it very extraordinary? I own it, says the genie, and, upon that account, remit the merchant the second third of the crime which he has committed against me.

As soon as the second old man had finished his story, the third began, and made the like demand of the genie with the two first; that is to say, to pardon the merchant the other third of his crime, provided the story he had to tell him exceeded the two he had already heard for singular events. The genie made him the

same promise as he had done the other two. Hearken then, says the old man to him. But day appears, says Scheherazade, I must stop here.

I cannot enough admire, sister, says Dinarzade, the adventures you have told me. I know abundance more, answers the sultanness, that are still more wonderful. Schahriar, willing to know if the story of the third old man would be as agreeable as that of the second, put off the execution of Scheherazade till the next night.

The Eighth Night.

As soon as Dinarzade perceived it was time to call the sultanness, she says, Sister, I have been awake a long time, and have a great mind to awake you, I am so impatient to hear the story of the third old man. The sultan answered, I can hardly think that the third story will surpass the two former ones.

Sir, replies the sultanness, the third old man told his story to the genie; I cannot tell it you, because it is not come to my knowledge, but I know that it did so much exceed the two former stories in the variety of wonderful adventures that the genie was astonished at it; and no sooner heard the end of it, but he said to the third old man, I remit the other third part of the merchant's crime upon the account of your story. He is very much obliged to all three of you, for having delivered him out of this danger by your stories; without which he had not now been in the world. And, having spoken thus, he disappeared to the great contentment of the company.

The merchant failed not to give his three deliverers the thanks he owed them. They rejoiced to see him out of danger; after which he bid them adieu, and each of them went on his way. The merchant returned to his wife and children, and passed the rest of his days with them in peace. But, Sir, added Scheherazade, how pleasant soever these stories may be, that I have told your majesty hitherto, they do not come near that of the fisherman. Dinarzade, perceiving that the sultanness demurred, says to her, Sister, since there is still some time remaining, pray tell us the story of the fisherman, if the sultan is willing. Schahriar agreed to it, and Scheherazade, resuming her discourse, pursued it in this manner.

THE STORY OF THE FISHERMAN.

Sir--There was a very ancient fisherman, so poor, that he could scarcely earn enough to maintain himself, his wife, and three children. He went every day to fish betimes in a morning; and imposed it as a law upon himself, not to cast his nets above four times a-day. He went one morning by moon-light, and, coming to the sea-bank, undressed himself, and cast in his nets. As he drew them towards the shore, he found them very heavy, and thought he

had got a good draught of fish, at which he rejoiced within himself; but, in a moment after, perceiving that, instead of fish, there was nothing in his nets but the carcase of an ass, he was mightily vexed. Scheherazade stopped here, because she saw it was day.

Sister, says Dinarzade, I must confess that the beginning of this story charms me, and I foresee that the result of it will be very agreeable. There is nothing more surprising than the story of this fisherman, replied the sultaness, and you will be convinced of it next night, if the sultan will be so gracious as to let me live. Schahriar, being curious to hear the success of such an extraordinary fishing, would not order Scheherazade to be put to death that day.

The Ninth Night.

My dear sister, cries Dinarzade, next morning at the usual hour, if you be not asleep, I pray you to go on with the story of the fisherman; I am ready to die till I hear it. I am willing to give you that satisfaction, says the sultaness; but at the same time she demanded leave of the sultan, and, having obtained it, began again as follows:

Sir, when the fisherman, vexed to have made such a sorry draught, had mended his nets, which the carcase of the ass had broken in several places, he threw them in a second time; and when he drew them, found a great deal of resistance, which made him think he had taken abundance of fish; but he found nothing except a pannier full of gravel and slime, which grieved him extremely. O Fortune! cries he, with a lamentable tone, do not be angry with me, nor persecute a wretch who prays thee to spare him. I came hither from my house to seek for my livelihood, and thou pronoucest death against me. I have no other trade but this to subsist by; and, notwithstanding all the care I take, I can scarcely provide what is absolutely necessary for my family. But I am in the wrong to complain of thee; thou takest pleasure to persecute honest people, and to leave great men in obscurity, whilst thou showest favour to the wicked, and advancest those who have no virtue to recommend them.

Having finished this complaint, he threw away the pannier in a fret, and washing his nets from the slime, cast them the third time, but brought up nothing except stones, shells, and mud. Nobody can express his disorder; he was within an ace of going quite mad. However, when day began to appear, he did not forget to say his prayers like a good Mussulman, and afterwards added this petition: "Lord, you know that I cast my net only four times a day; I have already drawn them three times, without the least reward for my labour: I am only to cast them once more; I pray you to render the sea favourable to me, as you did to Moses."

The fisherman, having finished this prayer, cast his nets the fourth time; and, when he thought it was time, he drew them, as formerly, with great difficulty; but, instead of fish, found nothing in them but a vessel of yellow copper, that, by its weight, seemed to be full of something; and he observed that it was shut up and sealed with lead, having the impression of a seal upon it. This rejoiced him; I will sell it, says he, to the

founder, and with the money arising from the product, buy a measure of corn. He examined the vessel on all sides, and shook it, to see if what was within made any noise, and heard nothing. This circumstance, with the impression of the seal upon the leaden cover, made him to think there was something precious in it. To try this, he took a knife, and opened it with very little labour; he presently turned the mouth downward; but nothing came out, which surprised him extremely. He set it before him, and, while he looked upon it attentively, there came out a very thick smoke which obliged him to retire two or three paces from it.

This smoke mounted as high as the clouds, and extending itself along the sea, and upon the shore, formed a great mist, which, we may well imagine, did mightily astonish the fisherman. When the smoke was all out of the vessel, it reunited itself, and became a solid body, of which there was formed a genie twice as high as the greatest of giants. At the sight of a monster of such unsizeable bulk, the fisherman would fain have fled, but was so frightened that he could not go one step.

Solomon, cried the genie immediately, Solomon, the great prophet, pardon, pardon; I will never more oppose your will: I will obey all your commands.--Scheherazade, perceiving it day, broke off her story.

Upon which Dinarzade said, Dear sister, nobody can keep their promise better than you can keep yours. This story is certainly more surprising than the former. Sister, replies the sultanness, there are more wonderful things yet to come, if my lord the sultan will allow me to tell them you. Schahriar had too great a desire to hear out the story of the fisherman to deprive himself of that pleasure, and therefore put off the sultanness's death another day.

The Tenth Night.

Dinarzade called her sister next night when she thought it was time, and prayed her to continue the story of the fisherman; and the sultan being also impatient to know what concern the genie had with Solomon, Scheherazade continued her story thus;

Sir, the fisherman, when he heard these words of the genie, recovered his courage, and says to him, Thou proud spirit, what is this that you talk? it is above eighteen hundred years since the prophet Solomon died, and we are now at the end of time: Tell me your history, and how you came to be shut up in this vessel.

The genie, turning to the fisherman with a fierce look, says, You must speak to me with more civility; thou art very bold to call me a proud spirit. Very well, replies the fisherman, shall I speak to you with more civility, and call you the owl of good luck? I say, answers the genie, speak to me more civilly, before I kill thee. I have only one favour to grant thee. And what is that, says the fisherman? It is, answers the genie, to give you your choice in what manner you wouldst have me to take thy life. But wherein have I offended you, replies the fisherman? Is this the reward for the good service I have done you. I cannot treat you otherwise, says the genie; and that you may be convinced of it, hearken to my story.

I am one of those rebellious spirits that opposed themselves to the will of Heaven; all the other genies owned Solomon, the great prophet, and submitted to him. Sacar and I were the only genies that would never be guilty of so mean a thing: And, to avenge himself, that great monarch sent Asaph, the son of Barakia, his chief minister, to apprehend me. That was accordingly done; Asaph seized my person, and brought me by force before his master's throne.

Solomon, the son of David, commanded me to quit my way of living, to acknowledge his power, and to submit myself to his commands: I bravely refused to obey, and told him, I would rather expose myself to his resentment, than swear fealty, and submit to him as he required. To punish me, he shut me up in this copper vessel; and to make sure of me that I should not break prison, he stamped (himself) upon this leaden cover his seal, with the great name God engraven upon it. Thus he gave the vessel to one of the genies that submitted to him, with orders to throw it into the sea, which was executed to my great sorrow.

During the first hundred years imprisonment, I swore that if one would deliver me before the hundred years expired, I would make him rich even after his death: But that century ran out, and nobody did me that good office. During the second, I made an oath, that I would open all the treasures of the earth to any one that would set me at liberty, but with no better success. In the third, I promised to make my deliverer a potent monarch, to be always near him in spirit, and to grant him every day three demands, of what nature soever they might be: But this century ran out as well as the two former, and I continued in prison. At last, being angry, or rather mad, to find myself a prisoner so long, I swore, that if afterwards any one should deliver me, I would kill him without pity, and grant him no other favour but to choose what kind of death he would die; and therefore, since you have delivered me to-day, I give you that choice.

This discourse afflicted the poor fisherman extremely: I am very unfortunate, cries he, to come hither to do such a piece of good service to one that is so ungrateful. I beg you to consider your injustice, and revoke such an unreasonable oath: pardon me, and Heaven will pardon you; if you grant me my life, Heaven will protect you from all attempts against yours. No, thy death is resolved on, says the genie, only choose how you will die. The fisherman, perceiving the genie to be resolute, was extremely grieved, not so much for himself as for his three children, and bewailed the misery they must be reduced to by his death. He endeavoured still to appease the genie, and says, Alas! be pleased to take pity on me in consideration of the good service I have done you. I have told thee already, replies the genie, it is for that very reason I must kill thee. That is very strange, says the fisherman, are you resolved to reward good for evil? The proverb says, "That he who does good to one who deserves it not, is always ill rewarded." I must confess I thought it was false; for in effect there can be nothing more contrary to reason, or the laws of society. Nevertheless, I find now, by cruel experience, that it is but too true. Do not let us lose time, replies the genie, all thy reasoning shall not divert me from my purpose: Make haste, and tell me which way you choose to die.

Necessity is the mother of invention. The fisherman bethought himself of a stratagem. Since I must die then, says he to the genie, I submit to the will of Heaven; but, before I choose the manner of death, I conjure you by the great name which was engraven upon the seal of the prophet Solomon, the son of David, to answer me truly the question I am going to ask you. The genie, finding himself obliged to give a positive answer by this adjuration, trembled, and replied to the fisherman, Ask what thou wilt, but make haste. Day appearing, Scheherazade held her peace.

Sister, says Dinarzade, it must be owned, that the more you speak, the more you surprise and satisfy. I hope the sultan, our lord, will not order you to be put to death till he hears out the fine story of the fisherman. The sultan is absolute, replies Scheherazade; we must submit to his will in every thing. But Shahriar, being as willing as Dinarzade to hear an end of the story, did again put off the execution of the sultanness.

The Eleventh Night.

Shahriar, and the princess his spouse, passed this night in the same manner as they had done the former; and, before break of day, Dinarzade awaked them with these words, which she addressed to the sultanness: I pray you, sister, to resume the story of the fisherman. With all my heart, says Scheherazade, I am willing to satisfy you, with the sultan's permission.

The genie (continued she) having promised to speak the truth, the fisherman says to him, I would know if you were actually in this vessel? Dare you swear it by the name of the great God? Yes, replied the genie, I do swear by that great name that I was, and it is a certain truth. In good faith, answered the fisherman, I cannot believe you; the vessel is not capable to hold one of your feet, and how should it be possible that your whole body could be in it? I swear to thee notwithstanding, replied the genie, that I was there just as you see me here: Is it possible that thou dost not believe me after the great oath which I have taken? Truly, not I, said the fisherman; nor will I believe you unless you show it me.

Upon which the body of the genie was dissolved, and changed itself into smoke, extending itself, as formerly, upon the sea-shore; and then at last, being gathered together, it began to reenter the vessel, which he continued to do successively, by a slow and equal motion, after a smooth and exact way, till nothing was left out, and immediately a voice came forth, which said to the fisherman, Well, now, incredulous fellow, I am all in the vessel, do not you believe me now?

The fisherman, instead of answering the genie, took the cover of lead, and having speedily shut the vessel, Genie, cries he, now it is your turn to beg my favour, and to choose which way I shall put thee to death; but not so, it is better that I should throw you into the sea, whence I took you; and then I will build a house upon the bank, where I will dwell, to give notice to all fishermen, who come to throw in their nets, to beware of such a wicked genie as thou art, who hast made an oath to kill him who shall set thee at liberty.

The genie, enraged at these expressions, did all he could to get out of the vessel again, but it was not possible for him to do it; for the impression of Solomon's seal prevented him; so, perceiving that the fisherman had got the advantage of him, he thought fit to dissemble his anger. Fisherman, says he, in a pleasant tone, take heed you do not what you say; for what I spoke before was only by way of jest, and you are to take it no otherwise. O genie! replies the fisherman, thou who wast but a moment ago the greatest of all genies, and now art the least of them, thy crafty discourse will signify nothing to thee, but to the sea thou shalt return: If thou hadst staid in the sea so long as thou hast told me, thou mayst very well stay there till the day of judgment. I begged thee, in God's name, not to take away my life, and thou didst reject my prayers; I am obliged to treat you in the same manner.

The genie omitted nothing that could prevail upon the fisherman: Open the vessel, says he, give me my liberty, I pray thee, and I promise to satisfy thee to thy own content. Thou art a mere traitor, replies the fisherman, I should deserve to lose my life, if I be such a fool as to trust thee; thou wilt not fail to treat me in the same manner as a certain Grecian king treated the physician Douban. It is a story I have a mind to tell thee, therefore listen to it.

THE STORY OF THE GRECIAN KING, AND THE PHYSICIAN DOUBAN.

There was in the country of Zouman, in Persia, a king whose subjects were originally Greeks. This king was all over leprous, and his physicians in vain endeavoured his cure; and when they were at their wits end what to prescribe him, a very able physician, called Douban, arrived at his court.

This physician had learned his science in Greek, Persian, Turkish, Arabian, Latin, Syrian, and Hebrew books; and, besides that he was an expert philosopher, he fully understood the good and bad qualities of all sorts of plants and drugs. As soon as he was informed of the king's distemper, and understood that his physicians had given him over, he clad himself the best he could, and found a way to present himself to the king: Sir, says he, I know that all your majesty's physicians have not been able to cure you of the leprosy; but if you will do me the honour to accept my service, I will engage myself to cure you without drenches or external applications.

The king listened to what he said, and answered, if you are able to perform what you promise, I will enrich you and your posterity; and, besides the presents I shall make you, you shall be my chief favourite. Do you assure me, then, that you will cure me of my leprosy, without making me take any potion, or applying any external medicine? Yes, sir, replies the physician, I promise myself success, through God's assistance, and to-morrow I will make trial of it.

The physician returned to his quarters, and made a mallet, hollow within, and at the handle he put in his drugs: He made also a ball in such a manner as suited his purpose, with which, next morning, he went to present himself before the king, and, falling

down at his feet, kissed the very ground. Here Scheherazade, perceiving day, acquainted the sultan with it, and held her peace.

I wonder, sister, says Dinarzade, where you learn so many things. You will hear a great many others to-morrow, re-
045.txt----- plies Scheherazade, if the sultan, my master, will be pleased to prolong my life further, Schahriar, who longed as much as Dinarzade to hear the sequel of the story of Douban the physician, did not order the sultanness to be put to death that day.

THE TWELFTH NIGHT.

The twelfth night was pretty far advanced, when Dinarzade called, and says, Sister, you owe us the continuation of the agreeable history of the Grecian king and the physician Douban. I am very willing to pay my debt, replies Scheherazade, and resumed the story as follows.

Sir, the fisherman, speaking always to the genie, whom he kept shut up in his vessel, went on thus: The physician Douban rose up, and, after a profound reverence, says to the king, he judged it meet that his majesty should take horse, and go to the place where he used to play at the mell. The king did so, and when he arrived there, the physician came to him with the mell, and says to him, Sir, exercise yourself with this mell, and strike the ball with it until you find your hands and your body in a sweat. When the medicine I have put in the handle of the mell is heated with your hand, it will penetrate your whole body; and as soon as you shall sweat, you may leave off the exercise, for then the medicine will have had its effect. As soon as you are returned to your palace, go into the bath, and cause yourself to be well washed and rubbed; then go to bed, and, when you rise to-morrow, you will find yourself cured.

The king took the mell, and struck the ball, which was returned by his officers that played with him; he struck it again, and played so long, till his hand and his whole body were in a sweat, and then the medicine shut up in the handle of the mell had its operation, as the physician said. Upon this the king left off play, returned to his palace, entered the bath, and observed very exactly what his physician had prescribed him.

He was very well after; and next morning, when he arose, he perceived, with as much wonder as joy, that his leprosy was cured, and his body as clean as if he had never been attacked with that distemper. As soon as he was dressed, he came into the hall of public audience, where he mounted his throne, and showed himself to his courtiers, who, longing to know the success of the new medicine, came thither betimes, and, when they saw the king perfectly cured, did all of them express a mighty joy for it. The physician Douban, entering the hall, bowed himself before the throne with his face to the ground. The king, perceiving him, called him, made him sit down by his side, showed him to the assembly, and gave him all the commendation he deserved. His majesty did not stop here; but, as he treated all his court that day, he made him to eat at his table atone with him. At these words Scheherazade, perceiving day, broke off her story. Sister,

says Dinarzade, I know not what the conclusion of this story will be, but I find the beginning very surprising. That which is to come is yet better, answered the sultanness, and I am certain you will not deny it, if the sultan gives me leave to make an end of it to-morrow night. Shahriar consented, and rose very well satisfied with what he had heard.

The Thirteenth Night.

Dinarzade, willing to keep the sultan in ignorance of her design, cried out, as if she had started out of her sleep, O dear sister, I have had a troublesome dream, and nothing will sooner make me forget it than the remainder of the story of the Grecian king and the doctor Douban. I conjure you, by the love you always bore me, not to defer it a moment longer. I shall not be wanting, good sister, to ease your mind; and, if my sovereign will permit me, I will go on. Schahriar, being charmed with the agreeable manner of Scheherazade's telling her story, says to her, You will oblige me no less than Dinarzade, therefore continue.

The Grecian king (says the fisherman to the genie) was not satisfied with having admitted the physician Douban to his table, but towards night, when he was about dismissing the company, he caused him to be clad in a long rich robe, like unto those which his favourites usually wore in his presence; and, besides that, he ordered him two thousand sequins. The next day, and the day following, he was very familiar with him. In short, this prince, thinking that he could never enough acknowledge the obligations he lay under to that able physician, bestowed every day new favours upon him. But this king had a grand vizier that was avaricious, envious, and naturally capable of all sorts of mischief; he could not see, without envy, the presents that were given to the physician, whose other merits had begun to make him jealous, and therefore he resolved to lessen him in the king's esteem. To effect this, he went to the king, and told him in private that he had some advice to give him which was of the greatest concernment. The king having asked what it was, Sir, said he, it is very dangerous for a monarch to put confidence in a man whose fidelity he never tried. Though you heap favours upon the physician Douban, and show him all the familiarity that may be, your majesty does not know but he may be a traitor at the same time, and came on purpose to this court to kill you. From whom have you this, answered the king, that you dare tell it me? Consider to whom you speak, and that you advance a thing which I shall not easily believe. Sir, replied the vizier, I am very well informed of what I have had the honour to represent to your majesty, therefore do not let your dangerous confidence grow to a further height; if your majesty be asleep, be pleased to awake; for I do once more repeat it, that the physician Douban did not leave the heart of Greece, his country, nor come hither to settle himself at your court, but to execute that horrid design which I have just now hinted to you.

No, no, vizier, replies the king, I am certain that this man, whom you treat as a villain and a traitor, is one of the best and most virtuous men in the world; and there is no man I love so much. You know by what medicine, or rather by what miracle, he cured me of my leprosy; if he had a design upon my life, why did he save me? He needed only to have left me to my disease; I could

not have escaped; my life was already half gone; forbear, then, to fill me with any unjust suspicions. Instead of listening to you, I tell you, that from this day forward I will give that great man a pension of a thousand sequins per month for his life; nay, though I did share with him all my riches and dominions, I should never pay him enough for what he has done me; I perceive it to be his virtue that raises your envy; but do not think that I will be unjustly possessed with prejudice against him; I remember too well what a vizier said to King Sinbad, his master, to prevent his putting to death the prince his son. But, sir, says Scheherazade, day-light appears, which forbids me to go further.

I am very well pleased that the Grecian king, says Dinarzade, had so much firmness of spirit as to reject the false accusation of his vizier. If you commend the firmness of that prince to-day, says Scheherazade, you will as much condemn his weakness to-morrow, if the sultan be pleased to allow me time to finish this story. The sultan, being curious to hear wherein the Grecian king discovered his weakness, did further delay the death of the sultanness.

The Fourteenth Night.

An hour before day, Dinarzade awaked her sister, and says to her, you will certainly be as good as your word, madam, and tell us out the story of the fisherman. To assist your memory, I will tell you where you left off; it was where the Grecian king maintained the innocence of his physician Douban against his vizier. I remember it, says Scheherazade, and am ready to give you satisfaction.

Sir, continues she, addressing herself to Schahriar, that which the Grecian king said about King Sinbad raised the vizier's curiosity, who says to him, Sir, I pray your majesty to pardon me, if I have the boldness to demand of you what the vizier of King Sinbad said to his master to divert him from cutting off the prince his son. The Grecian king had the complaisance to satisfy him: That vizier, says he, after having represented to King Sinbad that he ought to beware lest, on the accusation of a mother-in-law, he should commit an action which he might afterwards repent of, told him this story.

THE STORY OF THE HUSBAND AND PARROT.

A certain man had a fair wife, whom he loved so dearly that he could scarcely allow her to be out of his sight. One day, being obliged to go abroad about urgent affairs, he came to a place where all sorts of birds were sold, and there bought a parrot, which not only spoke very well, but could also give an account of every thing that was done before it. He brought it in a cage to his house, prayed his wife to put it in the chamber, and to take care of it, during a journey he was obliged to undertake, and

then went out.

At his return, he took care to ask the parrot concerning what had passed in his absence, and the bird told him things that gave him occasion to upbraid his wife. She thought some of her slaves had betrayed her, but all of them swore they had been faithful to her; and they all agreed that it must have been the parrot that had told tales.

Upon this, the wife bethought herself of a way how, she might remove her husband's jealousy, and at the same time revenge herself on the parrot, which she effected thus: Her husband being gone another journey, she commanded a slave, in the night time, to turn a hand-mill under the parrot's cage; she ordered another to throw water, in form of rain, over the cage; and a third to take a glass, and turn it to the right and to the left before the parrot, so as the reflections of the candle might shine on its face. The slaves spent great part of the night in doing what their mistress commanded them, and acquitted themselves very dexterously.

Next night the husband returned, and examined the parrot again about what had passed during his absence. The bird answered, Good master, the lightning, thunder, and rain, did so much disturb me all night, that I cannot tell how much I suffered by it. The husband, who knew that there had been neither thunder, lightning, nor rain that night, fancied that the parrot, not having told him the truth in this, might also have lied to him in the other; upon which he took it out of the cage, and threw it with so much force to the ground that he killed it; yet afterwards he understood, by his neighbours, that the poor parrot had not lied to him when it gave him an account of his wife's base conduct, which made him repent that he had killed it. Scheherazade stopped here, because she saw it was day.

All that you tell us, sister, says Dinarzade is so curious, that nothing can be more agreeable. I shall be willing to divert you, answers Scheherazade, if the sultan, my master, will allow me time to do it. Schahriar, who took as much pleasure to hear the sultaness as Dinarzade, rose, and went about his affairs, without ordering the vizier to cut her off.

The Fifteenth Night.

Dinarzade was punctual this night, as she had been the former, to awake her sister, and begged of her, as usual, to tell her a story. I am going to do it, sister, says Scheherazade; but the sultan interrupted her, for fear she should begin a new story, and bid her finish the discourse between the Grecian king and his vizier about his physician Douban. Sir, says Scheherazade, I will obey you, and went on with the story as follows.

When the Grecian king, says the fisherman to the genie, had finished the story of the parrot; and you, vizier, adds he, because of the hatred you bear to the physician Douban, who never did you any hurt, you would have me cut him off; but I will take care of that, for fear I should repent it, as the husband did the killing of his parrot.

The mischievous vizier was too much concerned to effect the ruin of the physician Douban to stop here. Sir, says he, the death of the parrot was but a trifle, and I believe his master did not mourn for him long. But why should your fear of wronging an innocent man hinder your putting this physician to death? Is it not enough that he is accused of a design against your life to authorize you to take away his? When the business in question is to secure the life of a king, bare suspicion ought to pass for certainty; and it is better to sacrifice the innocent than to spare the guilty. But, sir, this is not an uncertain thing; the physician Douban has certainly a mind to assassinate you. It is not envy which makes me his enemy; it is only the zeal and concern I have for preserving your majesty's life, that make me give you my advice in a matter of this importance. If it be false, I deserve to be punished in the same manner as a vizier was formerly punished. What had that vizier done, says the Grecian king, to deserve punishment? I will inform your majesty of that, says the vizier, if you will be pleased to hear me.

THE STORY OF THE VIZIER THAT WAS PUNISHED.

There was a king, says the vizier, who had a son that loved hunting mightily. He allowed him to divert himself that way very often, but gave orders to his grand vizier to attend him constantly, and never to lose sight of him.

One hunting day, the huntsman having roused a deer, the prince who thought the vizier followed him, pursued the game so far, and with so much earnestness, that he was left quite alone. He stopped, and finding that he had lost his way, endeavoured to return the same way he came, to find out the vizier, who had not been careful enough to find him, and so wandered further.

Whilst he rode up and down without keeping any road, he met, by the way-side, a handsome lady, who wept bitterly. He stopped his horse, asked who she was, how she came to be alone in that place, and what she wanted? I am, says she, daughter of an Indian king; as I was taking the air on horseback in the country, I grew sleepy, fell from my horse, who is got away, and I know not what is become of him. The young prince, taking compassion on her, asked her to get up behind him, which she willingly accepted.

As they passed by the ruins of a house, the lady signified a desire to alight on some occasion. The prince stopped his horse, and suffered her to alight; then he alighted himself, and went near the ruins with his horse in his hand: But you may judge how much he was surprised, when he heard the lady within it say these words, "Be glad, my children, I bring you a handsome young man, and very fat;" and other voices which answered immediately, "Mamma, where is he, that we may eat him presently, for we are very hungry."

The prince heard enough to convince him of his danger, and then

he perceived that the lady, who called herself daughter to an Indian king, was a hogress, wife to one of those savage demons called hogress, who live in remote places, and make use of a thousand wives to surprise and devour passengers; so that the prince, being thus frightened, mounted his horse as soon as he could.

The pretended princess appeared that very moment, and perceiving that she had missed her prey, she cries, Fear nothing, prince! Who are you? Whom do you seek? I have lost my way, replies he, and am seeking it. If you have lost your way, says she, recommend yourself to God, he will deliver you out of your perplexity. Then the prince lift up his eyes towards Heaven. But, sir, says Scheherazade, I am obliged to break off, for day appears.

I long mightily, says Dinarzade, to know what became of that young prince, I tremble for him. I will deliver you from your uneasiness to-morrow, answers the sultanness, if the sultan will allow me to live till then. Schahriar, willing to hear an end of this adventure, prolonged Scheherazade's life for another day.

The Sixteenth Night.

Dinarzade had such a mighty desire to hear out the story of the young prince, that she awaked that night sooner than ordinary, and said, Sister, pray go on with the story you began yesterday: I am much concerned for the young prince, and ready to die for fear that he was eaten up by the hogress and her children. Schahriar having signified that he had the same fear, the sultanness replies, Well, Sir, I will satisfy you immediately.

After the counterfeit Indian princess had bid the young prince recommend himself to God, he could not believe she spoke sincerely, but thought she was sure of him, and therefore lifting up his hands to Heaven, said, Almighty Lord, cast thine eyes upon me, and deliver me from this enemy. After this prayer, the hogress entered the ruins again, and the prince rode off with all possible haste. He happily found his way again, and arrived safe and sound at his father's court, to whom he gave a particular account of the danger he had been in through the vizier's neglect; upon which the king, being incensed against that minister, ordered him to be strangled that very moment.

Sir, continues the Grecian king's vizier, to return to the physician Douban, if you do not take care, the confidence you put in him will be fatal to you: I am very well assured that he is a spy sent by your enemies to attempt your majesty's life. He has cured you, you will say: But, alas! who can assure you of that? He has perhaps cured you only in appearance, and not radically; who knows but the medicines he has given you may in time have pernicious effects?

The Grecian king, who had naturally very little sense, was not able to discover the wicked design of his vizier, nor had he firmness enough to persist in his first opinion. This discourse staggered him: Vizier, says he, thou art in the right; he may be come on purpose to take away my life, which he may easily do by the very smell of some of his drugs. We must consider what is fit for us to do in this case.

When the vizier found the king in such a temper as he would have him, Sir, says he, the surest and speediest method you can take to secure your life, is to send immediately for the physician Douban, and order his head to be cut off as soon as he comes. In truth, says the king, I believe that is the way we must take to prevent his design. When he had spoken thus, he called for one of his officers, and ordered him to go for the physician; who, knowing nothing of the king's design, came to the palace in haste.

Know ye, says the king, when he saw him, why I sent for you? No, Sir, answered he; I wait till your majesty be pleased to inform me. I sent for you, replied the king, to rid myself of you by taking your life.

No man can express the surprise of the physician, when he heard the sentence of death pronounced against him. Sir, says he, why would your majesty take away my life? What crime have I committed? I am informed by good hands, replies the king, that you come to my court only to attempt my life; but, to prevent you, I will be sure of yours. Give the blow, says he to the executioner, who was present, and deliver me from a perfidious wretch, who came hither on purpose to assassinate me.

When the physician heard this cruel order, he readily judged that the honours and presents he had received from the king had procured him enemies, and that the weak prince was imposed upon. He repented that he had cured him of his leprosy, but it was now too late. Is it thus, replies the physician, that you reward me for curing you? The king would not hearken to him, but ordered the executioner a second time to strike the fatal blow. The physician then had recourse to his prayers: Alas! sir, cries he, prolong my days, and God will prolong yours; do not put me to death, lest God treat you in the same manner. The fisherman broke off his discourse here, to apply it to the genie. Well, genie, says he, you see that what passed then betwixt the Grecian king and his physician Douban is acted just now betwixt us.

The Grecian king, continues he, instead of having regard to the prayers of the physician, who begged him for God's sake to spare him, cruelly replied to him, No, no; I must of necessity cut you off, otherwise you may take away my life with as much subtleness as you cured me. The physician, melting into tears, and bewailing himself sadly for being so ill rewarded by the king, prepared for death. The executioner bound up his eyes, tied his hands, and went to draw his scimitar.

Then the courtiers, who were present, being moved with compassion, begged the king to pardon him, assuring his majesty that he was not guilty of the crime laid to his charge, and that they would answer for his innocence; but the king was inflexible, and answered them so, as they dared not to say any more of the matter.

The physician being on his knees, his eyes tied up, and ready to receive the fatal blow, addressed himself once more to the king: Sir, says he, since your majesty will not revoke the sentence of death, I beg, at least, that you will give me leave to return to

my house, to give orders about my burial, to bid farewell to my family, to give alms, and to bequeath my books to those who are capable of making good use of them. I have one in particular I would present to your majesty; it is a very precious book, and worthy to be laid up very carefully in your treasury. Well, replies the king, why is that book so precious as you talk of? Sir, says the physician, because it contains an infinite number of curious things, of which the chief is, that when you have cut off my head, if your majesty will give yourself the trouble to open the book at the sixth leaf, and read the third line of the left page, my head will answer all the questions you ask it. The king, being curious to see such a wonderful thing, deferred his death till next day, and sent him home under a strong guard.

The physician, during that time, put his affairs in order; and the report being spread, that an unheard-of prodigy was to happen after his death, the viziers, emirs, officers of the guard, and, in a word, the whole court, repaired next day to the hall of audience, that they might be witnesses of it.

The physician Douban was soon brought in, and advanced to the foot of the throne, with a great book in his hand; there he called for a bason, upon which he laid the cover that the book was wrapped in, and presenting the book to the king, Sir, says he, take that book, if you please, and as soon as my head is cut off, order that it may be put into the bason upon the cover of the book; as soon as it is put there, the blood will stop; then open the book, and my head will answer your questions. But, Sir, says he, permit me once more to implore your majesty's clemency; for God's sake grant my request, I protest to you that I am innocent. Your prayers, answers the king, are vain; and if it were for nothing but to hear your head speak after your death, it is my will you should die. As he said this, he took the book out of the physician's hand, and ordered the executioner to do his duty.

The head was so dexterously cut off, that it fell into the bason, and was no sooner laid upon the cover of the book than the blood stopped; then, to the great surprise of the king, and all the spectators, it opened its eyes, and said, Sir, will your majesty be pleased to open the book? The king opened it, and finding that one leaf was, as it were, glued to another, that he might turn it with more ease, he put his finger to his mouth, and wet it with spittle. He did so till he came to the sixth leaf, and finding no writing on the place where he was bid to look for it, Physician, says he to the head, here is nothing written. Turn over some more leaves, replies the head. The king continued to turn over, putting always his finger to his mouth, until the poison, with which each leaf was imbued, came to have its effect; the prince finding himself, all of a sudden, taken with an extraordinary fit, his eye-sight failed, and he, fell down at the foot of his throne in great convulsions. At these words Scheherazade, perceiving day, gave the sultan notice of it, and forbore speaking. Ah! dear sister, says Dinarzade, how grieved am I that you have not time to finish this story! I should be inconsolable if you lose your life to-day. Sister, replies the sultaness, that must be as the sultan pleases; but I hope he will be so good as to suspend my death till to-morrow. And accordingly Schahriar, far from ordering her death that day, expected next night with

much impatience; so earnest was he to hear out the story of the Grecian king, and the sequel of that of the fisherman and the genie.

The Seventeenth Night.

Though Dinarzade was very curious to hear the rest of the story of the Grecian king, she did not awake that night so soon as usual, so that it was almost day before she called upon the sultanness; and then said, I pray you, sister, to continue the wonderful story of the Greek king; but make haste, I beseech you, for it will speedily be day.

Scheherazade resumed the story where she left off the day before. Sir, says she to the sultan, when the physician Douban, or rather his head, saw that the poison had taken effect, and that the king had but a few moments to live: Tyrant, it cried, now you see how princes are treated, who, abusing, their authority, cut off innocent men: God punishes, soon or late, their injustice and cruelty. Scarcely had the head spoken these words, when the king fell down dead, and the head itself lost what life it had.

Sir, continues Scheherazade, such was the end of the Grecian king, and the physician Douban; I must return now to the story of the fisherman and the genie; but it is not worth while to begin it now, for it is day. The sultan, who always observed his hours regularly, could stay no longer, but got up; and having a mind to hear the sequel of the story of the genie and, the fisherman, he bid the sultanness prepare to tell it him next night.

The Eighteenth Night.

Dinarzade made amends this night for last night's neglect; she awaked long before day, and calling upon Scheherazade, Sister, says she, if you be not asleep, pray give us the rest of the story of the fisherman and the genie; you know the sultan desires to hear it as well as I.

I shall soon satisfy his curiosity and yours, answers the sultanness; and then, addressing herself to Schahriar, Sir, continued she, as soon as the fisherman had concluded the history of the Greek king and his physician Douban, he made the application to the genie, whom he still kept shut up in the vessel. If the Grecian king, says he, would have suffered him to live; but he rejected his most humble prayers; and it is the same with thee, O genie. Could I have prevailed with thee to grant me the favour I demanded, I should now have had pity upon thee; but since, notwithstanding the extreme obligation thou wast under to me for having set thee at liberty, thou didst persist in thy design to kill me, I am obliged in my turn to be as hard-hearted to thee.

My good friend fisherman, replies the genie, I conjure thee once more not to be guilty of so cruel a thing; consider that it is not good to avenge one's self, and that, on the other hand, it is commendable to do good for evil; do not treat me as Imama treated Ateca formerly. And what did Imama do to Ateca, replies the fisherman? Ho! says the genie, if you have a mind to know it, open the vessel; do you think that I can be in a humour to tell

stories in so strait a prison? I will tell you as many as you please when you let me out. No, says the fisherman, I will not let thee out, it is in vain to talk of it; I am just going to throw you into the bottom of the sea. Hear me one word more, cries the genie, I promise to do thee no hurt; nay, so far from that, I will show thee a way how thou mayst become exceeding rich.

The hope of delivering himself from poverty prevailed with the fisherman. I could listen to thee says he, were there any credit to be given to thy word; swear to me by the great name of God, that you will faithfully perform what you promise, and I will open the vessel; I do not believe you will dare to break such an oath.

The genie swore to him, and the fisherman immediately took off the covering of the vessel. At that very instant the smoke came out, and the genie having resumed his form as before, the first thing he did was to kick the vessel into the sea. This action frightened the fisherman: Genie, says he, what is the meaning of that; will not you keep the oath you made, just now? And must I say to you as the physician Douban said to the Grecian king, Suffer me to live, and God will prolong your days.

The genie laughed at the fisherman's fear, and answered, No, fisherman, be not afraid, I only did it to divert myself, and to see if thou wouldst be alarmed at it: But, to persuade thee that I am in earnest, take thy net and follow me. As he spoke these words, he walked before the fisherman, who, having taken up his nets, followed him, but with some distrust: They passed by the town, and came to the top of a mountain, from whence they descended into a vast plain, which brought them to a great pond that lay betwixt four hills,

When they came to the side of the pond, the genie says to the fisherman, Cast in thy nets, and take fish; the fisherman did not doubt to catch some, because he saw a great number in the pond; but he was extremely surprised when he found they were of four colours; that is to say, white, red, blue, and yellow. He threw in his nets, and brought out one of each colour; having never seen the like, he could not but admire them, and, judging that he might get a considerable sum for them, he was very joyful. Carry these fish, says the genie to him, and present them to the sultan; he will give you more money for them than ever you had in your life. You may come every day to fish in this pond, and I give thee warning not to throw in thy nets above once a day; otherwise you will repent it. Take heed, and remember my advice; if you follow it exactly, you will find your account in it. Having spoken thus, he struck his foot upon the ground, which opened, and shut again after it had swallowed up the genie.

The fisherman, being resolved to follow the genie's advice exactly, forebore casting in his nets a second time; but returned to the town very well satisfied with his fish, and making a thousand reflections upon his adventure. He went straight to the sultan's palace to present him his fish. But, sir, says Scheherazade, I perceive day, and must stop here.

Dear sister, says Dinarzade, how surprising are the last events

you have told us? I have much ado to believe that any thing you have to say can be more surprising. Sister, replies the sultanness, if the sultan, my master, will let me live till to-morrow, I am persuaded you will find the sequel of the history of the fisherman more wonderful than the beginning of it, and incomparably more diverting. Schahriar, being curious to know if the remainder of the story of the fisherman would be such as the sultanness said, put off the execution of the cruel law one day more.

The Nineteenth Night.

Towards morning, Dinarzade called the sultanness, and said, Dear sister, my pendulum tells me it will be day speedily, therefore pray continue the history of the fisherman; I am extremely impatient to know what the issue of it was. Scheherazade, having demanded leave of Schahriar, resumed her discourse as follows: Sir, I leave it to your majesty to think how much the sultan was surprised when he saw the four fishes which the fisherman presented him. He took them up one after another, and beheld them with attention; and after having admired them a long time, take these fishes, says he to his prime vizier, and carry them to the fine cook-maid that the emperor of the Greeks has sent me. I cannot imagine but they must be as good as they are fine.

The vizier carried them himself to the cook, and, delivering them into her hands, Look ye, says he, there are four fishes newly brought to the sultan, he orders you to dress them; and, having said so, he returned to the sultan his master, who ordered him to give the fisherman four hundred pieces of gold of the coin of that country, which he did accordingly.

The fisherman, who had never seen so much cash in his lifetime, could scarcely believe his own good fortune, but thought it must needs be a dream, until he found it to be real, when he provided necessaries for his family with it.

But, sir, says Scheherazade, having told you what happened to the fisherman, I must acquaint you next with what befel the sultan's cook-maid, whom we shall find in a mighty perplexity. As soon as she had gutted the fishes, she put them upon the fire in a frying-pan with oil, and when she thought them fried enough on one side, she turned them upon the other; but, O monstrous prodigy! scarcely were they turned, when the wall of the kitchen opened, and in comes a young lady of wonderful beauty and comely size. She was clad in flowered satin, after the Egyptian manner, with pendants in her ears, necklace of large pearl, and bracelets of gold, garnished with rubies, with a rod of myrtle in her hand. She came towards the frying-pan, to the great amazement of the cook-maid, who continued immovable at this sight, and, striking one of the fishes with the end of the rod, says, "Fish, fish, art thou in thy duty?" The fish having answered nothing, she repeated these words, and then the four fishes lift up their heads altogether, and said to her, "Yes, yes, if you reckon, we reckon; if you pay your debts, we pay ours; if you fly, we overcome, and are content." As soon as they had finished these words, the lady overturned the frying-pan, and entered again into the open part of the wall, which shut immediately, and became as it was before.

The cook-maid was mightily frightened at this, and, coming a little to herself, went to take up the fishes that fell upon the earth, but found them blacker than coal, and not fit to be carried to the sultan. She was grievously troubled at it, and fell a-weeping most bitterly: Alas! says she, what will become of me? If I tell the sultan what I have seen, I am sure he will not believe me, but will be mightily enraged against me.

Whilst she was thus bewailing herself, in comes the grand vizier, and asked her if the fishes were ready? She told him all that had happened, which, we may easily imagine, astonished him mightily; but, without speaking a word to the sultan, he invented an excuse that satisfied him, and sending immediately for the fisherman, bid him bring four more such fish; for a misfortune had befallen the other, that they were not fit to be carried to the sultan. The fisherman, without saying any thing of what the genie had told him, in order to excuse himself from bringing them that very day, told the vizier he had a great way to go for them, but would certainly bring them to-morrow.

Accordingly the fisherman went away by night, and, coming to the pond, threw in his nets betimes next morning, took four such fishes as the former, and brought them to the vizier at the hour appointed. The minister took them himself, carried them to the kitchen, and shutting himself up all alone with the cook-maid, she gutted them, and put them on the fire, as she had done the four others the day before; when they were fried on the one side, and she had turned them upon the other, the kitchen-wall opened, and the same lady came in with the rod in her hand, struck one of the fishes, spoke to it as before, and all four gave her the same answer. But, sir, says Scheherazade, day appears, which obliges me to break off. What I have told you is indeed singular, but if I be alive to-morrow, I will tell you other things which are yet better worth your hearing. Schahriar, conceiving that the sequel must be very curious, resolved to hear her next night.

The Twentieth Night.

Next morning the sultan prevented Dinarzade, and says to Scheherazade, Madam, I pray you make an end of the story of the fisherman; I am impatient to hear it. Upon which the sultaness continued it thus:

Sir, after the four fishes had answered the young lady, she overturned the frying-pan with her rod, and retired into the same place of the wall from whence she came out. The grand vizier being witness to what passed, This is too surprising and extraordinary, says he, to be concealed from the sultan; I will inform him of this prodigy; which he did accordingly, and gave him a faithful account of all that had happened.

The sultan, being much surprised, was mighty impatient to see this himself. To this end, he sent immediately for the fisherman, and says to him, Friend, cannot you bring me four more such fishes? The fisherman replied, If your majesty will be pleased to allow me three days time, I will do it. Having obtained this time, he went to the pond immediately, and, at the first throwing in of his net, he took four such fishes, and brought them presently to the sultan, who was the more rejoiced at it, as he

did not expect them so soon, and ordered him other four hundred pieces of gold. As soon as the sultan had the fish, he ordered them to be carried into the closet, with all that was necessary for frying them; and having shut himself up there with his vizier, that minister gutted them, put them in the pan upon the fire, and when they were fried on one side, turned them upon the other; then the wall of the closet opened; but, instead of the young lady, there came out a black, in the habit of a slave, and of a gigantic stature, with a great green baton in his hand. He advanced towards the pan, and touching one of the fishes with his baton, says to it with a terrible voice, "Fish, art thou in thy duty?" At these words, the fishes raised up their heads, and answered, "Yes, yes, we are: if you reckon, we reckon; if you pay your debts, we pay ours; if you fly, we overcome, and are content."

The fish had no sooner finished these words, than the black threw the pan into the middle of the closet, and reduced these fishes to a coal. Having done this, he retired fiercely, and entering again into the hole of the wall, it shut, and appeared just as it was before.

After what I have seen, says the sultan to the vizier, it will not be possible for me to be easy in my mind. These fish, without doubt, signify something extraordinary, in which I have a mind to be satisfied. He sent for the fisherman; and when he came, says to him, Fisherman, the fishes you have brought us make me very uneasy; where did you catch them? Sir, answers he, I fished for them in a pond situate betwixt four hills, beyond the mountain that we see from hence. Know you that pond, says the sultan to the vizier? No, sir, replies the vizier, I never so much as heard of it; and yet it is not sixty years since I hunted beyond that mountain and thereabouts. The sultan asked the fisherman, how far the pond might be from the palace? The fisherman answered, it was not above three hours journey. Upon this assurance, and there being day enough beforehand, the sultan commanded all his court to take horse, and the fisherman served them for a guide. They all ascended the mountain, and at the foot of it they saw, to their great surprise, a vast plain, that nobody had observed till then; and at last they came to the pond, which they found actually to be situate betwixt four hills, as the fisherman had said. The water of it was so transparent, that they observed all the fishes to be like those which the fisherman had brought to the palace.

The sultan staid upon the bank of the pond, and, after beholding the fishes with admiration, he demanded of his emirs and all his courtiers, if it was possible they had never seen this pond, which was within so little a way of the town. They all answered, that they had never so much as heard of it.

Since you all agree, says he, that you never heard of it, and as I am no less astonished than you are, at this novelty I am resolved not to return to my palace till I know how this pond came hither, and why all the fish in it are of four colours. Having spoken thus, he ordered his court to encamp, and immediately his pavilion, and the tents of his household, were planted upon the banks of the pond.

When night came, the sultan retired under his pavilion, and spoke to the vizier by himself thus: Vizier, my mind is very uneasy: this pond transported hither, the black that appeared to us in my closet, and the fishes that we heard speak; all this does so much whet my curiosity, that I cannot resist the impatient desire that I have to be satisfied in it. To this end, I am resolved to withdraw alone from the camp, and I order you to keep my absence secret; stay in my pavilion, and to-morrow morning, when the emirs and courtiers come to attend my levee, send them away, and tell them, that I am somewhat indisposed, and have a mind to be alone: and the following day tell them the same thing, till I return.

The grand vizier said several things to divert the sultan from his design: He represented to him the danger to which he might be exposed, and that all his labour might perhaps be in vain. But it was to no purpose; the sultan was resolved on it, and would go. He put on a suit fit for walking, and took his scimitar; and as soon as he saw that all was quiet in the camp, he goes out alone, and went over one of the hills without much difficulty; he found the descent still more easy, and, when he came to the plain, walked on till the sun rose, and then he saw before him, at a considerable distance, a great building. He rejoiced at the sight, in hopes to be informed there of what he had a mind to know. When he came near, he found it was a magnificent palace, or rather a very strong castle, of fine black polished marble, and covered with fine steel, as smooth as a looking-glass. Being mightily pleased that he had so speedily met with something worthy his curiosity, he stopped before the front of the castle, and considered it with abundance of attention.

He afterwards came up to the gate, which had two leaves, one of them open: though he might have entered when he would, yet he thought it best to knock. He knocked at first softly, "and waited for some time; but seeing nobody, and supposing they had not heard him, he knocked harder the second time; but neither seeing nor hearing anybody, he knocked again and again; but nobody appearing, it surprised him extremely; for he could not think that a castle so well in repair was without inhabitants. If there be nobody in it, says he to himself, I have nothing to fear, and if there be, I have wherewith to defend me.

At last he entered, and when he came within the porch, he cries, Is there nobody here to receive a stranger, who comes in for some refreshment as he passes by? He repeated the same two or three times; but, though he spoke very high, nobody answered.

This silence increased his astonishment; he came into a very spacious court, and looking on every side to see if he could perceive any body, he saw no living thing. But, sir, says Scheherazade, day appears, and I must stop.

Ah! sister, says Dinarzade, you break off at the very best of the story. It is true, answers the sultanness; but, sister, you see I am forced to do so. If my lord the sultan pleases, you may hear the rest to-morrow, Schahriar agreed to this, not so much to please Dinarzade as to satisfy his own curiosity, being mightily impatient to hear what adventure the prince met with in the castle.

The Twenty-first Night.

Dinarzade, to make amends for her neglect the night before, never laid eye together, and, when she thought it was time, awaked the sultanness, saying to her, My dear sister, pray give us an account of what happened in the fine castle where you left us yesterday.

Scheherazade forthwith resumed her story, and, addressing herself to Schahriar, says, Sir, the sultan, perceiving nobody in the court, entered the great halls, which were hung with silk tapestry; the alcoves and sofas were covered with stuffs of Mecca, and the porches with the richest stuffs of the Indies, mixed with gold and silver. He came afterwards into an admirable saloon, in the middle of which there was a great fountain, with a lion of massy gold at each corner: Water issued at the mouths of the four lions, and this water, as it fell, formed diamonds and pearls, that very well answered a jet of water, which, springing from the middle of the fountain, rose as high almost as the bottom of a cupola painted after the Arabian manner.

The castle on three sides was encompassed by a garden, with flower-pots, water-works, groves, and a thousand other fine things concurring to embellish it; and what completed the beauty of the place, was an infinite number of birds, which filled the air with their harmonious notes, and always staid there; nets being spread over the trees, and fastened to the palace, to keep them in. The sultan walked a long time from apartment to apartment, where he found every thing very grand and magnificent. Being tired with walking, he sat down in an open closet, which had a view over the garden, and there reflecting upon what he had already seen, and did then see, all of a sudden he heard the voice of one complaining, accompanied with lamentable cries. He listened with attention, and heard distinctly these sad words: "O fortune! thou who wouldst not suffer me longer to enjoy a happy lot, and hast made me the most unfortunate man in the world, forbear to persecute me, and by a speedy death, put an end to my sorrows! Alas! is it possible that I am still alive after so many torments as I have suffered?"

The sultan, being affected with those pitiful complaints, rose up, and made towards the place where he heard the voice; and when he came to the gate of a great hall, he opened it, and saw a handsome young man, richly habited, set upon a throne raised a little above the ground. Melancholy was painted in his looks, The sultan drew near, and saluted him: The young man returned him his salute by a low bow with his head; but not being able to rise up, he says to the sultan, My lord, I am very well satisfied that you deserve I should rise to receive you, and do you all possible honour; but I am hindered from doing so by a very sad reason, and therefore hope you will not take it ill. My lord, replies the sultan, I am very much obliged to you for having so good an opinion of me: As to the reason of your not rising, whatever your apology be, I heartily accept of it. Being drawn hither by your complaints, and affected by your grief, I came to offer you my help; would to God that it lay in my power to ease you of your trouble; I would do my utmost to effect it. I flatter myself that you would willingly tell me the history of your misfortunes; but pray tell me first the meaning of the pond near the palace, where

the fishes are of four colours? what this castle is? how you came to be here? and why you are alone?

Instead of answering these questions, the young man began to weep bitterly. "Oh, how inconstant is fortune!" cried he: "She takes pleasure to pull down those men she hath raised up. Where are they who enjoy quietly the happiness which they hold of her, and whose day is always clear and serene?"

The sultan, moved with compassion to see him in that condition, prayed him forthwith to tell him the cause of his excessive grief. Alas! my lord, replies the young man, how is it possible but I should grieve? And why should not my eyes be inexhaustible fountains of tears? At these words, lifting up his gown, he showed the sultan that he was a man only from his head to the girdle, and that the other half of his body was black marble. Here Scheherazade broke off, and told the sultan that day appeared.

Schahriar was so much charmed with the story, and became so much in love with Scheherazade, that he resolved to let her live a month. He got up, however, as usual, without acquainting her with his resolution.

The Twenty-second Night.

Dinarzade was so impatient to hear out the story, that she called her sister next morning sooner than usual, and says to her, Sister, pray continue the wonderful story you began, but could not make an end of yesterday morning. I agree to it, replied the sultanness; hearken then.

You may easily imagine, continues she, that the sultan was strangely surprised when he saw the deplorable condition of the young man. That which you show me, says he, as it fills me with horror, whets my curiosity so, that I am impatient to hear your history, which no doubt is very strange, and I am persuaded that the pond and the fishes make some part of it; therefore I conjure you to tell it me. You will find some comfort in it, since it is certain that unfortunate people find some sort of ease in telling their misfortunes. I will not refuse you that satisfaction, replies the young man, though I cannot do it without renewing my grief. But I give you notice beforehand, to prepare your ears, your mind, and even your eyes, for things that surpass all that the most extraordinary imagination can conceive.

THE HISTORY OF THE YOUNG KING OF THE BLACK ISLES.

You must know, my lord, continued he, that my father, who was called Mahmoud, was king of this country. This is the kingdom of the Black Isles, which takes its name from the four little neighbouring mountains; for those mountains were formerly isles: The capital where the king my father had his residence, was where

that pond you now see is. The sequel of my history will inform you of all those changes.

The king my father died when he was seventy years of age: I had no sooner succeeded him, but I married; and the lady I chose to share the royal dignity with me was my cousin. I had all the reason imaginable to be satisfied in her love to me; and, for my part, I had so much tenderness for her, that nothing was comparable to the good understanding betwixt us, which lasted five years, at the end of which time I perceived the queen my cousin had no more delight in me.

One day, while she was at bath, I found myself sleepy after dinner, and lay down upon a sofa; two of her ladies, who were then in my chamber, came and sat down, one at my head, and the other at my feet, with fans in their hands to moderate the heat, and to hinder the flies from troubling me in my sleep. They thought I was fast, and spoke very low; but I only shut my eyes, and heard every word they said.

One of them says to the other, Is not the queen much in the wrong not to love such an amiable prince as this? Ay, certainly, replies the other; for my part I do not understand it, and I know not how she goes out every night, and leaves him alone: is it possible that he does not perceive it? Alas! says the first, how would you have him to perceive it? She mixes every evening in his drink the juice of a certain herb, which makes him sleep so sound all night, that she has time to go where she pleases, and as day begins to appear, she comes and lies down by him again, and wakes him by the smell of something she puts under his nose.

You may guess, my lord, how much I was surprised at this discourse, and with what sentiments it inspired me; yet, whatever emotions it made within me, I had command enough over myself to dissemble it, and feigned myself to awake, without having heard one word of it.

The queen returned from the bath; we supped together, and, before we went to bed, she presented me with a cup of water such as I was accustomed to drink; but, instead of putting it to my mouth, I went to a window that stood open, and threw out the water so privately that she did not perceive it, and put the cup again into her hands, to persuade her I had drunk it.

We went to bed together, and soon after, believing that I was asleep, though I was not, she got up with so little precaution, that she said, so loud as I could hear distinctly, Sleep, and may you never awake again. She dressed herself speedily, and went out of the chamber. As Scheherazade spoke these words, she saw day appear, and stopped.

Dinarzade had heard, her sister with a great deal of pleasure; and Shahriar thought the history of the king of the Black Isles so worthy of his curiosity, that he rose up full of impatience for the rest of it.

The Twenty-third Night.

An hour before day, Dinarzade, being awake, failed not to call

upon the sultaness, and said, Pray, dear sister, go on with the history of the young king of the Black Islands. Scheherazade, calling to mind where she left off, resumed the story thus:

As soon as the queen my wife went out, continues the king of the Black Islands, I got up, dressed me in haste, took my scimitar, and followed her so quick that I soon heard the sound of her feet before me, and then walked softly after her, for fear of being heard. She passed through several gates, which opened upon her pronouncing some magical words; and the last she opened was that of the garden, which she entered: I stopped at the gate, that she might not perceive me, As she crossed a plot, and looking after her as far as I could in the night, I perceived that she entered a little wood, whose walks were guarded by thick palisades. I went thither by another way, and slipping behind the palisades of a long walk, I saw her walking there with a man.

I gave good heed to their discourse, and heard her say thus; I do not deserve, says the queen to her gallant, to be upbraided by you for want of diligence; you know very well what hinders me; but if all the marks of love that I have already given you be not enough, I am ready to give you greater marks of it: You need but command me; you know my power. I will, if you desire it, before sun-rising, change this great city, and this fine palace, into frightful ruins, which shall be inhabited by nothing but wolves, owls, and ravens. Would you have me to transport all the stones of those walls, so solidly built, beyond mount Caucasus, and out of the bounds of the habitable world? Speak but the word, and all those places shall be changed.

As the queen finished these words, her gallant and she came to the end of the walk, turned to enter another, and passed before me. I had already drawn my scimitar, and her gallant being next me, I struck him in the neck, and made him fall to the ground. I thought I had killed him, and therefore retired speedily without making myself known to the queen, whom I had a mind to spare, because she was my kinswoman.

In the mean time, the blow I had given her gallant was mortal, but she preserved his life by the force of her enchantments, in such a manner, however, that he could not be said to be either dead or alive. As I crossed the garden to return to the palace, I heard the queen cry out lamentably, and, judging by that how much she was grieved, I was pleased that I had spared her life.

When I returned to her apartment, I went to bed, and being satisfied with having punished the villain that did me the injury, I went to sleep; and when I awaked next morning, found the queen lying by me. Scheherazade was obliged to stop here, because she saw day.

O Heaven! sister, says Dinarzade, how it troubles me that you can say no more! Sister, replies the sultaness, you ought to have awaked me sooner; it is your fault. I will make amends next night, replies Dinarzade; for I doubt not but the sultan will be as willing to hear out the story as I am; and I hope he will be so good as to let you live one day more.

The Twenty-fourth Night.

Dinarzade was actually as good as her word; she called the sultanness very early, saying, Dear sister, if you be not asleep, pray make an end of the agreeable history of the king of the Black Isles; I am ready to die with impatience to know how he came to be changed into marble. You shall hear it, replies Scheherazade, if the sultan will give me leave.

I found the queen lying by me, then, says the king of the Black Islands; I cannot tell you whether she slept or not; but I got up without making any noise, and went to my closet, where I made an end of dressing myself. I afterwards went and held my council, and, at my return, the queen was clad in mourning, her hair hanging about her eyes, and part of it pulled off. She presented herself before me, and said, Sir, I come to beg your majesty not to be surprised to see me in this condition; three afflicting pieces of news that I have just now received all at once are the cause of my heavy grief, of which the tokens you see are but very faint resemblances. Alas! what is that news, madam, said I? The death of the queen, my dear mother, said she; that of the king my father killed in battle; and that of one of my brothers, who is fallen headlong into it.

I was not ill pleased that she made use of this pretext to hide the true cause of her grief, and I thought she had not suspected me to have killed her gallant. Madam, said I, I am so far from blaming your grief, that I assure you I am willing to bear what share of it is proper for me. I should very much wonder if you were insensible of so great a loss. Mourn on, your tears are so many proofs of your good-nature; but I hope, however, that time and reason will moderate your grief.

She retired into her apartment, where, giving herself wholly up to sorrow, she spent a whole year in mourning and afflicting herself. At the end of that time, she begged leave of me to build a burying-place for herself within the bounds of the palace, where she would continue, she told me, to the end of her days. I agreed to it, and she built a stately palace, with a cupola, that may be seen here, and she called it the Palace of Tears. When it was finished, she caused her gallant to be brought thither from the place that she made him to be carried the same night that I wounded him; she had hindered his dying by the drink she gave him, and carried to him herself every day after he came to the Palace of Tears.

Yet, with all her enchantments, she could not cure the wretch; he was not only unable to walk, and to help himself, but had also lost the use of his speech, and gave no sign of life but only by his looks. Though the queen had no other consolation but to see him, and to say to him all that her foolish passion could inspire her with, yet every day she made him two long visits; I was very well informed of all this, but pretended to know nothing of it.

One day I went out of curiosity to the Palace of Tears to see how the princess employed herself, and, going to a place where she could not see me, I heard her speak thus to her gallant: I am afflicted to the highest degree to see you in this condition; I am as sensible as you are yourself of the tormenting grief you endure; but, dear soul, I always speak to you, and you do not

answer me. How long will you be silent? speak only one word:
Alas! the sweetest moments of my life are those I spend here in
partaking of your grief. I cannot live at a distance from you,
and would prefer the pleasure of always seeing you to the empire
of the universe.

At these words, which were several times interrupted by her sighs
and sobs, I lost all patience; and, discovering myself, came up
to her, and said, Madam, you have mourned enough, it is time to
give over this sorrow which dishonours us both; you have too much
forgotten what you owe to me and to yourself. Sir, says she, if
you have any kindness or complaisance left for me, I beseech you
to put no force upon me; allow me to give myself up to mortal
grief; it is impossible for time to lessen it.

When I saw that my discourse, instead of bringing her to her
duty, served only to increase her rage, I gave over and retired.
She continued every day to visit her gallant, and for two long
years gave herself up to excessive grief.

I went a second time to the Palace of Tears while she was there;
I hid myself again, and heard her speak thus to her gallant: It
is now three years since you spoke one word to me; you return no
answer to the marks of love I give you by my discourse and
groans. Is it from want of sense, or out of contempt? O tomb!
have you abated that excessive love he had for me? Have you shut
those eyes that showed me so much love, and were all my joy? No,
no, I believe nothing of it. Tell me rather by what miracle you
became intrusted with the rarest treasure that ever was in the
world?

I must confess, my lord, I was enraged at these words; for, in
short, this gallant so much doted upon, this adored mortal, was
not such a one as you would imagine him to have been; he was a
black Indian, a native of that country. I say, I was so enraged
at this discourse, that I discovered myself all of a sudden, and
addressing the tomb in my turn, O tomb! cried I, why do you not
swallow up that monster in nature, or rather why do you not
swallow up the gallant and his mistress?

I had scarcely finished these words, when the queen, who sat by
the black, rose up like a fury. Ah, cruel man! says she, thou art
the cause of my grief; do not you think but I know it. I have
dissembled it but too long; it is thy barbarous hand which hath
brought the object of my love to this lamentable condition; and
you are so hard-hearted as to come and insult a despairing lover.
Yes, said I, in a rage, it is I who chastized that monster
according to his desert; I ought to have treated thee in the same
manner; I repent now that I did not do it; thou hast abused my
goodness too long. As I spoke these words, I drew out my
scimitar, and lifted up my hand to punish her; but she,
steadfastly beholding me, said, with a jeering smile, Moderate
thy anger. At the same time she pronounced words I did not
understand, and afterwards added, By virtue of my enchantments, I
command thee immediately to become half marble and half man.
Immediately, my lord, I became such as you see me, already a dead
man among the living, and a living man among the dead. Here
Scheherazade, perceiving day, broke off her story.

Upon which Dinarzade says, Dear sister, I am exceedingly obligated to the sultan, for it is to his goodness I owe the extraordinary pleasure I have in your stories. My sister, replies the sultanness, if the sultan will be so good as to suffer me to live till to-morrow, I shall tell you a thing that will afford as much satisfaction as any thing you have yet heard. Though Schahriar had not resolved to defer the death of Scheherazade a month longer, he could not have ordered her to be put to death that day.

The Twenty-fifth Night.

Towards the end of the night, Dinarzade cried, Sister, if I do not trespass too much upon your complaisance, I would pray you to finish the history of the king of the Black Islands. Scheherazade, having awaked upon her sister's call, prepared to give the satisfaction she required, and began thus:

The king, half marble half man, continued his history to the sultan thus: After this cruel magician, unworthy of the name of a queen, had metamorphosed me thus, and brought me into this hall by another enchantment, she destroyed my capital, which was very flourishing and full of people; she abolished the houses, the public places, and markets, and made a pond and desert field of it, which you may have seen; the fishes of four colours in the pond are the four sorts of people, of different religions, that inhabited the place. The white are the Mussulmen; the red, the Persians, who worshipped the fire; the blue, the Christians; and the yellow, the Jews. The four little hills were the four islands that gave name to this kingdom. I learned all this from the magician, who, to add to my affliction, told me with her own mouth these effects of her rage. But this is not all; her revenge was not satisfied with the destruction of my dominions, and the metamorphosis of my person; she comes every day, and gives me, over my naked shoulders, an hundred blows with ox pizzles, which makes me all over blood; and, when she has done so, covers me with a coarse stuff of goats hair, and throws over it this robe of brocade that you see, not to do me honour, but to mock me.

At this part of the discourse, the king could not withhold his tears; and the sultan's heart was so pierced with the relation, that he could not speak one word to comfort him. A little time after, the young king, lifting up his eyes to heaven, cried out, Mighty Creator of all things, I submit myself to your judgments, and to the decrees of your providence; I endure my calamities with patience, since it is your will it should be so; but I hope your infinite goodness will reward me for it.

The sultan, being much moved by the recital of so strange a story, and animated to avenge this unfortunate prince, says to him, Tell me whither this perfidious magician retires, and where her unworthy gallant may be, who is buried before his death? My lord, replies the prince, her gallant, as I have already told you, is in the Palace of Tears, in a tomb in form of a dome, and that palace joins to this castle on the side of the gate. As to the magician, I cannot precisely tell whither she retires; but every day at sun-rising she goes to see her gallant, after having executed her bloody vengeance upon me, as I have told you: and you see I am not in a condition to defend myself against so great

cruelty. She carries him the drink with which she has hitherto prevented his dying, and always complains of his never speaking to her since he was wounded.

Oh, unfortunate prince, says the sultan, you can never enough be bewailed! Nobody can be more sensibly touched with your condition than I am; never did such an extraordinary misfortune befall any man; and those who write your history will have the advantage to relate a passage that surpasses all that has ever yet been recorded. There is nothing wanting but one thing, the revenge which is due to you, and I will omit nothing that can be done to procure it.

While the sultan discoursed upon this subject with the young prince, he told him who he was, and for what end he entered the castle, and thought on a plan of revenge, which he communicated to him. They agreed upon the measures they were to take for effecting their design, but deferred the execution of it till the next day. In the mean time, the night being far spent, the sultan took some rest, but the poor young prince passed the night without sleep as usual, having never slept since he was enchanted; but he conceived some hopes of being speedily delivered from his misery.

Next morning the sultan got up before day, and, in order to execute his design, he hid in a corner his upper garment, that would have been cumbersome to him, and went to the Palace of Tears. He found it illuminated with an infinite number of flambeaux of white wax, and a delicious scent issued from several boxes of fine gold, of admirable workmanship, all ranged in excellent order. As soon as he saw the bed where the black lay, he drew his scimitar, killed the wretch without resistance, dragged his corpse into the court of the castle, and threw it into a well. After this he went and lay down in the black's bed, took his scimitar with him under the counterpane, and lay there to execute what he had designed.

The magician arrived in a little time; she first went into the chamber where her husband, the king of the Black Islands, was; stripped him, and beat him with bull pizles in a most barbarous manner. The poor prince filled the palace with his lamentations to no purpose; and conjured her, in the most affecting manner that could be, to take pity on him; but the cruel woman would not give over till she had given him an hundred blows. You had no compassion on my lover, said she, and you are to expect none from me. Scheherazade, perceiving day, stopped, and could go no further.

O heaven! says Dinarzade, sister, this was a barbarous enchantress indeed. But must we stop here? Will you not tell us whether she received the chastisement she deserved? My dear sister, says the sultanness, I desire nothing more than to acquaint you with it to-morrow; but you know that depends on the sultan's pleasure. After what Schahriar had heard, he was far from any design to put Scheherazade to death; on the contrary, says he to himself, I will not take away her life till she has finished this surprising story, though it should last for two months. It shall always be in my power to keep the oath I have made.

The Twenty-sixth Night.

As soon as Dinarzade thought it was time to call the sultanness, she says to her, How much should I be obliged to you, dear sister, if you would tell us what passed in the Palace of Tears. Schahriar having signified that he was as curious to know it as Dinarzade, the sultanness resumed the story of the young enchanted prince as follows:

Sir, after the enchantress had given the king her husband an hundred blows with bull pizzles, she put on again his covering of goat hair, and his brocade gown over all; she went afterwards to the Palace of Tears, and, as she entered the same, she renewed her tears and lamentations; then approaching the bed, where she thought her gallant was, What cruelty, cries she, was it to disturb the contentment of so tender and passionate a lover as I am! O thou who reproachest me that I am too inhuman, when I make thee feel the effects of my resentment! cruel prince! does not thy barbarity surpass my vengeance? Ah, traitor! in attempting the life of the object whom I adore, hast thou not robbed me of mine? Alas! says she, addressing herself to the sultan, while she thought she spoke to the black, my soul, my life, will you always be silent? Are you resolved to let me die, without giving me so much comfort as to tell me that you love me? My soul! speak one word to me at least, I conjure you.

The sultan, making as if he had awakened out of a deep sleep, and counterfeiting the language of the blacks, answers the queen with a grave tone, 'There is no force nor power but in God alone, who is almighty.' At these words, the enchantress, who did not expect them, gave a great shout, to signify her excessive joy. My dear lord, says she, do not I deceive myself? is it certain that I hear you, and that you speak to me? Unhappy wretch, said the sultan, art thou worthy that I should answer thy discourse? Alas! replies the queen, why do you reproach me thus? The cries, replied he, the groans and tears of thy husband, whom thou treatest every day with so much indignity and barbarity, hinder me to sleep night and day. I should have been cured long ago, and have recovered the use of my speech, hadst thou disenchanting him. This is the cause of my silence, which you complain of. Very well, says the enchantress, to pacify you, I am ready to do what you will command me; would you that I restore him as he was? Yes, replies the sultan, make haste to set him at liberty, that I be no more disturbed with his cries.

The enchantress went immediately out of the Palace of Tears; she took a cup of water, and pronounced words over it, which caused it to boil as if it had been on the fire. She went afterwards to the hall to the young king her husband, and threw the water upon him, saying, 'If the Creator of all things did form thee so as thou art at present, or if he be angry with thee, do not change; but if thou art in that condition merely by virtue of my enchantments, resume thy natural shape, and become what thou wast before.' She had scarcely spoken these words, when the prince, finding himself restored to his former condition, rose up freely with all imaginable joy, and returned thanks to God. The enchantress then said to him, Get thee gone from this castle, and never return here on pain of death. The young king, yielding to

necessity, went away from the enchantress without replying a word, and retired to a remote place, where he immediately expected the success of the design which the sultan had begun so happily. Meanwhile the enchantress returned to the Palace of Tears, and, supposing that she still spoke to the black, says, Dear lover, I have done what you ordered; let nothing now hinder you to give me that satisfaction of which I have been deprived so long.

The sultan continued to counterfeit the language of the blacks. That which you have just now done, said he, signifies nothing to my cure; you have only eased me of part of my disease; you must cut it up by the roots. My lovely black, replies she, what do you mean by the roots? Unfortunate woman, replies the sultan, do you not understand that I mean the town and its inhabitants, and the four islands, which thou hast destroyed by thy enchantments?

The fishes, every night at midnight, raise their heads out of the pond, and cry for vengeance against thee and me. This is the true cause of the delay of my cure. Go speedily, restore things as they were, and at thy return I will give thee my hand, and thou shalt help me to rise.

The enchantress, filled with hopes from these words, cried out in a transport of joy, My heart, my soul, you shall soon be restored to your health; for I will immediately do what you command me. Accordingly she went that moment, and when she came to the brink of the pond, she took a little water in her hand, and sprinkling it--Here Scheherazade saw day, and stopped.

Dinarzade says to the sultanness, Sister, I am much rejoiced to hear that the young king of the Black Islands was disenchanting, and I already consider the town and the inhabitants as restored to their former state; but I long to know what will become of the enchantress. Have a little patience, replies the sultanness, and you shall have the satisfaction you desire to-morrow, if the sultan, my lord, will consent to it. Schahriar, having resolved on it already, as was said before, rose up, and went about his business.

The Twenty-seventh Night.

At the usual hour Dinarzade called upon the sultanness thus: Dear sister, pray tell us what was the fate of the magician queen, as you promised us; upon which Scheherazade went on thus: The enchantress had no sooner sprinkled the water, and pronounced some words over the fishes and the pond, than the city was restored that very minute. The fishes became men, women, and children; Mahometans, Christians, Persians, or Jews, freemen or slaves, as they were before; every one having recovered their natural form. The houses and shops were immediately filled with their inhabitants, who found all things as they were before the enchantment. The sultan's numerous retinue, who found themselves encamped in the largest square, were astonished to see themselves, in an instant, in the middle of a large, fine, and well-peopled city.

To return to the enchantress: As soon as she had made this wonderful change, she returned with all diligence to the Palace

of Tears, that she might reap the fruits of it. My dear lord, cries she, as she entered, I come to rejoice with you for the return of your health; I have done all that you required of me; then pray rise, and give me your hand. Come near, says the sultan, still counterfeiting the language of the blacks. She did so. You are not near enough, replies he; come nearer. She obeyed. Then he rose up, and seized her by the arm so suddenly, that she had not time to know who it was, and with a blow of his scimitar cut her in two, so that the one half fell one way, and the other another. This being done, he left the carcase upon the place, and, going out of the Palace of Tears, he went to seek the young king of the Black Isles, who waited for him with a great deal of impatience; and when he found him, Prince, says he, embracing him, rejoice, you have nothing to fear now; your cruel enemy is dead.

The young prince returned thanks to the sultan in such a manner as showed that he was thoroughly sensible of the kindness that he had done him, and, in acknowledgment, wished him a long life and all happiness. You may henceforward, says the sultan, dwell peaceably in your capital, unless you will go to mine, which is so near, where you shall be very welcome, and have as much honour and respect as if you were at home. Potent monarch, to whom I am so much indebted, replies the king, you think then that you are very near your capital. Yes, says the sultan, I know it, it is not above four or five hours journey. It will take you a whole years journey, says the prince; I do believe, indeed, that you came hither from your capital in the time you spoke of, because mine was enchanted; but, since the enchantment is taken off, things are changed: However, this shall not hinder me to follow you, were it to the utmost corner of the earth. You are my deliverer, and that I may give you proofs of my acknowledging this during my whole life, I am willing to accompany you, and to leave my kingdom without regret.

The sultan was exceedingly surprised to understand that he was so far from his dominions, and could not imagine how it could be. But the young king of the Black Islands convinced him so plainly, that he could no more doubt of it. Then the sultan replied, it is no matter; the trouble that I shall have to return to my own country is sufficiently recompensed by the satisfaction I have had to oblige you, and by acquiring you for a son; for since you will do me the honour to attend me, and that I have no child, I look upon you as one; and from this moment I appoint you my heir and successor.

This discourse between the sultan and the king of the Black Islands concluded with the most affectionate embraces; after which the young prince was wholly taken up in making preparations for his journey, which were finished in three weeks time, to the regret of his court and subjects, who agreed to receive at his hands one of his nearest kindred for king.

At last the sultan and the young prince began their journey with an hundred camels laden with inestimable riches from the treasury of the young king, followed by fifty handsome gentlemen on horseback, perfectly well mounted and dressed. They had a very happy journey; and when the sultan, who had sent courtiers to give advice of his delay, and of the adventure which had

occasioned it, came near his capital, the principal officers he had left there came to receive him, and to assure him that his long absence had occasioned no alteration in his empire. The inhabitants also came out in great crowds, receiving him with, mighty acclamations, and made public rejoicings for several days,

Next day after his arrival, the sultan gave all his courtiers a very ample account of all things which, contrary to his expectation, had detained him so long. He acquainted them with his having adopted the king of the four Black Islands, who was willing to leave a great kingdom to accompany and live with him; and in short, as an acknowledgment of their loyalty, he rewarded each of them according to their rank.

As for the fisherman, as he was the first cause of the deliverance of the young prince, the sultan gave him a plentiful estate, which made him and his family happy the rest of their days.

Here Scheherazade made an end of the story of the fisherman and the genie. Dinarzade signified that she had taken a great deal of pleasure in it; and Schahriar having said the same thing, the sultanness told that she knew another which was much finer; and if the sultan would give her leave, she would tell it them next morning, for day began to appear. Schahriar, bethinking himself that he had granted the sultanness a month's reprieve, and being curious, moreover, to know if this new story would be as agreeable as she promised, got up with a design to hear it next morning.

[Advertisement. The readers of the Tales were tired, in the former editions, with the interruption Dinarzade gave them: This defect is now remedied; and they will meet with no more interruptions at the end of every night. It is sufficient to know the design of the Arabian author who first made this collection; and for this purpose we retained his method in the preceding nights.

There are of these Arabian Tales where neither Scheherazade, Sultan Schahriar, Dinarzade, or any distinction by nights, is mentioned; which shows that all the Arabians have not approved the method which this author has used, and that a great number of them have been fatigued with these repetitions. This, therefore, being reformed in the following translation, the reader must be acquainted that Scheherazade goes on always without being interrupted.]

THE STORY OF THE THREE CALENDERS, SONS OF KINGS; AND OF THE FIVE LADIES OF BAGDAD.

In the reign of the caliph Haroun Alraschid, there was at Bagdad, the place of their residence, a porter, who, notwithstanding his mean and laborous business, was a fellow of wit and good-humour.

One morning, as he was at a place where he usually plied, with a great basket, waiting for employment, a young handsome lady, covered with a great muslin veil, came to him, and said with a pleasant air, Hark ye, porter, take your basket, and follow me. The porter, charmed with those few words pronounced in so agreeable a manner, took his basket immediately, set it on his head, and followed the lady, saying, "O happy day, a day of good luck!"

The lady stopped presently before a gate that was shut, and knocked: a Christian, with a venerable long white beard, opened the gate, and she put money into his hand, without speaking one word; but the Christian, who knew what she wanted, went in, and in a little time after brought a large jug of excellent wine. Take this jug, says the lady to the porter, and put it in your basket. This being done, she commanded him to follow her; and as she went on, the porter says still, "O happy day! this is a day of agreeable surprise and joy!"

The lady stopped at a fruit-shop, where she bought several sorts of apples, apricots, peaches, quinces, lemons, citrons, oranges, myrtles, sweet basil, lilies, jessamine, and some other sorts of flowers and plants that smell well; she bid the porter put them all into his basket, and follow her. As she went by a butcher's stall, she made him weigh her twenty-five pounds of his best meat, which she ordered the porter to put also in his basket.

At another shop, she took capers, cucumbers, and other herbs preserved in vinegar; at another she bought pistachios, walnuts, small nuts, almonds, kernels of pine-apples, and other fruits; and of another she bought all sorts of confections. When the porter had put all these things into his basket, and perceiving, that it grew full, My good lady, says he, you ought to have given me notice that you had so much provision to carry, and then I would have got a horse, or rather a camel, to have carried them; for if you buy ever so little more, I shall not be able to carry it. The lady laughed at the fellow's pleasant humour, and ordered him still to follow her.

Then she went to a druggist, where she furnished herself with all manner of sweet-scented waters, cloves, musk, pepper, ginger, and a great piece of ambergris, and several other Indian spices; this quite filled the porter's basket, and she ordered him to follow her. They walked till they came to a magnificent house, whose front was adorned with fine columns, and which had a gate of ivory: there they stopped, and the lady knocked softly.

While the young lady and the porter staid for the opening of the gate, the porter had a thousand thoughts: he wondered that such a fine lady should come abroad to buy provisions; he concluded she could not be a slave, her air being too noble for that, and therefore he thought she must needs be a woman of quality. Just as he was about to ask her some questions upon that head, another lady came to open the gate, and appeared so beautiful to him, that he was perfectly surprised, or rather so much struck with her charms, that he was like to let the basket fall, for he had never seen any beauty that came near her.

The lady, who brought the porter with her, perceiving his

disorder, and the occasion of it, diverted herself with it, and took so much pleasure to examine his looks, that she forgot the gate was opened. Upon this, the beautiful lady says to her, Pray sister, come in, what do you stay for? Do you not see this poor man so heavily loaded, that he is scarcely able to stand under it?

When she entered with the porter, the lady who opened the gate shut it, and all three, after having gone through a very fine porch, came into a very spacious court encompassed with an open gallery, which had a communication with several apartments on a floor, and was extremely magnificent. There was at the further end of the court a sofa richly adorned, with a throne of amber in the middle of it, supported by four columns of ebony, enriched with diamonds and pearls of extraordinary size, and covered with satin embroidered with Indian gold, of admirable workmanship. In the middle of the court there was a great fountain faced with white marble, and full of clear water, which fell into it abundantly out of the mouth of a lion of brass.

The porter, though very heavily loaded, could not but admire the magnificence of the house, and the excellent order that every thing was placed in; but that which particularly captivated his attention was a third lady, who seemed to be a greater beauty than the second, and was set upon the throne just now mentioned: she came down from it as soon as she saw the two former ladies, and advanced towards them: He judged, by the respect which the others showed her, that she was the chief, in which he was not mistaken. This lady was called Zobeide, she who opened the gate was called Safie, and Amine was the name of her who went out to buy the provisions.

Zobeide says to the two ladies, when she came to them, Sisters, do not you see that this honest man is like to sink under his burden? why do not you ease him of it? Then Amine and Safie took the basket, the one before and the other behind; Zobeide also lent her hand, mid all three set it on the ground, then emptied it; and when they had done, the beautiful Amine took out money, and paid the porter liberally.

The porter, very well satisfied with the money he had received, was to have taken up his basket and be gone; but he could not tell how to think on it. Do what he could, he found himself stopped by the pleasure of seeing three such beauties, who appeared to him equally charming; for Amine, having now laid aside her veil, was as handsome as either of them. That which surprised him most was, that he saw never a man about the house; yet most of the provisions he brought in, as dry fruits, and several sorts of cakes and confections, were fit chiefly for those who could drink and make merry.

Zobeide thought at first that the porter staid only to take his breath; but perceiving that he staid too long, What do you wait for, says she, are you not well enough paid? And turning to Amine, says, Sister, give him something more, that he may depart satisfied. Madam, replies the porter, it is not that which stays me. I am over and above paid; I am sensible that I am unmannerly to stay longer than I ought, but, I hope you will be so good as to pardon me, if I tell you that I am astonished to see that there is no man with three ladies of such extraordinary beauty;

and you know that a company of women without men is as melancholy a thing as a company of men without women. To this he added several very pleasing things to prove what he said, and did not forget the Bagdad proverb, 'That one is never well at a table, unless there be four in company. And so concluded, that as there were but three, they had need of a fourth.'

The ladies fell a laughing at the porter's discourse, after which Zobeide says to him, very gravely, Friend, you are a little too bold; and though you do not deserve that I should enter into particulars with you, yet I am willing to tell you we are three sisters, who do our business so secretly that nobody knows any thing of it. We have too great reason to be cautious of acquainting indiscreet persons with it; and a good author that we have read, says, 'Keep your secret, and do not reveal it to any body.' He that reveals it is no longer master of it. If your own breast cannot keep your secret, how do you think that another person will keep it?

My ladies, replies the porter, by your very air I judged at first you were persons of extraordinary merit, and I conceive that I am not mistaken; though fortune has not given me wealth enough to raise me above my mean profession, yet I have not failed to cultivate my mind as much as I could by reading books of science and history: And allow me, if you please, to tell you, that I have also read in another author a maxim which I have always happily practised: 'We do not conceal our secrets, says he, but from such persons as are known to all the world to want discretion, and would abuse the confidence we put in them; but we make no scruple to discover them to prudent persons, because we know they can keep them.' A secret with me is as sure as if it were in a closet whose key is lost, and the door sealed up.

Zobeide, perceiving that the porter did not want sense, but conceiving that he had a mind to have a share in their treat, replies to him, smiling, You know that we are about to have a treat, and you know also that we have been at a considerable expense, and it is not just that you should have a share of it without contributing towards it. The beautiful Safie seconded her sister, and says to the porter, Friend, have you never heard that which is commonly said, "If you bring any thing with you, you shall be welcome; but if you bring nothing, you must get you gone with nothing?"

The porter, notwithstanding his rhetoric, must, in all probability, have retired in confusion, if Amine had not taken his part, and said to Zobeide and Safie, My dear sisters, I conjure you to let him stay with us; I need not tell you that he will divert us, you see well enough that he is capable of that: I must needs tell you, that unless he had been very willing, as well as nimble, and hardy enough to follow me, I could not have done so much business in so little time; besides, should I repeat to you all the obliging expressions he made to me by the way, you would not be surprised at my protecting him.

At these words of Amine, the porter was so much transported with joy, that he fell on his knees, kissed the ground at the feet of that charming person, and, raising himself up, says, Most beautiful lady, you began my good fortune to-day, and now you

complete it by this generous action; I cannot enough testify my acknowledgment of it. As to what remains, my ladies, says he, addressing himself to all the three sisters, since you do me so great honour, do not think that I will abuse it, or look upon myself as a person who deserves it. No, I shall always look upon myself as one of your most humble slaves. When he had spoken these words, he would have returned the money he had received; but the grave Zobeide ordered him to keep it. That which we have once given, says she, to reward those who have served us, we never take again.

Zobeide would not take back the money from the porter, but said, My friend, in consenting that you stay with us, I must forewarn you, that it is not only on condition that you keep secret what we have required of you, but also that you observe exactly the rules of good manners and civility. In the mean time the charming Amine put off the apparel she went abroad with, put on her night-gown, that she might be more easy, and covered the table, which she furnished with several sorts of meat, and upon a sideboard she set bottles of wine and cups of gold. Soon after the ladies took their places, and made the porter sit down by them, who was overjoyed to see himself at the table with three such admirable beauties. After they had ate a little, Amine, who sat next the sideboard, took up a bottle and cup, filled out wine, and drank first herself, according to the custom of the Arabians; then she filled the cup to her sisters, who drank in course as they sat; and at last she filled it the fourth time to the porter, who, as he received it, kissed Amine's hand, and, before he drank, sung a song to this purpose: That as the wind brings along with it the sweet scents of the perfumed places through which it passes, so the wine he was going to drink, coming from her fair hands, received a more exquisite taste than what it had of its own nature. This song pleased the ladies so much, that each of them sung another in their turn. In short, they were extraordinary merry all the time of dinner, which lasted a long while, and nothing was wanting that could make it agreeable. The day being almost spent, Safie spoke in the name of the three ladies, and says to the porter, Arise, and be gone; it is time for you to depart. But the porter, not willing to leave so good company, cried, Alas! ladies, whither do you command me to go in the condition I am in? I am quite beside myself by what I have seen since I came hither, and having also drunk above my ordinary, I shall never find the way home: Allow me this night to recover myself in any place where you please, for no less time is necessary for me to come to myself; but, go when I will, I shall leave the best part of myself behind me.

Amine pleaded a second time for the porter, saying, Sisters, he is in the right; I am pleased with the request; he having already diverted us so well; and if you will take my advice, or if you love me as much as I think you do, let us keep him to pass away the remaining part of the night. Sister, answered Zobeide, we can refuse you nothing; and then, turning to the porter, said, We are willing once more to grant your request; but upon this new condition, that whatever we do in your presence, relating to ourselves or any thing else, take heed that you do not once open your mouth to ask the reason of it; for if you ask questions about that which does not belong to you, you may come to know that which will be no way pleasing to you: Beware, therefore, and

be not too curious to dive into the motives of our actions.

Madam, replies the porter, I promise to observe this condition with such exactness, that you shall have no cause to reproach me with the breaking of it, and far less to punish my indiscretion; my tongue shall be immovable on this occasion, and my eye like a looking-glass, which retains nothing of the object that is set before it. And to show you, says Zobeide, with a serious countenance, that what we demand of you is not a new thing among us, rise up and read what is over our gate in the inside.

The porter went thither, and read these words, written in large characters of gold: 'He who speaks of things that do not concern him, shall hear of things that will not please him.' Returning again to the three sisters, Ladies, says he, I give you my oath that you will never hear me speak any thing which does not concern me, or wherein you may have any concern.

This agreement being made, Amine brought in supper, and after the room was set round with tapers that were mixed with aloes and ambergris, which gave a most agreeable scent, as well as a delicate light, she sat down at table with her sisters and the porter. They began again to eat and drink, to sing and repeat verses. The ladies took pleasure to inebriate the porter, under pretext of causing him to drink their healths; and abundance of witty sentences passed on both sides. In short, as they were all in the best humour in the world, they heard one knocking at the gate.

When the ladies heard the knocking, they all three got up to open the gate; but Safie, to whom this office did particularly belong, was the nimblest; which her other two sisters perceiving, sat down till she came back to acquaint them who it could be that had any business with them so late. Safie returning, said, Sisters, we have here a very fine opportunity to pass a good part of the night with much satisfaction, and if you be of the same mind with me, we shall not let it slip. There are three calenders at our gate, at least they appear to be such by their habit; but that which you will most wonder at is, they are all three blind of the right eye, have their heads, beards, and eye-brows shaved, and, as they say, are but just come to Bagdad, where they never were before; and it being night, and not knowing where to find any lodging, they happened by chance to knock at this gate, and pray us, for the love of Heaven, to have compassion on them, and receive them into the house: They care not what place we put them in; provided they may be under shelter, they would be satisfied with a stable. They are young and handsome enough, and seem also to be men of good sense; but I cannot, without laughing, think of their pleasant and uniform figure. Here Safie fell a-laughing so heartily, that it put the two sisters and the porter into the same mood. My dear sisters, says she, are you content that they come in? it is impossible but, with such persons as I have already described them to be, we shall finish the day better than we began it; they will afford us diversion enough, and put us to no charge, because they desire shelter only for this night, and resolve to leave us as soon as day appears.

Zobeide and Amine made some difficulty to grant Safie's request, for reasons they knew well enough; but she having so great a

desire to obtain this favour, they could not refuse. Go then, says Zobeide, and bring them in, but do not forget to acquaint them that they must not speak of any thing which does not concern them, and cause them to read what is written over the gate. Safie ran out with a great deal of joy, and in a little while after returned with the three calenders in company.

At their entrance they made a profound bow to the ladies, who rose up to receive them; told them most obligingly that they were very welcome, that they were glad to have met with an opportunity to oblige them, and to contribute towards relieving them from the fatigue of their journey, and at last invited them to sit down with them.

The magnificence of the place, and the civility of the ladies, made the calenders to conceive a mighty idea of their fine land-ladies: But, before they sat down, having by chance cast their eye upon the porter, whom they saw clad almost like one of those other calenders with whom they are in controversy about several points of discipline, because they neither shave their beards nor eye-brows, one of them said, Look here, I believe we have got one of our revolted Arabian brethren.

The porter, though half asleep, and having his head pretty warm with wine, was affronted at these words; and, with a fierce look, without stirring from his place, answered, Sit you down, and do not meddle with what does not concern you. Have you not read the inscription over the gate? Do not pretend to make people live after your fashion, but follow ours.

Honest man, says the calender, do not put yourself into a passion; we should be very sorry to give you the least occasion; but, on the contrary, we are ready to receive your commands. Upon which, to avoid all quarrels, the ladies interposed, and pacified them. When the calenders were set at table, the ladies served them with meat; and Safie, being most pleased with them, did not let them want for drink.

After the calenders had ate and drunk liberally, they signified to the ladies that they had a great desire to entertain them with a concert of music, if they had any instruments in the house, and would cause them to be brought them. They willingly accepted the proffer, and fair Safie, going to fetch them, returned again in a moment, and presented them with a flute of her own country fashion, another of the Persian sort, and a tabor. Each man took the instrument he liked, and all the three together began to play a tune. The ladies, who knew the words of a merry song that suited that air, joined the concert with their voices; but the words of the song made them now and then stop, and fall into excessive laughter.

At the height of this diversion, and when the company was in the midst of their jollity, somebody knocks at the gate; Safie left off singing, and went to see who it was. But, sir, says Scheherazade to the sultan, it is fit your majesty should know why this knocking happened so late at the ladies' house, and the reason was this: The caliph Haroun Alraschid was accustomed to walk abroad in disguise very often by night, that he might see with his own eyes if every thing was quiet in the city, and that

no disorders were committed in it.

This night the caliph went out pretty early on his rambles, accompanied with Giafar his grand vizier, and Mesrour the chief of the eunuchs of his palace, all disguised in merchants' habits; and passing through the street where the three ladies dwelt, he heard the sound of the music, and great fits of laughter; upon which he commanded the vizier to knock, because he would go in to know the reason of that jollity. The vizier told him in vain that it was some women a merry-making; that, without question, their heads were warm with wine; and that it would not be proper he should expose himself to be affronted by them; besides, it was not yet an unlawful hour, and therefore he ought not to disturb them in their mirth. No matter, said the caliph, I command you to knock. So it was that the grand vizier Giafar knocked at the ladies' gate by the caliph's order, because he himself would not be known. Safie opened the gate, and the vizier perceived, by the light that she held in her hand, that she was an incomparable beauty. The vizier acted his part very well, and, with a very low bow and respectful behaviour, said, Madam, we are three merchants of Moussol, who arrived about ten days ago with rich merchandise, which we have in a warehouse at a khan, or inn, where we have also our lodging. We happened to-day to be with a merchant of this city, who invited us to a treat at his house, where we had a splendid entertainment; and the wine having put us in humour, he sent for a company of dancers; night being come on, and the music and dancers making a great noise, the watch came by in the mean time, caused the gate to be opened, and some of the company to be taken up; but we had the good fortune to escape by getting over a wall. Now, says the vizier, being strangers, and somewhat overcome with wine, we were afraid of meeting another, or perhaps the same watch, before we got home to our khan, which lies a good way from hence. Besides, when we come there, the gates will be shut, and not opened till morning; wherefore, madam, hearing, as we passed by this way, the sound of music, we supposed you were not yet going to rest, and made bold to knock at your gate, to beg the favour of lodging ourselves in the house till morning; and if you think us worthy of your good company, we will endeavour to contribute to your diversion what lies in our power, to make some amends for the interruption we have given you; if not, we only beg the favour of staying this night under your porch.

While Giafar held this discourse, fair Safie had time to observe the vizier and his two companions, who were said to be merchants like himself, and told them that she was not mistress of the house; but, if they would have a minute's patience, she would return with an answer.

Safie acquainted her sisters with the matter, who considered for some time what to conclude upon; but, being naturally of a good disposition, and having granted the same favour to the three calenders, they at last consented to let them in.

The caliph, his grand vizier, and the chief of the eunuchs, being introduced by the fair Safie, very courteously saluted the ladies and the calenders; the ladies returned them the like civilities, supposing them to be merchants. Zobeide, as the chief, says to them, with a grave and serious countenance, which was natural to

her, You are welcome; but, before I proceed further, I hope you will not take it ill if we desire one favour of you. Alas! said the vizier, what favour? We can refuse nothing to such fair ladies. Zobeide replied, It is, that you would only have eyes, but no tongues; that you put no questions to us about the reason of any thing you may happen to see; and not to speak of any thing that does not concern you, lest you come to hear of things that will by no means please you. Madam, replied the vizier, you shall be obeyed. We are not censorious, nor impertinently curious; it is enough for us to take notice of that which concerns us, without meddling with that which does not belong to us. Upon this they all sat down, and the company being united, they drank to the health of the new comers.

While Giafar entertained the ladies in discourse, the caliph could not forbear to admire their extraordinary beauty, graceful behaviour, pleasant humour, and ready wit; on the other hand, nothing was more surprising to him than the calenders being all three blind of the right eye. He would gladly have been informed of this singularity; but the conditions so lately imposed upon himself and his companions would not allow him to speak. This, with the richness of the furniture, the exact order of every thing, and neatness of the house, made him think it was some enchanted palace.

Their entertainment happening to be upon divertisements, and different ways of making merry, the calenders rose and danced after their fashion, which augmented the good opinion the ladies had conceived of them, and procured them the esteem of the caliph and his companions.

When the three calenders had made an end of their dance, Zobeide arose, and, taking Amine by the hand, said, Pray, sister, rise up, for the company will not take it ill if we use our freedom; and their presence need not hinder our performance of what we were wont to do. Amine, by understanding her sister's meaning, rose up from her seat, carried away the dishes, the table, the flasks, and cups, together with the instruments which the calenders had played upon.

Safie was not idle, but swept the room, put every thing again in its place, snuffed the candles, and put fresh aloes and ambergris to them, and then prayed the three calenders to sit down upon the sofa on one side, and the caliph, with his companions, on the other. As to the porter, she says to him, Get up, and prepare yourself to serve in what we are going to be about; a man like you, who is one of the family, ought not to be idle. The porter, being somewhat recovered from his wine, gets up immediately, and, having tied the sleeve of his gown to his belt, answers, Here am I, ready to obey your commands in any thing. That is very well, replied Safie; stay till you are spoken to; you shall not be idle very long. A little time after, Amine came in with a chair, which she placed in the middle of the room; and so went to a closet, which having opened, she beckoned to the porter, and says to him, Come hither and help me; which he obeying, entered the closet, and returned immediately leading two black bitches, with each of them a collar and chain; they looked as if they had been severely whipped with rods, and he brought them into the middle of the room.

Then Zobeide, rising from her seat between the calenders and the caliph, marched very gravely towards the porter, Come on, says she, with a great sigh, let us perform our duty; then tucking up her sleeves above her elbows, and receiving a rod from Safie, Porter, said she, deliver one of the bitches to my sister Amine, and come to me with the other.

The porter did as he was commanded; the bitch that he held in his hand began to cry, and, turning towards Zobeide, held her head up in a begging posture; but Zobeide, having no regard to the sad countenance of the bitch, which would have moved pity, nor her cries that sounded through ail the house, whipped her with the rod till she was out of breath; and having spent her strength that she could strike no more, she threw down the rod, and, taking the chain from the porter, lifted up the bitch by her paws, and looking upon her with a sad and pitiful countenance, they both wept; after which Zobeide, with her handkerchief, wiped the tears from the bitch's eyes, kissed her, returned the chain to the porter, bid him carry her to the place whence he took her, and bring her the other. The porter led back the whipped bitch to the closet, and receiving the other from Amine, presented her to Zobeide, who, bidding the porter hold her as he had done the first, took up the rod, and treated her after the same manner; and when she had wept over her, dried her eyes, and, kissing her, returned her to the porter; but lovely Amine spared him the trouble of leading her back into the closet, and did it herself. The three calenders and the caliph, with his companions, were extremely surprised at this execution, and could not comprehend why Zobeide, after having so furiously whipped those two bitches, that, by the Mussulman religion, are reckoned unclean animals, should cry with them, wipe off their tears, and kiss them. They muttered among themselves; and the caliph, being more impatient than the rest, longed exceedingly to be informed of the cause of so strange an action, and could not forbear making signs to the vizier to ask the question; the vizier turned his head another way; but, being pressed by repeated signs, he answered by others that it was not yet time for the caliph to satisfy his curiosity.

Zobeide sat still some time in the middle of the room, where she had whipped the two bitches, to recover from the fatigue; and fair Safie called to her, Dear sister, will you be pleased now to return to your place, that I may also act my part? Yes, sister, replies Zobeide, and then went and sat down upon the sofa, having the caliph, Giafar, and Mesrour, on her right hand, and the three calenders, with the porter, on her left.

After Zobeide sat down, the whole company was silent for a while; at last Safie, sitting on a chair in the middle of the room, spoke to her sister Amine; Dear sister, I conjure you to rise up; you know well enough what I would say, Amine rose up, and went into another closet near to that where the bitches were, and brought out a case covered with yellow satin, richly embroidered with gold and green silk; she came near Safie, and opened the case, from whence she took a lute, and presented her, and, after some time spent in tuning it, Safie began to play, and, accompanying it with her voice, she sung a song about the torments that absence creates to lovers, with so much sweetness as to charm the caliph and all the company. Having sung with a

great deal of passion and action, she said to lovely Amine, Pray take it, sister, for I can do no more; my voice fails me; oblige the company with a tune and song in my room. Very willingly, replied Amine, who, taking the lute from her sister Safie, sat down in her place.

Amine, after a small trial to see whether the instrument was in tune, played and sung almost as long upon the same subject, but with so much vehemency, and was so much affected, or rather transported, by the words of the song, that her strength failed her as she made an end of it.

Zobeide, willing to testify her satisfaction, said, Sister, you have done wonders, and we may easily see that you have a feeling of the grief you have expressed so much to the life. Amine was prevented from answering this civility, her heart being so sensibly touched at the same moment, that she was obliged, for air, to uncover her neck and breast, which did not appear so fair as might have been expected from such a lady; but, on the contrary, black and full of scars, which frightened all the spectators. This, however, gave her no ease, but she fell into a fit.

While Zobeide and Safie ran to help their sister, one of the calenders could not forbear to say, We had better have slept in the streets than have come hither, had we thought to have seen such spectacles. The caliph, who heard this, came up to him and the other calenders, and asked them what might be the meaning of all this? They answered, Sir, we know no more than you do. What, says the caliph, are you not of the family? nor can you resolve us concerning the two black bitches and the lady that fainted away, and has been so basely abused? Sir, said the calenders, this is the first time that ever we were in the house, having come in but a few minutes before you.

This increased the caliph's astonishment. It may be, says he, this other man that is with you may know something of it. One of the calenders made a sign for the porter to come near, and asked him whether he knew why those two black bitches had been whipped, and why Amine's bosom was so scarred? Sir, said the porter, I can swear by Heaven, that if you know nothing of all this, I know as little as you do. It is true I live in this city, but I never was in the house till now, and if you are suprised to see me here, I am as much to find myself in your company; and that which increases my wonder is, that I have not seen one man with these ladies.

The caliph and his company, as well as the calenders, supposed the porter had been one of the family, and hoped he could inform them of what they desired to know; but finding he could not, and resolving to satisfy his curiosity, cost what it would, he says to the rest, Look ye, we are here seven men, and have but three women to deal with; let us try if we can oblige them to satisfy us, and, if they refuse by fair means, we are in a condition to force them to it.

The grand vizier Giafar was against this method, and showed the caliph what might be the consequence of it; but, without discovering the prince to the calenders, he addressed him, as if

he had been, a merchant, thus: Sir, consider, I pray you, that our reputation lies at stake; you know very well upon what conditions these ladies were ready to receive us, and we also agreed to them. What will they say of us if we break them? We shall be still more to blame if any mischief befall us; for it is not likely that they would demand such a promise of us, if they did not know themselves in a condition to make us repent the breaking of it.

Here the vizier took the caliph aside, and whispered to him thus: Sir, the night will soon be at an end, and if your majesty will only be pleased to have so much patience, I will take these ladies to-morrow morning, and bring them before your throne, where you may be informed of all you desire to know. Though this advice was very judicious, the caliph rejected it, bid the vizier hold his tongue, and said he would not stay till then, but would have satisfaction in the matter presently.

The next business was to know who should carry the message. The caliph endeavoured to prevail with the calenders to speak first; but they excused themselves, and at last they agreed that the porter should be the man. And as they were consulting how to word this fatal question, Zobeide returned from her sister Amine, who was recovered of her fit, drew near them, and having overheard them speaking pretty loud, and with some passion, says, Gentlemen, what is the subject of your discourse? what are you disputing about?

The porter answered immediately, Madam, these gentlemen pray you to let them understand wherefore you wept over your two bitches, after you whipped them so severely, and how the bosom of the lady, who lately fainted away, comes to be so full of scars? This is what I am ordered to ask in their name.

At these words, Zobeide looked with a stern countenance, and, turning towards the caliph and the rest of the company, Is it true, gentlemen, says she, that you have given him orders to ask me this question? All of them, except Giafar, who spoke not a word, answered, Yes. On which she told them, in a tone which sufficiently expressed her resentment, Before we granted you the favour of being received into our house, and to prevent all occasion of trouble from you, because we are alone, we did it upon condition that you should not speak of any thing that did not concern you, lest you might come to hear that which would not please you; and yet, after having received and entertained you as well as possibly we could, you make no scruple to break your promise. It is true that our easy temper has occasioned this, but that shall not excuse you, for your proceedings are very unhandsome. As she spoke these words, she gave three hard knocks with her foot, and, clapping her hands as often together, cried, Come quick! Upon this a door flew open, and seven strong sturdy black slaves, with scimitars in their hands, rushed in; every one seized a man, threw him on the ground, and dragged him into the middle of the room in order to cut off his head.

We may easily conceive what a fright the caliph was in; he then repented, but too late, that he had not taken his vizier's advice. In the mean time this unhappy prince, Giafar, Mesrour, the porter, and the calenders, were upon the point of losing

their lives by their indiscreet curiosity. But, before they would strike the fatal blow, one of the slaves says to Zobeide and her sisters, High, mighty, and adorable mistresses, do you command us to cut their throats? Stay, says Zobeide, I must examine them first. The frightened porter interrupted her thus: In the name of Heaven, do not make me die for another man's crime. I am innocent, they are to blame. Alas! says he, crying, how pleasantly did we pass our time! those blind calenders are the cause of this misfortune; there is no town in the world but goes to ruin, wherever these inauspicious fellows come. Madam, I beg you not to destroy the innocent with the guilty, and consider that it is more glorious to pardon such a wretch as I, who have no way to help myself, than to sacrifice me to your resentment.

Zobeide, notwithstanding her anger, could not but laugh within herself at the porters lamentation; but, without answering him, she spoke a second time to the rest: Answer me, says she, and tell me who you are, otherwise you shall not live one moment longer. I cannot believe you to be honest men, nor persons of authority or distinction in your own countries; for, if you were, you would have been more modest and more respectful to us.

The caliph, who was naturally impatient, was infinitely more so than the rest, to find his life depend upon the command of a lady justly incensed; but he began to conceive some hopes when he saw she would know who they all were; for he imagined she would not take away his life when once she came to be informed who he was; therefore he spoke with a low voice to the vizier, who was near him, to declare speedily who he was; but the vizier, being more prudent, resolved to save his master's honour, and not to let the world know the affront he had brought upon himself by his own weakness; and therefore answered, We have what we deserve. But, if he would have spoken in obedience to the caliph, Zobeide did not give him time; for having turned to the calenders, and seeing them all three blind of one eye, she asked if they were brothers. One of them answered, No, madam, no otherwise than as we are all calenders; that is to say, as we observe the same rules. Were you born blind of the right eye? replied she. No, madam, answers he, I lost my eye in such a surprising adventure, that it would be instructive to every body, were it in writing. After this misfortune, I shaved my beard and eye-brows, and took the habit of a calender, which I now wear.

Zobeide asked the other two calenders the same question, and had the same answer; but he that spoke last added, Madam, to show you that we are no common fellows, and that you may have some consideration for us, be pleased to know, that we are all three sons of kings; and though we never met together till this evening, yet we have had time enough to make that known to one another; and I assure you that the kings from whom we derive our being made some noise in the world.

At this discourse Zobeide assuaged her anger, and said to the slaves, Give them their liberty a while, but stay here. Those who tell us their history, and the occasion of their coming, do them no hurt, let them go where they please, but do not spare those who refuse to give us that satisfaction.

Scheherazade demanded leave of the sultan, and having obtained

it, Sir, says she, the three calenders, the caliph, the grand vizier Giafar, the eunuch Mesrour, and the porter, were all in the middle of the hall, set upon a foot-carpet, in the presence of the three ladies, who sat upon a sofa, and the slaves stood ready to do whatever their mistresses should command.

The porter, understanding that he might rid himself of his danger by telling his history, spoke first, and said, Madam, you know my history already, and the occasion of coming hither; so that what I have to say will be very short. My lady, your sister there, called me this morning at the place where I plied as a porter to see if anybody would employ me, that I might get my bread; I followed her to a vintner's, then to an herb-woman's, then to one that sold oranges, lemons, and citrons, then to a grocer's, next to a confectioner's and a druggist's, with my basket upon my head, as full as I was able to carry it; then I came hither, where you had the goodness to suffer me to continue till now; a favour that I shall never forget. This, Madam, is my history.

When the porter had done, Zobeide says to him, Go, march; let us see you no more here. Madam, replies the porter, I beg you to let me stay; it would be just, after the rest have had the pleasure to hear my history, that I should also have the satisfaction to hear theirs. And having spoken thus, he sat him down at the end of the sofa, glad to the heart to have escaped the danger that had frightened him so much. After him, one of the three calenders, directing his speech to Zobeide, as the principal of the three ladies, and the person that commanded him to speak, began his history thus;

THE HISTORY OF THE FIRST CALENDER, A KING'S SON.

Madam, in order to inform you how I lost my right eye, and why I was obliged to put myself into a calender's habit, I must tell you that I am king's son born; the king my father had a brother that reigned, as he did, over a neighbouring kingdom; and the prince his son and I were almost of one age.

After I had learned my exercises, and that the king my father granted me such liberty as suited my dignity, I went regularly every year to see my uncle, at whose court I diverted myself during a month or two, and then returned again to my father's. These several journies gave occasion of contracting a very firm and particular friendship between the prince my cousin and myself. The last time I saw him, he received me with greater demonstrations of tenderness than he had done at any time before; and resolving one day to give me a treat, he made great preparations for that purpose. We continued a long time at table, and after we had both supped very well, Cousin, says he, you will hardly be able to guess how I have been employed since your last departure from hence, now about a year past. I have had a great many men at work to perfect a design I have had in my mind; I

have caused an edifice to be built, which is now finished so well as one may dwell in it: You will not be displeased if I show it you. But first you are to promise me, upon oath, that you will keep my secret, according to the confidence I repose in you.

The love and familiarity existing between us would not allow me to refuse him any thing. I very readily took the oath required of me: Upon which he says to me, Stay here till I return; I will be with you in a moment: and accordingly he came with a lady in his hand, of singular beauty, and magnificently apparelled. He did not discover who she was, neither did I think it was polite in me to make inquiry. We sat down again with this lady at table, where we continued some time entertaining ourselves with discourses upon indifferent subjects; and now and then a full glass to drink one another's health. After which the prince said, Cousin, we must lose no time, therefore pray oblige me to take this lady along with you, and conduct her to such a place, where you will see a tomb newly built in the form of a dome; you will easily know it; the gate is open; go in there together, and tarry till I come, which will be very speedily.

Being true to my oath, I made no further inquiry, but took the lady by the hand, and by the directions which the prince my cousin had given me, I brought her to the place, by the light of the moon, without losing one step of the way. We were scarcely got thither, when we saw the prince following after, carrying a little pitcher with water, a hatchet, and a little bag with plaister.

The hatchet served him to break down the empty sepulchre in the middle of the tomb; he took away the stones one after another, and laid them in a corner. When all this was taken away, he digged up the ground, where I saw a trap-door under the sepulchre, which he lifted up, and underneath perceived the head of a staircase leading into a vault. Then my cousin, speaking to the lady, said, Madam, it is by this way that we are to go to the place I told you of. Upon which the lady drew nigh and went down, and the prince began to follow after, but, turning first to me, said, My dear cousin, I am infinitely obliged to you for the trouble you have been at; I thank you: Adieu. I cried, Dear cousin, what is the meaning of this? Be content, replied he; you may return back the same way you came.

Madam, said the calender to Zobeide, I could get nothing further from him, but was obliged to take leave of him; as I returned to my uncle's palace, the vapours of the wine got up into my head; however, I got to my apartment, and went to bed. Next morning, when I awaked, I began to reflect upon what befel me the night before, and, after recollecting all the circumstances of such a singular adventure, I fancied it was nothing but a dream. Being full of these thoughts, I sent to see if the prince my cousin was ready to receive a visit from me; but when they brought back word that he did not lie in his own lodgings that night, they knew not what was become of him, and were in much trouble about it, I conceived that the strange event of the tomb was but too true. I was sensibly afflicted at it, and, stealing away privately from my people, I went to the public burying-place, where there was a vast number of tombs like that which I had seen. I spent the day in viewing them one after another, but could not find that I

sought for; and thus I spent four days successively in vain.

You must know all this while the king my uncle was absent, and had been a-hunting for several days. I grew weary of staying for him, and having prayed his ministers to make my apology to him at his return, I left his palace, and set towards my father's court, from which I had never been so long absent before. I left the ministers of the king my uncle in great trouble to think what had become of the prince my cousin; but, because of the oath I had made to keep his secret, I durst not tell them any thing of what I had seen or knew, in order to make them easy.

I arrived at my father's capital, the usual place of his residence, where, contrary to custom, I found a great guard at the gate of the palace, who surrounded me as I entered. I asked the reason, and the commanding officer replied, Prince, the army proclaimed the grand vizier king instead of your father, who is dead; and I take you prisoner in the name of the new king. At these words the guards laid hold of me, and carried me before the tyrant. I leave you to judge, madam, how much I was surprised and grieved.

The rebel vizier had entertained a mortal hatred against me for a long time upon this occasion: When, I was a stripling, I loved to shoot with a cross-bow; and being one day upon the terrace of the palace with my bow, a bird happened to come by; I shot, but missed him, and the ball by misfortune hit the vizier, who was taking the air upon the terrace of his own house, and put out one of his eyes. As soon as I understood it, I not only sent to make my excuse to him, but did it in person; yet he always resented it, and, as opportunity offered, made me sensible of it. But now, madam, that he had me in his power, he expressed his resentment in a very barbarous manner; for he came to me like a madman as soon as ever he saw me, and, thrusting his finger into my right eye, pulled it out himself; and so, madam, I became blind of one eye.

But the usurper's cruelty did not stop here; he ordered me to be shut up in a box, and commanded the executioner to carry me into the country to cut off my head, and leave me to be devoured by the birds of prey. The hangman and another carried me, thus shut up on horseback, into the country, in order to execute the usurper's barbarous sentence; but by my prayers and tears I moved the executioner's compassion. Go, says he, get you speedily out of the kingdom, and take heed of ever returning to it, otherwise you will certainly meet with your own ruin and be the cause of mine. I thanked him for the favour he did me; and as soon as I was left alone, I comforted myself for the loss of my eye, by considering that I had very narrowly escaped a much greater danger.

Being in such a condition, I could not travel far at a time. I retired to remote places while it was day, and travelled as far by night as my strength would allow me. At last I arrived in the dominions of the king my uncle, and came to his capital.

I gave him a long detail of the tragical cause of my return, and of the sad condition he saw me in. Alas! cried he, was it not enough for me to have lost my son; but must I have also news of

the death of a brother I loved so dearly, and see you also reduced to this deplorable condition? He told me how uneasy he was; that he could hear nothing of his son, notwithstanding all the diligence and inquiry he could make. At these words, the unfortunate father burst out into tears, and was so much affected, that, pitying his grief, it was impossible for me to keep the secret any longer; so that, notwithstanding the oath I had made to the prince my cousin, I told the king his father all that I knew.

His majesty listened to me with some sort of comfort, and when I had done, Nephew, says he, what you tell me gives me some hope. I know that my son ordered that tomb to be built, and I can guess pretty near at the place, and, with the idea you still have of it, I fancy we shall find it; but since he ordered it to be built privately, and you took your oath to keep his secret, I am of opinion that we ought to go in quest of it alone, without saying any thing.

But he had another reason for keeping the matter secret, which he did not then tell me, and an important reason it was, as you will perceive by the sequel of my discourse.

We both of us disguised ourselves, and went out by a door of the garden which opened into the field, and soon found what we sought for. I knew the tomb, and was so much the more rejoiced at it, because I had formerly sought it a long time in vain. We entered, and found the iron trap pulled down upon the entrance of the stair-case; we had much ado to raise it, because the prince had fastened it on the inside with the water and mortar formerly mentioned; but at last we got it up.

The king my uncle went down first, I following, and we went down about fifty steps. When we came to the foot of the stairs, we found a sort of antichamber full of a thick smoke, and an ill scent, which obscured the lamp that gave a very faint light. From this antichamber we came into another, very large, supported by great columns, and lighted by several branched candlesticks. There was a cistern in the middle, with provisions of several sorts standing on one side of it; but we were very much surprised to see nobody. Before us there appeared a high sofa, which we mounted by several steps, and over this there appeared a very large bed, with the curtains drawn close. The king went up, and, opening the curtains, perceived the prince his son and the lady in bed together, but burnt and changed into a coal, as if they had been thrown into a great fire, and taken out again before they were consumed.

But that which surprised me most of all was, that though this spectacle filled me with horror, the king my uncle, instead of testifying his sorrow to see the prince his son in such a frightful condition, spit in his face, and says to him, with an air, "This is the punishment of this world, but that of the other will last to eternity;" and, not content with this, he pulled off his sandal, and gave his son a great blow on the cheek with it.

I cannot enough express, Madam, said the calender how much I was astonished, when I saw the king my uncle abuse the prince his son, thus, after he was dead. Sir, said I, whatever grief this

dismal sight is capable to impress upon me, I am forced to suspend it, on purpose to ask your majesty what crime the prince my cousin may have committed, that his corpse should deserve this sort of treatment? Nephew, replied the king, I must tell you that my son (who is unworthy of that name) loved his sister from his infancy, and so she did him: I did not hinder their growing love, because I did not foresee the pernicious consequences of it. This tenderness increased as they grew in years, and came to such a height, that I dreaded the end of it. At last I applied such remedies as were in my power; I not only gave my son a severe reprimand in private, laying before him the foulness of the passion he was entertaining, and the eternal disgrace he would bring upon my family if he persisted in such criminal courses, but I also represented the same thing to my daughter; and besides I shut her up so close, that she could have no conversation with her brother. But that unfortunate creature had swallowed so much of the poison, that all the obstacles, which by my prudence I could lay in the way, served only the more to inflame her love.

My son, being persuaded of his sister's constancy, on pretence of building a tomb, caused this subterraneous habitation to be made, in hopes to find one day or other an opportunity to possess himself of that object which was the cause of his flame, and to bring her hither. He laid hold on the time of my absence to enter by force into the place of his sister's confinement; but that is a thing which my honour would not suffer me to make public; and, after so damnable an action, he came and enclosed himself and her in this place, which he has supplied, as you see, with all sorts of provisions, that he might enjoy his detestable pleasures for a long time, which ought to be a subject of horror to all the world: but God, who would not suffer such an abomination, has justly punished them both. At these words he melted into tears, and I joined mine with his.

After a while, casting his eyes upon me, Dear nephew, cried he, embracing me, if I have lost that unworthy son, I shall happily find in you one who will better supply his place. And, upon some other reflections he made on the doleful end of the prince and princess, we both fell into a new fit of weeping.

We went up the same stairs again, and departed at last from this dismal place. We let down again the trapdoor, and covered it with earth, and such other materials as the tomb was built of, on purpose to hide, as much as lay in our power; so terrible an effect of the wrath of God.

We had not been very long got back to the palace unperceived by anyone, before we heard a confused noise of trumpets, drums, and other instruments of war: We soon understood, by the thick cloud of dust which almost darkened the air, that it was the arrival of a formidable army; and it proved to be the same vizier that had dethroned my father, and usurped his throne, who, with a vast number of troops, was also come to possess himself of that of the king my uncle.

That prince, who then had only his usual guards about him, could not resist so many enemies; they invested the city, and the gates being opened to them without any resistance, they very soon became masters of the city, and broke into the palace where the

king my uncle was, who defended himself till he was killed, and sold his life at a dear rate. For my part I fought as well as I could for a while, but, seeing we were forced to submit to a superior power, I thought on my retreat and safety, which I had the good fortune to effect by some back ways, and got to one of the king's servants, on whose fidelity I could depend.

Being thus surrounded with sorrows, and persecuted by fortune, I had recourse to a stratagem, which was the only means left me to save my life; I caused my beard and eyebrows to be shaved, and putting on a calender's habit, I passed, unknown by any, out of the city: After that, by degrees, I found it easy to get out of my uncle's kingdom by taking the byeroads.

I avoided passing through towns, until I was got into the empire of the mighty governor of the Mussulmen, the glorious and renowned Caliph Haroun Alraschid, when I thought myself out of danger; and, considering what I was to do, I resolved to come to Bagdad, intending to throw myself at the monarch's feet, whose generosity is every where applauded. I shall move him to compassion, said I to myself, by the relation of my surprising misfortunes, and without doubt he will take pity on such an unfortunate prince, and not suffer me to implore his assistance in vain.

In short, after a journey of several months, I arrived yesterday at the gate of this city, into which I entered about the dusk of the evening, and standing still a little while to revive my spirits, and to consider on which hand I was to turn, this other calender you see here next me came also along; he saluted me, and I him. You appear, said I, to be a stranger, as I am. You are not mistaken, replied he. He had no sooner returned this answer, than this third calender you see there overtook us. He saluted us, and told us he was a stranger newly come to Bagdad; so that as brethren we joined together, resolving not to separate from one another.

Meanwhile it was late, and we knew not where to seek a lodging in the city, where we had no acquaintance, nor had ever been before. But good fortune having brought us before your gate, we made bold to knock, when you received us with so much kindness, that we are incapable to return you suitable thanks. This, madam, (said he,) is, in obedience to your commands, the account I was, to give you why I lost my right eye, wherefore my beard and eye-brows are shaved, and how I came to be with you at this present time.

It is enough, says Zobeide, you may retire to what place you think fit. The calender made his excuse, and begged the ladies' leave to stay till he had heard the relations of his two comrades, whom I cannot, says he, leave with honour; and till he might also hear those of the three other persons that were in company.

The story of the first calender seemed very strange to the whole company, but especially to the caliph, who, though the slaves stood by with their scimitars in their hands, could not forbear whispering to the vizier, Many stories have I heard, but never any thing that came near the story of the calender. Whilst he was saying this, the second calender began, addressing himself to

Zobeide.

THE STORY OF THE SECOND CALENDER, A KING'S SON.

Madam, said he, to obey your command, and to show you by what strange accident I became blind of the right eye, I must of necessity give you the whole account of my life.

I was scarcely past my infancy, when the king my father (for you must know, madam, I am a prince by birth) perceived that I was endowed with a great deal of sense, and spared nothing to improve it. He employed all the men in his dominions, who excelled in sciences and arts, to be constantly about me.

No sooner had I learned to read and write, than I learned the alcoran from the beginning to the end by heart; that admirable book, which contains the foundation, the precepts, and the rules of our religion; and, that I might be thoroughly instructed in it, I read the works of the most approved authors by whose commentaries it had been explained. I added to this study that of all the traditions collected from the mouth of our prophet by the great men that were contemporary with him. I was not satisfied with the knowledge alone of all that had any relation to our religion, but made also a particular search into our histories. I made myself perfect in polite learning, in the works of the poets, and in versification. I applied myself to geography, to chronology, and to speak our Arabian language in its purity; not forgetting, in the mean time, all such exercises as were proper for a prince to understand. But one thing I was mightily in love with, and succeeded in to admiration, was, to form the characters of our Arabian language, wherein I surpassed all the writing-masters of our kingdom, that had acquired the greatest reputation.

Fame did me more honour than I deserved, for she had not only spread the renown of my parts through all the dominions of the king my father, but carried it as far as the Indian court, whose potent monarch, desirous to see me, sent an ambassador, with rich presents, to demand me of my father, who was extremely glad of this embassy for several reasons; for he was persuaded that nothing could be more commendable in a prince of my age, than to travel and see foreign courts; and, besides, he was very glad to gain the friendship of the Indian sultan. I departed with the ambassador, but with no great retinue, because of the length and difficulty of the journey.

When we had travelled about a month, we discovered at a distance a great cloud of dust, and under that we saw very soon fifty horsemen well armed, that were robbers, coming towards us at full gallop.

As we had ten horses laden with baggage and other presents, which

I was to present to the Indian sultan from the king my father, and that my retinue was but small, you may easily judge that these robbers came boldly up to us; and, not being in a posture to make any opposition, we told them that we were ambassadors belonging to the sultan of the Indies, and hoped they would attempt nothing contrary to the honour that is due to them, thinking to save our equipage and our lives; but the robbers most insolently replied, For what reason would you have us show any respect to the sultan your master? We are none of his subjects, nor are we upon his territories. And, having spoken thus, they surrounded and fell upon us. I defended myself as well as I could; but finding myself wounded, and seeing the ambassador, with his servants and mine, lying on the ground, I made use of what strength yet remained in my horse, who was also very much wounded, and separated myself from the crowd, and rode away as fast as he could carry me; but he, happening all of a sudden to fall under me by weariness and the loss of blood, fell down dead; I got rid of him in a trice; and finding that I was not pursued, it made me judge the robbers were not willing to quit the booty they had got.

Here you see me alone, wounded, destitute of all help, and in a strange country. I durst not betake myself to the high- road, fearing I might fall again into the hands of these robbers. When I had bound up my wound, which was not dangerous, I marched on the rest of the day, and arrived at the foot of a mountain, where I perceived a passage into a cave; I went in, and staid there that night with little satisfaction, after I had eaten some fruits that I had gathered by the way.

I continued my journey for several days following, without finding any place of abode; but, after a month's time, I came to a large town well inhabited, and situated very advantageously, being surrounded with several rivers, so that it enjoyed a perpetual spring.

The pleasant objects which then presented themselves to my view, afforded me some joy, and suspended for a time the deep sorrow with which I was overwhelmed, to find myself in such a condition. My face, hands, and feet, were all tawny and sun-burnt, and by my long journey my shoes and stockings were quite worn out, so that I was forced to walk bare-footed; arid, besides, my clothes were all in rags. I entered into the town to inform myself where I was, and addressed myself to a tailor that was at work in his shop; who, perceiving by my air that I was a person of more note than my outward appearance bespoke me to be, made me sit down by him, and asked me who I was, and from whence I came, and what had brought me thither? I did not conceal any thing of all that had befallen me. nor made I any scruple to discover my quality.

The tailor listened with attention to my words; but after I had done speaking, he, instead of giving me any consolation, augmented my sorrow. Take heed, says he, how you discover to any person what you have now declared to me; for the prince of this country is the greatest enemy that the king your father has, and he will certainly do you some mischief when he comes to hear of your being in this city. I made no doubt of the tailor's sincerity when he named the prince; but since that enmity which is between my father and him has no relation to my adventures, I

must beg your pardon, madam, to pass it over in silence.

I returned the tailor thanks for his good advice, and showed myself inclinable wholly to follow his counsel, and assured him that his favours should never be forgotten by me. And as he believed I could not but be hungry, he caused them to bring me somewhat to eat, and offered me at the same time a lodging--in his house, which I accepted. Some days after, finding me pretty well recovered of the fatigue I had endured by a long and tedious journey, and, besides, being sensible that most princes of our religion did apply themselves to some art or calling that might stand them in stead upon occasion, he asked me if I had learned any thing whereby I might get a livelihood, and not be burdensome to any man? I told him that I understood the laws both divine and human; that I was a grammarian and poet; and, above all, that I understood writing perfectly well. By all this, says he, you will not be able, in this country, to purchase yourself one morsel of bread; nothing is of less use here than those sciences: But if you will be advised by me, says he, dress yourself in a labourer's habit; and since you appear to be strong, and of a good constitution, you shall go into the next forest, and cut down fire-wood, which you may bring to the market to be sold; and I can assure you it will turn to so good an account, that you may live by it without dependence upon any man: By this means you will be in a condition to wait for the favourable minute when Heaven shall think fit to dispel those clouds of misfortune that thwart your happiness, and oblige you to conceal your birth: I will take care to supply you with a rope and a hatchet.

The fear of being known, and the necessity I was under of getting a livelihood, made me agree to this proposal, notwithstanding all the meanness and hardships that attend it. The day following, the tailor brought me a rope, a hatchet, and a short coat, and recommended me to some poor people that gained their bread after the same manner, that they might take me into their company. They conducted me to the wood, and the first day I brought in as much upon my head as brought me half a piece of gold, which is the money of that country; for though the wood is not far distant from the town, yet it was very scarce there, by reason that few or none would be at the trouble to go and cut it. I gained a good sum of money in a short time, and repaid my tailor what he had advanced for me.

I continued this way of living for a whole year; and one day that by chance I had gone further into the wood than usual, I happened to light on a very pleasant place, where I began to cut down wood; and, in pulling up the root of a tree, I espied an iron ring, fastened to a trap-door of the same metal. I took away the earth that covered it, and, having lifted it up, saw stairs, which I descended, with my axe in my hand.

When I was come to the bottom of the stairs, I found myself in a large palace, which put me into a mighty consternation, because of the great light which appeared as clear in it as if it had been above ground in the open air. I went forward along a gallery supported by pillars of jasper, the bases and chapiters of massy gold; but seeing a lady of a noble and free air, and of extraordinary beauty, coming towards me, this turned my eyes from beholding any other object but her alone.

Being desirous to spare the lady the trouble to come to me, I made haste to meet her; and as I was saluting her with a low bow, she asked me, What are you? a man or a genie? A man, madam, said I; I have no correspondence with genies. By what adventure, said she, (fetching a deep sigh,) are you come hither? I have lived here these twenty-five years, and never saw any man but yourself during that time.

Her great beauty, which had already smitten me, and the sweetness and civility wherewith she received me, made me bold to say to her, Madam, before I have the honour to satisfy your curiosity, give me leave to tell you that I am infinitely satisfied with this unexpected rencounter, which offers me an occasion of consolation in the midst of my affliction; and perhaps it may give me an opportunity to make you also more happy than you are. I gave her a true account by what strange accident she saw me, the son of a king, in such a condition as I then appeared in her presence; and how fortune would have it that I should discover the entrance into that magnificent prison, where I had found her, but in an uneasy condition, according to appearance.

Alas! prince, said she, (sighing once more,) you have just cause to believe this rich and pompous prison cannot be otherwise than a most wearisome abode; the most charming place in the world being nowise delightful when we are detained in it contrary to our will. It is not possible but you have heard of the great Epitimarus, king of the isle of Ebone, so called from that precious wood it produces in abundance; I am the princess his daughter.

The king my father had chosen for me a husband, a prince that was my cousin; but, on my wedding-night, in the midst of the rejoicing there was in the court and the capital city of the kingdom of the isle of Ebone, before I was given to my spouse, a genie took me away. I fainted at the same moment, and lost all my senses; but, when I came to myself again, I found myself in this place. I was a longtime inconsolable; but time and necessity have accustomed me to see and receive the genie. It is twenty-five years, as I told you before, that I have continued in this place, where, I must confess, I have every thing that I can wish for necessary to life; and also every thing that can satisfy a princess that loves nothing but fine dress and fashions.

Every ten days, says the princess, the genie comes hither to lie with me one night, which he never exceeds; and the excuse he makes for it is, that he is married to another wife, who would grow jealous if she came to know how unfaithful he was to her. Meanwhile, if I have any occasion for him by day or night, as soon as I touch a talisman, which is at the entrance of my chamber, the genie appears. It is now the fourth day since he was here, and I do not expect him before the end of six more; so, if you please, you may stay five days and keep me company, and I will endeavour to entertain you according to your quality and merit. I thought myself too fortunate to have obtained so great a favour without asking it, to refuse so obliging a proffer. The princess made me go into a bagnio, which was the most handsome, the most commodious, and the most sumptuous, that could be imagined; and when I came forth, instead of my own clothes, I

found another very costly suit, which I did not esteem so much for its richness as that it made me look worthy to be in her company. We sat down on a sofa covered with rich tapestry, with cushions to lean upon, of the rarest Indian brocade; and, some time after, she covered a table with several dishes of delicate meats. We ate together, and passed the remainder of the day with very great satisfaction; and at night she received me to her bed.

The next day, as she contrived all manner of ways to please me, she brought in at dinner a bottle of old wine, the most excellent that ever was tasted, and, out of complaisance, she drank part of it with me. When my head grew hot with the agreeable liquor, Fair princess, said I, you have been too long thus buried alive; come follow me, and enjoy the real day from which you have been deprived of so many years, and abandon this false light that you have here. Prince, replied she with a smile, leave this discourse; if you, out of the days, will grant me nine, and resign the last to the genie, the fairest day that ever was would be nothing in my esteem. Princess, said I, it is the fear of the genie that makes you speak thus; for my part, I value him so little that I will break his talisman, with the conjuration that is written about it, in pieces. Let him come then, I will expect him, and how brave or redoubtable soever he be, I will make him feel the weight of my arm. I swear solemnly that I shall extirpate all the genies in the world, and him first. The princess, who knew the consequence, conjured me not to touch the talisman, for that would be a mean, said she, to ruin both you and me; I know what belongs to genies better than you. The fumes of the wine did not suffer me to hearken to her reasons, but I gave the talisman a kick with my foot, and broke it in several pieces.

The talisman was no sooner broken than the palace began to shake, and was ready to fall, with a hideous noise like thunder, accompanied with flashes of lightning, and a great darkness. This terrible noise in a moment dispelled the fumes of my wine, and made me sensible, but too late, of the folly I had committed. Princess, cried I, what means all this? She answered in a fright, and without any concern for her own misfortune, cries, Alas! you are undone, if you do not escape presently.

I followed her advice, and my fears were so great that I forgot my hatchet and cords. I was scarcely got to the stairs by which I came down, when the enchanted palace opened at once, and made a passage for the genie. He asked the princess, in great anger, what has happened to you, and why did you call me? A qualm at my stomach, said the princess, made me fetch this bottle which you see here, out of which I drank twice or thrice, and by mischance made a false step, and fell upon the talisman, which is broken, and that is all the matter.

At this answer the furious genie told her, You are a false woman and a liar. How came that axe and those ropes there? I never saw them till this moment, said the princess. Your coming in such an impetuous manner has, it may be, forced them up in some place as you came along, and so brought them hither without your knowing it.

The genie made no other answer but what was accompanied with

reproaches and blows, of which I heard the noise. I could not endure to hear the pitiful cries and shouts of the princess so cruelly abused; I had already laid off the suit she made me put on, and taken my own, which I had laid on the stairs the day before, when I came out of the bagnio. I made haste up stairs, being so much the more full of sorrow and compassion that I had been the cause of so great a misfortune; and that, by sacrificing the fairest princess on earth to the barbarity of a most merciless genie, I was become the most criminal and ungrateful of mankind. It is true, said I, she has been a prisoner these twenty-five years; but, setting liberty aside, she wanted nothing that could make her happy. My madness has put an end to her happiness, and brought upon her the cruelty of an unrelenting devil. I let down the trap-door, covered it again with earth, and returned to the city with a burden of wood, which I bound up without knowing what I did, so great were my trouble and sorrow.

My landlord, the tailor, was very much rejoiced to see me. Your absence, said he, has disquieted me very much, by reason you had intrusted in with the secret of your birth, and I knew not what to think. I was afraid that somebody had known you; God be thanked for your return. I thanked him for his zeal and affection, but never a word durst I say of what had passed, nor the reason why I came back without my hatchet and cords.

I retired to my chamber, where I reproached myself a thousand times for my excessive imprudence. Nothing, said I, could have paralleled the princess's good fortune and mine, had I foreborn to break the talisman.

While I was thus giving myself over to melancholy thoughts, the tailor came in and told me, An old man, said he, whom I do not know, brings me your hatchet and cords, which he found in his way, as he tells me, and understood, by your comrades that go along with you to the woods, that you lodge here. Come out and speak to him, for he will deliver them to none but yourself.

At this discourse I changed colour, and fell a-trembling. While the tailor was asking me the reason, my chamber-door opened at once, and the old man, having no patience to stay, appeared to us with my hatchet and cords. This was the genie, the ravisher of the fair princess of the isle of Ebone, who had thus disguised himself, after he had treated her with the utmost barbarity. I am a genie, said he, son of the daughter of Ebis, prince of genies. Is not this your hatchet? said he, speaking to me, and are not these your cords?

After the genie had put the question to me, he gave me no time to answer, nor was it in my power, so much had his terrible aspect put me beside myself. He grasped me by the middle, dragged me out of the chamber, and, mounting into the air, carried me up as high as the skies, with such swiftness, that I perceived I was got so high as not to be able to take notice of the way, being carried in so few moments. He descended again in like manner to the earth, which, on a sudden, he caused to open with a knock of his foot, and so sunk down at once, where I found myself in the enchanted palace before the fair princess of the isle of Ebone. But, alas! what a spectacle was there; I saw that which pierced me to the heart; this poor princess was quite naked, all in

blood, and laid upon the ground, more like one dead than alive, with her cheeks all bathed in tears.

Perfidious wretch, said the genie to her, pointing at me, is not this your gallant? She cast her languishing eyes upon me, and answered mournfully, I do not know him; I never saw him till this moment. What, said the genie, he is the cause of thy being in the condition thou art justly in; and yet darest thou say thou dost not know him? If I do not know him, said the princess, would you have me to make a lie on purpose to ruin him? O then, said the genie, pulling out a scimitar, and presenting it to the princess, if you never saw him before, take the scimitar and cut off his head. Alas! replied the princess, how is it possible I should execute what you would force me to do? My strength is so far spent that I cannot lift my arm; and if I could, how should I have the heart to take away an innocent man's life, and one I do not know? This refusal, said the genie to the princess, sufficiently informs me of your crime. Upon which, turning to me, And thou, said he, dost thou not know her?

I should have been the most ungrateful wretch, and the most perfidious of all mankind, if I had not shown myself as faithful to the princess as she was to me, who had been the cause of her misfortunes. Therefore I answered the genie, How should I know her, that never saw her till now? If that be so, said he, take the scimitar and cut off her head. On this condition I will set thee at liberty, for then I will be convinced that thou never saw her till this very moment, as thou sayest thyself. With all my heart, replied I, and took the scimitar in my hand.

Do not think, madam, that I drew near to the fair princess of the isle of Ebone, to be the executioner of the genie's barbarity; I did it only to demonstrate by my behaviour, as much as possible, that as she had shown her resolution to sacrifice her life for my sake, so I would not refuse to sacrifice mine for her's. The princess, notwithstanding her pain and suffering, understood my meaning, which she signified by an obliging look, and made me understand her willingness to die for me; and that she was satisfied to see also how willing I was to die for her. Upon this I stepped back, and threw the scimitar on the ground. I shall for ever, says I to the genie, be hateful to all mankind, should I be so base as to murder, I do not only say a person whom I do not know, but also a lady like this, who is ready to give up the ghost; do with me what you please since I am in your power; I cannot obey your barbarous commands.

I see, said the genie, that you both out-brave me, and insult my jealousy; but both of you shall know, by the treatment I give you, what I am capable of. At these words, the monster took up the scimitar and cut off one of her hands, which left her only so much life as to give me a token with the other, that she bid me for ever adieu. For the blood she had lost before, and that which gushed out then, did not permit her to live above one or two moments after this barbarous cruelty, the sight of which threw me into a fit. When I was come to myself again, I expostulated with the genie, why he made me languish in expectation of death. Strike, cried I, for I am ready to receive the mortal blow, and expect it as the greatest favour you can show me. But instead of agreeing to that, Look ye, says he, how genies treat their wives

whom they suspect of unfaithfulness; she has received thee here, and were I certain that she had put any other affront upon me, I would make thee die this minute; but I will content myself to transform thee into a dog, ape, lion, or bird: take thy choice of any of these, I will leave it to thyself.

These words gave me some hopes to mollify him. O genie; said I, moderate your passion, and since you will not take away my life, give it me generously; I shall always remember your clemency, if you pardon me, as one of the best men in the world pardoned one of his neighbours who bore him a mortal hatred. The genie asked me what had passed between those two neighbours, and said, he would have patience till he heard the story, which I told him thus: And I believe, madam, you will not take it ill if I also relate it to you.

THE STORY OF THE ENVIOUS MAN, AND OF HIM WHOM HE ENVIED.

In a considerable town, two persons dwelt next door to each other; one of them conceived such a violent hatred against the other, that he who was hated resolved to remove his dwelling further off, being persuaded that their being neighbours was the only cause from whence his animosity did arise; for, though he had done him several pieces of service, he found, nevertheless, that his hatred was nothing diminished; therefore he sold his house, with what goods he had left, and retired to the capital city of that kingdom, which was not far distant. He bought a little spot of ground, which lay about half a league from the city; he had a house convenient enough, with a fine garden, and a pretty spacious court, wherein was a deep well, which was not in use.

The honest man, having made this purchase, put on a dervize's or monk's habit to lead a retired life, and caused several cells to be made in the house, where in a short time he established a numerous society of dervizes. He came soon to be publicly known by his virtue, through which he acquired the esteem of a great many people, as well of the commonalty as of the chief of the city. In short, he was extremely honoured and cherished by every one. People came from far to recommend themselves to his prayers; and all those that came to live with him published what blessings they received through his means.

The great reputation of that honest man having spread to the town from whence he came, it touched the envious man so much to the quick, that he left his house and affairs, with a resolution to go and ruin him. With this intent he went to the new convent of dervizes, of which his former neighbour was the head, who received him with all imaginable tokens of friendship. The envious man told him that he was come on purpose to communicate a business of importance to him, which he could not do but in private; and because that nobody shall hear us, let us, says he,

take a walk in your court, and seeing night begins to draw on, command your dervizes to retire to their cells. The head of the dervizes did as he required.

When the envious man saw that he was alone, with this good man, he began to tell him his errand, walking side by side in the court until he saw his opportunity; and getting the good man near the brink of the well, he gave him a thrust, and pushed him into it, without any body being witness to so wicked an action. Having done this, he marched off immediately, got out at the gate of the convent without being known to any one, and came home to his own house, well satisfied with his journey, being fully persuaded that the object of his hatred was no more in this world.

This old well was inhabited by fairies and genies, which happened luckily for the relief of the head of the convent; for they received and supported him, and carried him to the bottom, so that he got no hurt. He perceived well enough that there was something extraordinary in his fall, which must otherwise have cost him his life; whereas he neither saw nor felt any thing. But he soon heard a voice, which said, Do you know what honest man this is to whom we have done this piece of service? Another voice answered, No. To which the first replied, Then I will tell you. This man, out of charity the greatest that ever was known, left the town he lived in, and has established himself in this place, in hopes to cure one of his neighbours of the envy he had conceived against him; he has acquired such a general esteem, that the envious man, not able to endure it, came hither on purpose to ruin him, which he had performed, had it not been for the assistance which we have given this honest man, whose reputation is so great, that the sultan, who keeps his residence in the neighbouring city, was to pay him a visit to-morrow, and to recommend the princess his daughter to his prayers.

Another voice asked, What need had the princess of the dervize's prayers? To which the first answered, You do not know, it seems, that she is possessed by genie Maimoun, the son of Demdim, who is fallen in love with her. But I know well how this good head of the dervizes may cure her; the thing is very easy, and I will tell it you. He has a black cat in his convent, with a white spot at the end of her tail, about the bigness of a small piece of English money: let him only pull seven hairs out of this white spot, burn them, and smoke the princess's head with the fume, she will not only be perfectly cured, but be so safely delivered from Maimoun, the son of Demdim, that he will never dare to come near her a second time.

The head of the dervizes remembered every word of the discourse between the fairies and the genies, who were very silent all the night after. The next morning, by break of day, when he could discern one thing from another, the well being broken down in several places, he saw a hole, by which he crept out with ease.

The other dervizes who had been seeking for him, were rejoiced to see him. He gave them a brief account of the wickedness of that man to whom he had given so kind a reception the day before, and retired into his cell. It was not long till the black cat, of which the fairies and the genies had made mention in their discourses the night before, came to fawn upon her master, as she

was accustomed to do: He took her up, and pulled seven hairs out of the white spot that was upon her tail, and laid them aside for his use, when occasion should serve.

The sun was not high, when the sultan, who would leave no means untried which he thought could restore the princess to her perfect health, arrived at the gate of the convent. He commanded his guards to halt, whilst he, with his principal officers, went in. The dervizes received him with profound respect.

The sultan called their head aside, and says, good Sheik, it may be you know already the cause of my coming hither. Yes, sir, replies he, very gravely; if I do not mistake it, it is the disease of the princess which procures me this honour that I have not deserved. That is the very thing, replied the sultan. You will give me new life, if your prayers, as I hope they will, can procure my daughter's health. Sir, said the good man, if your majesty will be pleased to let her come hither, I am in hopes, that through God's assistance and favour, she shall return in perfect health.

The prince, transported with joy, sent immediately to fetch his daughter, who very soon appeared with a numerous train of ladies and eunuchs, but masked, so that her face was not seen. The chief of the dervizes caused a pall to be held over her head, and he had no sooner thrown the seven tufts of hair upon the burning coal, than the genie Maimoun, the son of Demdim, gave a great cry, without any thing being seen, and left the princess at liberty; upon which she took the veil from off her face, and rose up to see where she was, saying, Where am I, and who brought me hither? At these words, the sultan, overcome with excess of joy, embraced his daughter, and kissed her eyes; he also kissed the chief of the dervize's hands, and said to his officers, Tell me your opinion, what reward does he deserve who has cured my daughter? They all cried, he deserves her in marriage. That is what I had in my thoughts, said the sultan; and I make him my son-in-law from this moment. Some time after, the prime vizier died, and the sultan conferred the place on the dervize. The sultan himself died without heirs-male; upon which the religious orders and the militia gathered together, and the honest man was declared and acknowledged sultan by general consent.

The honest dervize, being mounted on the throne of his father-in-law, as he was one day in the midst of his courtiers upon a march, espied the envious man among the crowd of people that stood as he passed along, and calling one of his viziers that attended him, whispered him in the ear thus: Go bring me that man you see there, but take care you do not frighten him. The vizier obeyed, and when the envious man was brought into his presence, the sultan said, Friend, I am extremely glad to see you. Upon which he called an officer: Go immediately, says he, and cause to be paid this man out of my treasury one hundred pieces of gold; let him have also twenty load of the richest merchandise in my store-houses, and a sufficient guard to conduct him to his house. After he had given this charge to the officer, he bade the envious man farewell, and proceeded on his march.

When I had finished the recital of this story to the genie, the murderer of the princess of the isle of Ebone, I made the

application to himself thus: O genie! you see here that this bountiful sultan did not content himself with forgetting the design of the envious man to take away his life, but treated him kindly, and sent him back with all the favours which I just now related. In short, I made use of all my eloquence, prayed him to imitate such a good example, and to grant me pardon; but it was impossible for me to move his compassion.

All that I can do for thee, said he, is, that I will not take away thy life; do not flatter thyself that I will send thee safe and sound back. I must let you feel what I am able to do by my enchantments. With that he laid violent hands on me, and carried me across the vault of the subterraneous palace, which opened to give him passage; he flew up with me so high, that the earth seemed to be only a little white cloud; from thence he came down again like lightning, and alighted upon the ridge of a mountain.

There he took up a handful of earth, and pronounced, or rather muttered, some words which I did not understand, and threw it upon me. Leave the shape of a man, says he to me, and take on that of an ape. He vanished immediately, and left me alone, transformed into an ape, overwhelmed with sorrow in a strange country, not knowing if I was near unto or far from my father's dominions.

I went down from the height of the mountain, and came into a plain country, which took me a month's time to travel through, and then I came to a coast of the sea. It happened then to be a great calm, and I espied a vessel about half a league from the shore; I would not lose this good opportunity, but broke off a large branch from a tree, which I carried with me to the sea-side, and set myself astride upon it, with a stick in each hand to serve me for oars.

I launched out in this posture, and advanced near the ship. When I was near enough to be known, the seamen and passengers that were upon the deck thought it an extraordinary spectacle, and all of them looked upon me with great astonishment. In the mean time, I got aboard, and laying hold of a rope, I jumped on the deck, and, having lost my speech, I found myself in very great perplexity; and indeed the risk I ran then was nothing less than when I was at the mercy of the genie.

The merchants, being both superstitious and scrupulous, believed I should occasion some mischief to their voyage, if they received me: therefore, says one, I will knock him down with an handspike; says another, I will shoot an arrow through his guts; says a third, Let us throw him into the sea. Some of them would not have failed to have executed their design, if I had not got to the side where the captain was; when I threw myself at his feet, and took him by the coat in a begging posture. This action, together with the tears which he saw gush from my eyes, moved his compassion; so that he took me into his protection, threatened to be avenged on him that should do me the least hurt; and he himself made very much of me, And on my part, though I had no power to speak, I did, by my gestures, show all possible signs of gratitude.

The wind that succeeded the calm was gentle and favourable, and

did not alter for five days, but brought us safe to the port of a fine town, well peopled, and of great trade, where we came to an anchor. It was so much the more considerable, that it was the capital city of a powerful state.

Our vessel was speedily surrounded with an infinite number of boats, full of people, who either came to congratulate their friends upon their safe arrival, or to inquire for those they had left behind them in the country from whence they came, or out of curiosity to see a ship that came from a far country.

Amongst the rest, some officers came on board, desiring to speak with the merchants in the name of the sultan. The merchants appearing, one of the officers told them, The sultan, our master, hath commanded us to acquaint you that he is glad of your safe arrival, and prays you to take the trouble, every one of you, to write some lines upon this roll of paper; and, that his design may be understood, you must know that he had a prime vizier, who, besides a great capacity to manage affairs, understood writing to the highest perfection. This minister is lately dead, at which the sultan is very much troubled, and since he can never behold his writing without admiration, he has made a solemn vow not to give the place to any man but to him that can write as well as he did. Abundance of people have presented their writings; but to this day nobody in all this empire has been judged worthy to supply the vizier's place.

Those merchants that believed they could write well enough to pretend to this high dignity, wrote, one after another, what they thought fit. After they had done, I advanced and took the roll out of the gentleman's hand; but all the people, especially the merchants, cried out, he will tear it, or throw it into the sea, till they saw how properly I held the roll, and made a sign that I would write in my turn. Then they were of another opinion, and their fears turned into admiration. However, since they had never seen an ape that could write, nor could be persuaded that I was more ingenious than other apes, they offered to snatch the roll out of my hand; but the captain took my part once more. Let him alone, says he; suffer him to write. If he only scribbles the paper, I promise you that I will punish him upon the spot. If, on the contrary, he writes well, as I hope he will, because I never saw an ape so handy and ingenious, and so apprehensive of every thing, I do declare that I will own him as my son. I had one that had not by far the wit that he has. Perceiving that no man did any more oppose my design, I took the pen, and wrote, before I had done, six sorts of hands used among the Arabians, and each specimen containing an extemporary distich or quatram in praise of the sultan. My writings did not only outdo that of the merchants, but I dare say they had not before seen any such fair writing in that country. When I had done, the officers took the roll, and carried it to the sultan.

The sultan took little notice of any of the other writings, but considered mine, which was so much to his liking, that he says to the officers, Take the finest horse in my stable, with the richest harness, and a robe of the most sumptuous brocade, to put upon that person who wrote those six hands, and bring him hither to me. At this command the officers could not forbear laughing: the sultan grew angry at their boldness, and was ready to punish

them till they told him. Sir, replied the officers, we humbly beg your majesty's pardon; these characters are not written by a man, but by an ape. What do you say! says the sultan, are not these admirable characters written by the hands of a man? No, sir, replied the officers, we do assure your majesty that it was an ape who wrote them in our presence. The sultan was too much surprised at this account not to desire a sight of me; and therefore says, Do what I command you, and bring me speedily that wonderful ape.

The officers returned to the vessel, and showed the captain their order, who answered, that the sultan's commands must be obeyed. Whereupon they clothed me with that rich brocade robe, and carried me ashore, where they set me on horseback, whilst the sultan waited for me at the palace with a great number of courtiers, whom he gathered together, to do me the more honour.

The cavalcade being begun, the harbour, the streets, the public places, windows, terraces, palaces, and houses, were all filled with an infinite number of people, of all sorts, who were curious to come from all parts of the city to see me; for the rumour was spread in a moment, that the sultan had chosen an ape to be his grand vizier; and after having served for a spectacle to the people, who could not forbear to express their surprise by redoubling their shouts and cries, I arrived at the palace of the sultan.

I found the prince seated on his throne, in the midst of the grandees. I made my bow three times very low, and at last kneeled and kissed the ground before him, and afterwards sat down in my seat in the posture of an ape. The whole assembly admired me, and could not comprehend how it was possible that an ape should understand so well to give the sultan his due respect; and he himself was more astonished than any man. In short, the usual ceremony of the audience would have been complete, could I have added speech to my behaviour; but apes do never speak, and the advantage I had of having been a man did not allow me that privilege.

The sultan dismissed his courtiers, and none remained by him but his chief of the eunuchs, a little young slave, and myself. He went from his chamber of audience into his own apartment, where he ordered dinner to be brought. As he sat at table, he gave me a sign to come near, and eat with him. To show my obedience, I kissed the ground, stood up, sat down at table, ate with discretion, and moderately.

Before the table was uncovered, I espied an ink-horn, which I made a sign should be brought me; having got it, I wrote upon a large peach some verses after my own way, which testified my acknowledgment to the sultan; who having read them, after my presenting him the peach, it increased his astonishment. When the table was uncovered, they brought him a particular liquor, of which he caused them to give me a glass. I drank, and wrote some new verses upon it, which explained the state I was in, after a great many sufferings. The sultan read them likewise, and said, an ape that was capable of doing so much ought to be exalted above the greatest of men.

The sultan caused them to bring in a chess-board, and asked me, by a sign, if I understood that game, and would play with him? I kissed the ground, and laying my hand upon my head, signified that I was ready to receive that honour. He won the first game, but I won the second and third; and perceiving he was somewhat displeased at it, I made a quatrain to pacify him; in which I told him that two potent armies had been fighting very eagerly all day, but that they made up a peace towards the evening, and passed the remaining part of the night very peaceably together upon the field of battle.

So many things appearing to the sultan far beyond what any one had either seen or known of the behaviour or knowledge of apes, he would not be the only witness of these prodigies himself; but having a daughter, called the lady of beauty, to whom the head of the eunuchs, then present, was governor, Go, said the sultan to him, and bid your lady come hither: I am willing she should have a share in my pleasure.

The eunuch went, and immediately brought the princess, who had her face uncovered; but she was no sooner got into the room, than she put on her veil, and said to the sultan, Sir, your majesty must needs have forgotten yourself; I am very much surprised that your majesty has sent for me to appear among men. How, daughter! said the sultan, you do not know what you say. Here is nobody but the little slave, the eunuch your governor, and myself, who have the liberty to see your face; and yet you lower your veil, and would make me a criminal in having sent for you hither. Sir, said the princess, your majesty shall soon understand that I am not in the wrong. That ape you see before you, though he has the shape of an ape, is a young prince, son of a great king; he has been metamorphosed into an ape by enchantment. A genie, the son of the daughter of Eblis, has maliciously done him this wrong, after having cruelly taken away the life of the princess of the isle of Ebone, daughter to the king of Epitimarus.

The sultan, astonished at this discourse, turned towards me, and spoke no more by signs, but, in plain words, asked me, if it was true what his daughter said? Seeing I could not speak, I put my hand to my head to signify that what the princess spoke was true. Upon this the sultan said again to his daughter, How do you know that this prince has been transformed by enchantment into an ape? Sir, replied the lady of beauty, your majesty may remember that when I was past my infancy, I had an old lady that waited upon me; she was a most expert magician, and taught me seventy rules of magic, by virtue of which I can transport your capital city into the midst of the sea, in the twinkling of an eye, or beyond mount Caucasus. By this science I know all enchanted persons at first sight. I know who they are, and by whom they have been enchanted: therefore do not admire if I forthwith relieve this prince, in spite of enchantments, from that which hinders him to appear in your sight what he naturally is. Daughter, said the sultan, I did not believe you to have understood so much. Sir, replies the princess, these things are curious, and worth knowing; but I think I ought not to boast of them. Since it is so, said the sultan, you can dispel the prince's enchantment. Yes, sir, said the princess, I can restore him to his first shape again. Do it then, said the sultan, you cannot do me a greater pleasure; for I will have him to be my vizier, and he shall marry

you. Sir, said the princess, I am ready to obey you in all that you shall be pleased to command me.

The princess, the lady of beauty, went into her apartment, from whence she brought in a knife which had some Hebrew words engraved on the blade: She made us all, viz. the sultan, the master of the eunuchs, the little slave, and myself, to go down into a private court adjoining to the palace, and there left us under a gallery that went round it. She placed herself in the middle of the court, where she made a great circle, and within it she wrote several words in Arabian characters, some of them ancient, and others of those which they call the character of Cleopatra.

When she had finished and prepared the circle as she thought fit, she placed herself in the centre of it, where she began adjurations, and repeated verses out of the alcoran. The air grew insensibly dark, as if it had been night, and the whole world about to be dissolved. We found ourselves struck with a panic fear, and this fear increased the more, when we saw the genie, the son of the daughter of Eblis, appear all of a sudden in the shape of a lion of a frightful size.

As soon as the princess perceived this monster, You dog, said she, instead of creeping before me, dare you present yourself in this shape, thinking to frighten me? And thou, replied the lion, art thou not afraid to break the treaty which was solemnly made and confirmed between us by oath, not to wrong or do one another any hurt? Oh, thou cursed creature! replied the princess, I can justly reproach thee with doing so. The lion answered fiercely, Thou shalt quickly have thy reward for the trouble thou hast given me to return: With that he opened his terrible throat, and ran at her to devour her; but she, being upon her guard, leaped backward, got time to pull out one of her hairs, and, by pronouncing three or four words, changed herself into a sharp sword, wherewith she cut the lion through the middle in two pieces.

The two parts of the lion vanished, and the head was only left, which changed itself into a large scorpion. Immediately the princess turned herself into a serpent, and fought the scorpion, who, finding himself worsted, took the shape of an eagle, and flew away: But the serpent at the same time took also the shape of an eagle that was black and much stronger, and pursued him, so that we lost sight of them both.

Some time after they disappeared, the ground opened before us, and out of it came forth a cat, black and white, with her hair standing upright, and keeping up a fearful mewling; a black wolf followed her close, and gave her no time to rest. The cat, being thus hard beset, changed herself into a worm, and being nigh to a pomegranate that had accidentally fallen from a tree that grew on the side of a canal, which was deep, but not broad, the worm pierced the pomegranate in an instant, and hid itself; but the pomegranate swelled immediately, and became as big as a gourd, which, mounting up to the top of the gallery, rolled there for some space backward and forward, fell down again into the court, and broke into several pieces.

The wolf, who had in the meanwhile transformed itself into a cock, fell a-picking up the seeds of the pomegranate one after another; but, finding no more, he came towards us with his wings spread, making a great noise, as if he would ask us whether there was any more seed? There was one lying on the brink of the canal, which the cock perceiving as he went back, ran speedily thither; but just as he was going to pick it up, the seed rolled into the river, and turned into a little fish.

The cock jumped into the river, and was turned into a pike, that pursued the small fish; they continued both under water above two hours, and we knew not what became of them; but all of a sudden we heard terrible cries, which made us to quake, and a little while after we saw the genie and princess all in flames. They threw flashes of fire out of their mouths at one another, until they came to it hand to hand; then the fires increased, with a thick burning smoke, which mounted so high, that we had reason to fear that it would set the palace on fire. But we very soon had a more pressing occasion of fear; for the genie, having got loose from the princess, came to the gallery where we stood, and blew flames of fire upon us. We had all perished, if the princess, running to our assistance, had not forced him, by her efforts, to retire and defend himself against her; yet, notwithstanding all her diligence, she could not hinder the sultan's beard from being burnt, and his face spoiled, the chief of the eunuch's from being stifled, and burnt on the spot, nor a spark to enter my right eye, and make it blind. The sultan and I expected nothing but death, when we heard a cry, Victory, victory; and, all of a sudden, the princess appeared in her natural shape, but the genie was reduced to a heap of ashes.

The princess came near to us, and, that she might not lose time, called for a cup of cold water, which the young slave that had got no damage brought her: She took it, and, after pronouncing some words over it, threw it upon me, saying, If thou art become an ape by enchantment, change thy shape, and take that of a man, which thou hadst before. These words were hardly uttered till I became a man, as I was before, one eye only excepted.

I was preparing myself to give thanks to the princess, but she prevented me, by addressing herself to her father thus: Sir, I have got the victory over the genie, as your majesty may see; but it is a victory that costs me dear; I have but a few moments to live, and you will not have the satisfaction to make the match you intended; the fire has pierced me during the terrible combat, and I find it consumes me by degrees. This would not have happened, had I perceived the last of the pomegranate seeds, and swallowed it as I did the other, when I was changed into a cock. The genie had fled thither as to his last intrenchment, and upon that the success of the combat depended, which would have been successful, and without danger to me. This slip obliged me to have recourse to fire, and to fight with those mighty arms as I did between heaven and earth in your presence; for, in spite of all his redoubtable art and experience, I made the genie to know that I understood more than he: I have conquered and reduced him to ashes, but I cannot escape death, which is approaching.

The sultan suffered the princess, the lady of beauty, to go on with the recital of her combat; and when she had done, he spoke

to her in a tone that sufficiently testified his grief. My daughter, said he, you see in what condition your father is: Alas! I wonder that I am yet alive! Your governor, the eunuch, is dead, and the prince whom you have delivered from his enchantment has lost one of his eyes. He could speak no more; for his tears, sighs, and sobs, made him speechless; his daughter and I were exceedingly sensible of his sorrow, and wept with him.

In the mean time, while we were striving to outdo one another in grief, the princess cried, I burn; Oh, I burn! She found that the fire which consumed her had at last seized upon her whole body, which made her still to cry, I burn, until death had made an end of her intolerable pains. The effect of that was so extraordinary, that in a few moments she was wholly reduced to ashes like the genie.

I cannot tell you, madam, how much I was grieved at so dismal a spectacle. I had rather all my life have continued an ape or a dog, than to have seen my benefactress thus miserably perish. The sultan, being afflicted beyond all that can be imagined, cried out piteously, and beat himself upon his head and stomach, until such time as, being quite overcome with grief, he fainted away, which made me fear his life. In the mean time the eunuchs and officers came running at the sultan's cries, and with very much ado brought him to himself again. There was no need for that prince and me to give them a long narrative of this adventure, in order to convince them of their great loss. The two heaps of ashes, into which the princess and genie had been reduced, were demonstration enough. The sultan was hardly able to stand upright, but was forced to be supported by them till he could get to his apartment.

When the noise of this tragical event had spread itself through the palace and the city, all the people bewailed the misfortune of the princess, the lady of beauty, and were sensible of the sultan's affliction. Every one was in deep mourning for seven days, and a great many ceremonies were performed: The ashes of the genie were thrown into the air, but those of the princess were gathered into a precious urn, to be kept; and the urn was set in a stately tomb, which was built for that purpose, on the same place where the ashes had lain.

The grief which the sultan conceived for the loss of his daughter threw him into a fit of sickness, which confined him to his chamber for a whole month. He had not fully recovered strength when he sent for me: Prince, said he, hearken to the orders that I now give you; it will cost you your life if you do not put them in execution. I assured him of exact obedience; upon which he went on thus: I have constantly lived in perfect felicity, and never was crossed by any accident; but by your arrival all the happiness I possessed is vanished; my daughter is dead, her governor is no more, and it is through a miracle that I am yet alive. You are the cause of all those misfortunes, for which it is impossible that I should be comforted; therefore depart from hence in peace, but without further delay, for I myself must perish, if you stay any longer: I am persuaded that your presence brings mischief along with it. This is all I have to say to you. Depart, and take care of ever appearing again in my dominions; there is no consideration whatsoever that shall hinder me from

making you repent of it. I was going to speak, but he stopped my mouth by words full of anger; and so I was obliged to remove from his palace, rejected, banished, thrown off by all the world, and not knowing what would become of me. Before I left the city, I went into a bagnio, where I caused my beard and eye-brows to be shaved, and put on a calender's habit. I began my journey, not so much deploring my own miseries as the death of the two fair princesses of which I had been the occasion. I passed through many countries without making myself known; at last I resolved to come to Bagdad, in hopes to get myself introduced to the commander of the faithful, to move his compassion by giving him an account of my strange adventures. I came hither this evening, and the first man I met was this calender, our brother, that spoke before me. You know the remaining part, madam, and the cause of my having the honour to be here.

When the second calender made an end of his story, Zobeide, to whom he had addressed his speech, told him, It is very well, you may go which way you please; I give you leave: but, instead of departing, he also petitioned the lady to show him the same favour she had vouchsafed to the first calender, and went and sat down by him.

The third calender, perceiving it was his turn to speak, addressed his speech, as the rest had done, to Zobeide, and began in this manner.

THE HISTORY OF THE THIRD CALENDER, A KING'S SON.

Most Honourable Lady,

That which I am going to tell you very much differs from what you have heard already. The two princes that spoke before me have each lost an eye by the pure effects of their destiny, but mine I lost through my own fault, and by hastening to seek my own misfortune, as you shall hear by the sequel of my story.

My name is Agib, and I am the son of a king who was called Cassib. After his death I took possession of his dominions, and resided in the same city where he lived before. This city is situate on the sea-coast; has one of the finest and safest harbours in the world, and an arsenal large enough for fitting out fifty men of war to sea, that are always ready on occasion, and light frigates, and pleasure-boats for recreation. My kingdom is composed of several fine provinces upon Terra Firma, besides a number of spacious islands, every one of which lies almost in sight of my capital city.

The first thing I did was to visit the provinces; I afterwards caused to fit out and man my whole fleet, went to my islands to gain the hearts of my subjects by my presence, and to confirm them in their loyalty; and, some time after I returned, I went

thither again. These voyages giving me some taste for navigation, I took so much pleasure in it that I resolved to make some discoveries beyond my islands; to which end I caused only ten ships to be fitted out, embarked on board them, and set sail.

Our voyage was very successful for forty days together; but on the forty-first night the wind became contrary, and withal so boisterous that we were like to have been lost in the storm. About break of day the wind grew calm, the clouds were dispersed, and the sun having brought back fair weather, we came close to an island, where we remained two days to take in fresh provisions; this being done, we put off again to sea. After ten days sail, we were in hopes of seeing land, for the tempests we had gone through had so much abated my curiosity, that I gave orders to steer back to my own coast; but I perceived at the same time that my pilot knew not where we were. Upon the tenth day, a seaman being sent to look out for land from the mast-head, he gave notice that on starboard and larboard he could see nothing but the sky and the sea which bounded the horizon, but just before us, upon the stern, he saw a great blackness.

The pilot changed colour at the relation and throwing his turban on the deck with one hand, and beating his breast with the other, cried, O, sir, we are all lost; not one of us will escape; and, with all my skill, it is not in my power to prevent it! Having spoken thus, he fell a-crying like a man who foresaw unavoidable ruin; his despair put the whole ship's crew into a terror. I asked him what reason he had thus to despair? He told me, the tempest which we had outlived had brought us so far out of our course that to-morrow about noon we should come near to that black place, which is nothing else but the black mountain, that is, a mine of adamant, which at this very minute draws all your fleet towards it, by virtue of the iron nails that are in your ships; and when we come to-morrow, at a certain distance, the strength of the adamant will have such a force, that all the nails will be drawn out of the sides and bottoms of the ships, and fastened to the mountain, so that your vessel will fall to pieces, and sink to the bottom; and as the adamant has a virtue to draw all iron to it, whereby its attraction becomes stronger, this mountain on the side of the sea is all covered over with nails, drawn out of an infinite number of vessels that have perished by it; and this preserves and augments its virtue at the same time.

This mountain, continues the pilot, is very rugged. On the top of it there is a dome of fine brass, supported by pillars of the same, and upon the top of that dome there stands a horse of the same metal, with a rider on his back, who has a plate of lead fixed to his breast, upon which some talismantical characters are engraved. Sir, the tradition is, that this statue is the chief cause that so many ships and men have been lost and sunk in this place, and that it will ever continue to be fatal to all who have the misfortune to come near it, until such time as it shall be thrown down.

The pilot, having ended his discourse, began to weep afresh, and this made all the rest of the ship's company to do the like. I myself had no other thoughts but that my days were there to have an end. In the mean time every one began to provide for his own

safety, and to that end took all imaginable precautions; and, being uncertain of the event, they all made one another their heirs, by virtue of a will, for the benefit of those that should happen to be saved.

The next morning we perceived the black mountain very plain, and the idea we had conceived of it made it appear more frightful than it was. About noon we were come so near that we found what the pilot had foretold to be true; for we saw all the nails and iron about the ships fly towards the mountain, where they were fixed, by the violence of the attraction, with a horrible noise; the ship split asunder, and sunk into the sea, which was so deep about that place that we could not sound it. All my people were drowned, but God had mercy on me, and permitted me to save myself by means of a plank, which the wind drove ashore just at the foot of the mountain; I did not receive the least hurt, and my good fortune brought me to a landing-place, where there were steps that went up to the top of the mountain.

At the sight of these steps, for there was not a bit of ground either on the right or left whereon a man could set his foot, I gave thanks to God, and recommended myself to his holy protection. I began to mount the steps, which were so narrow, rugged, and hard to get up, that had the wind blown ever so little, it would have thrown me down into the sea; but at last I got up to the top without any accident; I came into the dome, and, kneeling on the ground, gave God thanks for his mercies to me.

I passed the night under the dome, and, in my sleep, an old grave man appeared to me, and said, Hearken, Agib, as soon as thou art awake, dig up the ground under thy feet; thou shalt find a bow of brass, and three arrows of lead, that are made under certain constellations, to deliver mankind from so many calamities that threaten them. Shoot the three arrows at the statue, and the rider shall fall into the sea, but the horse will fall down by thy side, which thou must bury in the same place from whence you took the bow and arrows. This being done, the sea will swell and rise up to the foot of the dome that stands upon the top of the mountain; when it is come up so high, thou shalt see a boat with one man and an oar in each hand. This man is also of metal, different from that thou hast thrown down; step on board to him without mentioning the name of God, and let him conduct thee. He will in ten days time bring thee into another sea, where thou shalt find an opportunity to get home to thy country safe and sound, provided, as I have told thee, thou dost not mention the name of God during the whole voyage.

These were the contents of the old man's discourse. When I awaked, I was very much comforted by the vision, and did not fail to observe every thing that he had commanded me. I took the bow and arrows out of the ground, shot them at the horseman, with the third arrow I overthrew him, and he full into the sea, as the horse fell by my side, which I buried in the place whence I took the bow and arrows. In the mean time the sea swelled, and rose up by degrees. When it came as high as the foot of the dome that stood upon the top of the mountain, I saw afar off a boat rowing towards me, and I returned God thanks that every thing succeeded according to my dream.

At last the boat came ashore, and I saw the man was made of metal, according as I had dreamed. I stepped aboard, and took great heed not to pronounce the name of God, neither spoke I one word at all; I sat down, and the man of metal began to row off from the mountain. He rowed without ceasing, till the ninth day that I saw some islands, which put me in hopes that I was out of all the danger that I was afraid of. The excess of joy made me forget what I was forbidden to do; God's name be blessed, said I, the Lord be praised!

I had no sooner spoken these words than the boat sunk with the man of metal, and, leaving me upon the surface, I swam the remaining part of the day towards that land which appeared nearest to me. A very dark night succeeded, and, not knowing whereabouts I was, I swam at a venture; my strength began at last to fail, and I despaired of being able to save myself, when the wind began to blow hard, and a wave as big as a mountain threw me on a flat, where it left me, and drew back. I made haste to get ashore, fearing another wave might wash me back again. The first thing I did was to strip and wring the water out of my clothes, and then I laid them down to dry on the sand, which was still pretty warm by the heat of the day.

Next morning the sun dried my clothes betimes; I put them on, and went forward to see whereabouts I was. I had not walked very far till I found I was got upon a little desert island, though very pleasant, where grew several sorts of trees and wild fruits; but I perceived it was very far from the continent, which much diminished the joy I conceived for having escaped the danger of the seas. Notwithstanding, I recommended myself to God, and prayed him to dispose of me according to his good-will and pleasure; at the same time I saw a vessel coming from the main-land, before the wind, directly to the island. I doubted not that they were coming to anchor there, and being uncertain what sort of people they might be, whether friends or foes, thought it not safe for me to be seen: I got up into a very thick tree, from whence I might safely view them. The vessel came into a little creek, where ten slaves landed, carrying a spade and other instruments fit for digging up the ground; they went towards the middle of the island, where I saw them stop, and dig the ground a long while, after which I thought I saw them lift a trap-door. They returned again to the vessel, and unloaded several sorts of provisions and furniture, which they carried to that place where they had broken ground, and so went downward, which made me suppose it was a subterraneous dwelling.

I saw them once more go to the ship, and return soon after with an old man, who led a very handsome young lad in his hand, of about fourteen or fifteen years of age; they all went down at the trap-door; and being come up again, having let down the trap-door, and covered it over with earth, they returned to the creek where the ship lay, but I saw not the young man in their company; this made me believe that he staid behind in that place under ground, at which I could not but be extremely astonished.

The old man and the slaves went on board again, and the vessel being got under sail, steered its course towards the mainland. When I perceived they were at such a distance that they could not

see me, I came down from the tree, went directly to the place where I had seen the ground broken, and removed the earth by degrees, till I found a stone that was two or three feet square. I lifted it up, and saw it covered the head of the stairs, which were also of stone; I went down, and came into a large room, where there was laid a foot-carpet, with a couch covered with tapestry, and cushions of rich stuff, upon which the young man sat with a fan in his hand. I saw all this by the light of two tapers, together with the fruits and flower-pots he had standing about him. The young lad was startled at the sight of me; but, to rid him of his fear, I spoke to him as I came in thus: Whoever you be, sir, do not fear any thing: a king, and the son of a king, as I am, is not capable of doing you any prejudice. On the contrary, it is probable that your good destiny has brought me hither to deliver you out of this tomb, where it seems they have buried you alive, for reasons unknown to me. But that which makes me wonder, and that which I cannot conceive, (for you must know that I have been witness to all that hath passed since your coming into this island) is, that you suffered yourself to be buried in this place without any resistance.

The young man recovered himself at these words, and prayed me, with a smiling countenance, to sit down by him; which when I had done, he said, Prince, I am to acquaint you with a matter so odd in itself that it cannot but surprise you.

My father is a merchant-jeweller, who has acquired, through his ingenuity in his calling, a great estate; he hath a great many slaves, and also deputies whom he employs to go as supercargoes to sea with his own ships, on purpose to maintain the correspondence he has at several courts, which he furnishes with such precious stones as they want.

He had been married a long while, and without issue, when he understood by a dream that he should have a son, though his life would be but short, at which he was very much concerned when he awaked. Some days after, my mother acquainted him that she was with child, and the time which she supposed to be that of her conception agreed exactly with the day of his dream. She was brought to bed of me at the end of nine months, which occasioned great joy in the family.

My father, who had observed the very moment of my birth, consulted astrologers about my nativity, who told him, Your son shall live very happy till the age of fifteen, when he will be in danger of losing his life, and hardly be able to escape it; but if his good destiny preserve him beyond that time, he will live to grow very old. It will be then, said they, when the statue of brass that stands upon the top of the mountain of adamant, shall be thrown down into the sea by Prince Agib, son of King Cassib; and, as the stars prognosticate, your son shall be killed fifty days afterwards by that prince.

As the event of this part of the prediction about the statue agrees exactly with my father's dream, it afflicted him so much that he was struck to the very heart with it. In the mean time, he took all imaginable care of my education, until this present year, which is the fifteenth of my age; and he had notice given

him yesterday that the statue of brass had been thrown into the sea about ten days ago by the same prince I told you of. This news has cost him so many tears, and has alarmed him so much, that he looks not like himself.

Upon these predictions of the astrologers, he has sought by all means possible to falsify my horoscope, and to preserve my life. It is not long since he took the precaution to build me this subterranean habitation to hide me in till the expiration of the fifty days after the throwing down of the statue; and therefore, since it was that this had happened ten days ago, he came hastily hither to hide me, and promised at the end of forty days to come again and fetch me out. As for my own part, I am in good hopes, and cannot believe that Prince Agib will come to seek for me in a place under ground in the midst of a desert island. This, my lord, is what I have to say to you.

Whilst the jeweller's son was telling me this story, I laughed in myself at those astrologers who had foretold that I should take away his life; for I thought myself so far from being likely to verify what they said, that he had scarcely done speaking when I told him with great joy, Dear sir, put your confidence in the goodness of God, and fear nothing; you may consider it as a debt you was to pay, but that you are acquitted of it from this very hour. I am glad that, after my shipwreck, I came so fortunately hither to defend you against all those that would attempt your death; I will not leave you till the forty days are expired, of which the foolish astrologers have made you so apprehensive; and in the mean time I will do you all the service that lies in my power; after which I shall have the benefit of getting to the main-land in your vessel, with leave of your father and yourself; and when I am returned into my kingdom, I shall remember the obligations I owe you, and endeavour to demonstrate my acknowledgments in a suitable manner.

This discourse of mine encouraged the jeweller's son, and made him have confidence in me. I took care not to tell him I was the very Agib whom he dreaded, lest I should put him into a fright, and took as much care not to give him any cause to suspect it. We passed the time in several discourses, till night came on. I found the young lad of a ready wit, and ate with him of his provisions, of which he had enough to have lasted beyond the forty days, though he had had more guests than myself. After supper, we continued some time in discourse, at last we went to bed.

The next day, when we got up, I held the basin and water to him; I also provided dinner, and set it on the table in due time. After we had done, I invented a play to divert ourselves, not only for that day, but for those that followed. I prepared supper after the same manner as I had prepared dinner; and having supped, we went to bed as formerly. We had time enough to contract friendship; I found he loved me; and, for my part, I had so great a respect for him, that I have often said to myself, Those astrologers, who predicted to his father that his son should die by my hand, were impostors; for it is not possible that I could commit so base an action. In short, madam, we spent thirty-nine days in the pleasantest manner that could be in a place under ground.

The fortieth day appeared; and in the morning, when the young man awaked, he says to me, with a transport of joy that he could not restrain, Prince, this is the fortieth day, and I am not dead; thanks to God and your good company. My father will not fail to be here anon to give you testimony of his gratitude for it, and shall furnish you with all that is necessary for your return to your kingdom; but in the mean time, said he, I beg you to get ready some water very warm to wash my whole body in that portable bagnio, that I may clean myself, and change my clothes, to receive my father more cheerfully.

I set the water on the fire, and when it was hot put it into the moveable bagnio. The youth went in, and I myself washed and rubbed him. At last he came out, and laid himself down in his bed that I had prepared, and covered him with his bed-clothes. After he had slept a while, he awaked, and said, Dear prince, pray do me the favour to fetch me a melon and some sugar, that I may eat some and refresh me.

Out of several melons that remained, I took the best, and laid it on a plate; and because I could not find a knife to cut it with, I asked the young man if he knew where there was one? There is one, said he, upon this cornice over my head; I accordingly saw it there, and made so much haste to reach it, that while I had it in my hand, my foot being entangled in the covering, I fell most unhappily upon the young man, and the knife ran into his heart in a minute.

At this spectacle I cried out most hideously; I beat my head, my face, and breast; I tore my clothes, and threw myself on the ground with unspeakable sorrow and grief. Alas! I cried, there were only some hours wanting to have put him out of that danger from which he sought sanctuary here; and when I myself thought the danger past, then I became his murderer, and verified the prediction. But, O Lord, said I, lifting up my face and hands to heaven, I beg thy pardon, and, if I be guilty of his death, let me not live any longer.

After this misfortune I would have embraced death without any reluctance, had it presented itself to me. But what we wish to ourselves, whether good or bad, will not always happen. Nevertheless, considering with myself that all my tears and sorrows would not bring the young man to life again, and, the forty days being expired, I might be surprised by his father, I quitted that subterranean dwelling, laid down the great stone upon the entry of it, and covered it with earth.

I had scarcely done, when, casting my eyes upon the sea towards the main-land, I perceived the vessel coming to fetch home the young man. I began then to consider what I had best do; I said to myself, if I am seen by the old man, he will certainly lay hold on me, and perhaps cause me to be massacred by his slaves. When he has seen his son killed, all that I can allege to justify myself will not be able to persuade him of my innocence. It is better for me, then, to withdraw, since it is in my power, than expose myself to his resentment.

There happened to be near this subterranean habitation a large

tree with thick leaves, which I thought fit to hide me in. I got up to it, and was no sooner fixed in a place where I could not be seen, than I saw the vessel come to the same place where she lay the first time.

The old man and his slaves landed immediately, and advanced towards the subterranean dwelling, with a countenance that showed some hope; but when they saw the earth had been newly removed, they changed colour, particularly the old man. They lifted up the stone, and went down; they called the young man by his name, but he not answering, their fears increased; they went down to seek him, and at length found him lying upon the bed with the knife in his heart, for I had not power to take it out. At this sight, they cried out lamentably, which increased my sorrow: the old man fell down in a swoon. The slaves, to give him air, brought him up in their arms, and laid him at the foot of the tree where I was; but, notwithstanding all the pains they took to recover him, the unfortunate father continued a long while in that condition, and made them oftener than once despair of his life; but at last he came to himself. Then the slaves brought up his son's corpse dressed in his best apparel, and when they had made a grave, they put him into it. The old man, supported by two slaves, and his face all covered with tears, threw the first earth upon him, after which the slaves filled up the grave.

This being done, all the furniture was brought out from under ground, and, with the remaining provisions, put on board the vessel. The old man, overcome with sorrow, and not being able to stand, was laid upon a sort of litter, and carried to the ship, which put forth to sea, and in a short time sailed quite out of sight.

After the old man and his slaves were gone with the vessel, I was left alone upon the island. I lay that night in the subterranean dwelling, which they had shut up; and when the day came, I walked round the isle, and stopped in such places as I thought most proper to repose in when I had need.

I led this wearisome life for a month together; after which I perceived the sea to be mightily fallen, the island to be much larger, and the main-land seemed to be drawing nearer me. In effect, the water grew so low, that there was but a small stream between me and the Terra Firma. I crossed it, and the water did not come above the middle of my leg. I marched so long upon the slime and sands that I was very weary; at last I got upon firm ground, and, when at a good distance from the sea, I saw a good way before me somewhat like a great fire, which gave me some comfort, for I said to myself, I shall find somebody or other, it not being possible that this fire should kindle of itself; but when I came nearer, I found my error, and saw that what I had taken to be fire was a castle of red copper, which the beams of the sun made look, at a distance, as if it had been in flames.

I stopped near the castle, and sat down to admire its admirable structure, and to rest a while. I had not taken such a full view of this magnificent building, as it deserved, when I saw ten handsome young men coming along as if they had been taking a walk; but that which most surprised me was, that they were all blind of the right eye; they accompanied an old man, who was very

tall, and of a venerable aspect.

I could not but wonder at the sight of so many half-blind men all together, and every one of the same eye. As I was thinking in my mind by what adventure all these could come together, they came up to me, and seemed to be mighty glad to see me. After the first compliments were passed, they inquired what had brought me hither? I told them my story would be somewhat tedious, but, if they would take the trouble to sit down, I would satisfy their request. They did so, and I related unto them all that had happened unto me since I left my kingdom, which filled them with astonishment.

After I had ended my discourse, the young gentlemen prayed me to go with them into the castle; I accepted the proffer, and we passed through a great many halls, antichambers, bedchambers, and closets, very well furnished, and arrived at last in a spacious hall, where there were ten small blue sofas set round, and separate from each other, upon which they sat by day, and slept by night. In the middle of this round there stood an eleventh sofa, not so high as the rest, but of the same colour, upon which the old man before mentioned sat down, and the young gentlemen made use of the other ten, whereas each sofa could only contain one man. One of the young men says to me, Comrade, sit down upon that carpet in the middle of the room, and do not inquire into any thing that concerns us, nor the reason why we are all blind of the right eye; be content with what you see, and let not your curiosity go any further.

The old man, having sat a little while, rose up, and went out; but he returned in a minute or two, brought in supper for the ten gentlemen, distributed to each man his proportion by himself, and likewise brought me mine, which I ate by myself, as the rest did, and when supper was almost done, he presented to each of us a cup of wine.

They thought my story so extraordinary, that they made me repeat it after supper, and this gave occasion to discourses which lasted a good part of the night. One of the gentlemen, observing that it was late, said to the old man, You see it is time to go to bed, and you do not bring us that with which we may acquit ourselves of our duty. At these words the old man rose, and went into a closet, from whence he brought out upon his head ten basons, one after another, all covered with blue stuff: He set one before every gentleman, together with a light.

They uncovered their basons, in which there were ashes, coal-dust, and lamp-black; they mixed all together, and rubbed and bedaubed their faces with it in such a manner, that they looked very frightful. After having thus blackened themselves, they fell a-weeping and lamenting, beating their heads and breasts, and cried continually, This is the fruit of our idleness and debauches.

They continued this almost the whole night, and when they left off, the old man brought them water, with which they washed their faces and hands; they also changed their clothes, which were spoiled, and put on others; so that they did not look in the least as if they had been doing so strange an action.

You may judge, Madam, how uneasy I was all the while; I had a mind a thousand times to break the silence which these young gentlemen had imposed upon me, and ask questions; nor was it possible for me to sleep that night.

After we got up next day, we went out to walk, and then I told them, Gentlemen, I declare to you that I must renounce that law which you prescribed to me last night, for I cannot observe it. You are men of sense, and all of you have wit in abundance; you have convinced me of it, yet I have seen you do such actions, as none but madmen could be capable of. Whatever misfortune befalls me, I cannot forbear asking, why you bedaubed your faces with black? How it comes that each of you have but one eye? Some singular thing must have been the cause of it, therefore I conjure you to satisfy my curiosity. To these pressing instances they answered nothing, but that it was none of my business to ask such questions, and that I should do well to hold my peace.

We passed that day in discourses upon different subjects, and when night was come, and every man had supped, the old man brought in the blue basons, and the young gentlemen bedaubed their faces, wept, and beat themselves, crying, This is the fruit of our idleness and debauches, as before, and continued the same actions the following night. At last, not being able to resist my curiosity, I earnestly prayed them to satisfy me, or to show me how to return to my own kingdom, for it was impossible for me to keep them company any longer, and to see every night such an odd spectacle, without being permitted to know the reason.

One of the gentlemen answered in behalf of the rest, Do not wonder at our conduct in regard to yourself; and that hitherto we have not granted your request; it is out of mere kindness, and to prevent the sorrow of your being reduced to the same condition with us. If you have a mind to try our unfortunate destiny, you need but speak, and we will give you the satisfaction you desire. I told them I was resolved on it, let come what will. Once more, said the same gentleman, we advise you to restrain your curiosity; it will cost you the loss of your right eye. No matter, said I; I declare to you, that if such a misfortune befall me, I will not impute it to you, but to myself. He further represented to me, that when I had lost an eye, I must not hope to stay with them, if I were so minded, because their number was complete, and no addition could be made to it. I told them, that it would be a great satisfaction to me never to part from such honest gentlemen, but, if there was necessity for it, I was ready to submit; and, let it cost what it would, I begged them to grant my request.

The ten gentlemen, perceiving that I was positive in my resolution, took a sheep and killed it, and, after they had taken off the skin, presented me with the knife, telling me it would be useful to me on a certain occasion, which they should tell me of presently. We must sew you into this skin, said they, and then leave you; upon which a fowl of monstrous size, called a roc, will appear in the air, and, taking you to be a sheep, will come down upon you, and carry you up to the very sky; but let not that frighten you, he will come down again with you, and lay you upon the top of a mountain. When you find yourself upon the ground,

cut the skin with the knife, and throw it off. As soon as the roc sees you, he will fly away for fear, and leave you at liberty. Do not stay, but walk on till you come to a prodigious castle, all covered with plates of gold, large emeralds, and other precious stones: Go up to the gate, which always stands open, and walk in: We have been in the castle as long as we have been here: We will tell you nothing of what we saw, or what befel us there, because you will learn it yourself; all that we can inform you is, that it has cost each of us our right eye, and the penance which you have been witness to is what we are obliged to do, because we have been there. The history of each of us in particular is so full of extraordinary adventures, that a large volume would not contain them; but we must explain ourselves no further.

When the gentleman had ended this discourse, I wrapt myself in the sheep's skin, held fast the knife which was given me; and after those young gentlemen had been at the trouble to sew the skin about me, they retired into the hall, and left me on the place. The roc they had spoken of was not long a-coming; he fell down upon me, took me up between his talons like a sheep, and carried me to the top of the mountain. When I found myself upon the ground, I made use of the knife, cut the skin, and throwing it off, the roc at the first sight of me flew away. This roc is a white bird of a monstrous size; his strength is such that he can lift up elephants from the plains, and carry them to the tops of mountains, where he feeds upon them. Being impatient till I reached the castle, I lost no time, but made so much haste, that I got thither in half a day's journey, and I must say, that I found it surpassed the description they had given me of it. The gate being open, I entered into a court that was square, and so large, that there were round it ninety-nine gates of wood of sanders and aloes, with one of gold, without counting those of several magnificent stair-cases that led up to apartments above, besides many more I could not see. The hundred doors I spoke of opened into gardens or store-houses full of riches, or into palaces that contained things wonderful to be seen. I saw a door standing open just before me, through which I entered into a large hall, where I found forty young ladies of such perfect beauty, that imagination could not go beyond it; they were all most sumptuously apparelled; and as soon as they saw me, they rose up, and, without expecting my compliments, said to me, with demonstrations of joy, Noble sir, you are very welcome. And one spoke to me in the name of the rest thus: We have been in expectation a long while of such a gentleman as you; your mien assures us that you are master of all the good qualities we can wish for, and we hope you will not find our company disagreeable or unworthy of yours. They forced me, notwithstanding all the opposition I could make, to sit down on a seat that was higher than theirs, and though I signified that I was uneasy. That is your place, said they; you are at present our lord, master, and judge, and we are your slaves, ready to obey your commands.

Nothing in the world, madam, so much astonished me as the passion and eagerness of those fair ladies to do me all possible service. One brought hot water to wash my feet; a second poured sweet scented water on my hands; some brought me all sorts of necessaries, and change of apparel; others brought in a magnificent collation; and the rest came with glasses in their hands to fill me delicious wines, all in good order, and in the

most charming manner that could be. I ate and drank; after which the ladies placed themselves about me, and desired an account of my travels. I gave them a full relation of my adventures, which lasted till night came on.

When I had made an end of my story, which I related to the forty ladies, some of them that sat nearest me staid to keep me company, whilst the rest, seeing it was dark, rose to fetch tapers. They brought a prodigious quantity, which made such a marvellous light as if it had been day, and they were so proportionably disposed, that nothing could be more beautiful. Other ladies covered a table with dry fruits, sweet-meats, and everything proper to make the liquor relish; and a side-board was set with several sorts of wines and other liquors. Some of the ladies came in with musical instruments, and, when every thing was prepared, they invited me to sit down to supper. The ladies sat down with me, and we continued a long while at supper. They that were to play upon the instruments, and sing, stood up, and made a most charming concert. The others began a sort of ball, and danced by two and two, one after another, with a wonderfully good grace. It was past midnight before those diversions ended. At length one of the ladies says to me, You are doubtless wearied by the journey you have made to-day; it is time for you to go to rest; your lodging is prepared; but, before you depart, make choice of any of us you like best to be your bed-fellow. I answered, That I knew better things than to offer to make my own choice, since they were all equally beautiful, witty, and worthy of my respects and service, and that I would not be guilty of so much incivility as to prefer one before another. The same lady that spoke to me before answered. We are all very well satisfied of your civility, and find you are afraid to create a jealousy among us, which occasions your modesty; but let nothing hinder you. We assure you, that the good fortune of her whom you choose shall cause no jealousy; for we are agreed among ourselves, that every one of us shall have the same honour till it go round, and, when forty days are past, to begin again; therefore make your free choice, and lose no time to go and take the repose you stand in need of. I was obliged to yield to their instances, and offered my hand to the lady that spoke; she, in return, gave me hers, and we were conducted to an apartment, where they left us; and then every one retired to their own apartment. I was scarcely dressed next morning, when the other thirty-nine ladies came into my chamber, all in other dresses than they had the day before: They bid me good-morrow, and inquired after my health; after which they carried me into a bagnio*, where they washed me themselves, and, whether I would or not, served me in every thing I stood in need of; and when I came out of the bath, they made me put on another suit much richer than the former.

We passed the whole day almost constantly at table; and when it was bed-time, they prayed me again to make choice of one of them to keep me company. In short, madam, not to weary you with repetitions, I must tell you, that I continued a whole year among those forty ladies, and received them into my bed one after another: And during all the time of this voluptuous life, we met not with the least kind of trouble. When the year was expired, I was strangely surprised that these forty ladies, instead of appearing, with their usual cheerfulness, to ask how I did, entered one morning into my chamber all in tears: They embraced

me with great tenderness one after another, saying, Adieu, dear prince, adieu! for we must leave you. Their tears affected me; I prayed them to tell me the reason of their grief, and of the separation they spoke of. For God's sake, fair ladies, let me know, said I, if it be in my power to comfort you, or if my assistance can be any way useful to you. Instead of returning a direct answer, Would to God, said they, we had never seen nor known you. Several gentlemen have honoured us with their company before you, but never one of them had that comeliness, that sweetness, that pleasantness of humour, and merit, which you have; we know not how to live without you. After they had spoken these words, they began to weep bitterly. My dear ladies, said I, be so kind as not to keep me in suspense any more: Tell me the cause of your sorrow. Alas! said they, what other thing could be capable of grieving us, but the necessity of parting from you? It may so happen that we shall never see you again; but if you be so minded, and have command enough over yourself, it is not impossible for us to meet again. Ladies, said I, I understand not your meaning; pray explain yourselves more clearly. Oh, then, said one of them, to satisfy you, we must acquaint you, that we are all princesses, daughters of kings; we live here together in such a manner as; you have seen, but, at the end of every year, we are obliged to be absent forty days upon indispensable duties, which we are not permitted to reveal; and afterwards we return again to this castle. Yesterday was the last day of the year, and we must leave you this day, which is the cause of our grief. Before we depart, we will leave you the keys to every thing; especially those belonging to the hundred doors, where you will have enough to satisfy your curiosity, and to sweeten your solitude during our absence: But, for your own welfare, and our particular concern in you, we recommend unto you to forbear opening the golden door; for, if you do, we shall never see you again; and the fear of this augments our grief. We hope, nevertheless, that you will follow the advice we give you, as you tender your own quiet, and the happiness of your life; therefore take heed that you do not give way to indiscreet curiosity, for you will do yourself a considerable prejudice. We conjure you, therefore, not to commit this fault, but to let us have the comfort of finding you here again after forty days. We would willingly carry the key of the golden door along with us; but it would be an affront to a prince like you to question your discretion and modesty.

This discourse of the fair princesses made me extremely sorrowful. I omitted not to make them sensible how much their absence would afflict me: I thanked them for their good advice, and assured them that I would follow it, and willingly do what was much more difficult, in order to be so happy as to pass the rest of my days with ladies of such rare qualifications. We took leave of one another with a great deal of tenderness; and having embraced them all, they at last departed, and I was left alone in the castle. Their agreeable company, the good cheer, the concert of music, and other pleasures, had so much diverted me during the whole year, that I neither had time, nor the least desire, to see the wonderful things contained in this enchanted palace. Nay, I did not so much as take notice of a thousand rare objects that were every day in my sight; for I was so taken with the charming beauty of those ladies, and took so much pleasure in seeing them wholly employed to oblige me, that their departure afflicted me

very sensibly; and though their absence was to be only forty days, it seemed to be an age to live without them. I promised myself not to forget the important advice they had given me, not to open the golden door; but as I was permitted to satisfy my curiosity in every thing I took the first of the keys of the other doors, which were hung in good order. I opened the first door, and came into an orchard, which I believe the universe could not equal; I could not imagine that any thing could surpass it, but that which our religion promises us after death; the symmetry, the neatness, the admirable order of the trees, the abundance and diversity of a thousand sorts of unknown fruits, their freshness and beauty, ravished my sight.

I ought not to forget, madam, to acquaint you, that this delicious orchard was watered after a very particular manner; there were channels so artificially and proportionably digged, that they carried water in abundance to the roots of such trees as wanted it for making them produce their leaves and flowers. Some carried it to those that had their fruit budded;* Others carried it in lesser quantities to those whose fruit was growing big; and others carried only so much as was just requisite to water those which had their fruit come to perfection, and only wanted to be ripened. They exceeded the ordinary fruits of our gardens very much in bigness; and, lastly, those channels that watered the trees whose fruits were ripe, had no more moisture than what would just preserve them from withering. I could never be weary to look at and admire so sweet a place; and I should never have left it, had I not conceived a greater idea of the other things which I had not seen. I went out at last with my mind filled with those wonders; I shut that door, and opened the next. Instead of an orchard, I found a flower-garden, which was no less extraordinary of its kind; it contained a spacious plot, not watered so profusely as the former, but with greater niceness, furnishing no more water than just what each flower required. The roses, jessamines, violets, dills, hyacinths, wind-flowers, tulips, crowsfoots, pinks, lilies, and an infinite number of other flowers, which do not grow in other places but at certain times, were there flourishing all at once; and nothing could be more delicious than the fragrant smell of this garden.

I opened the third door, where I found a large volary, paved with marble of several fine colours that were not common. The cage was made of sanders and wood of aloes: it contained a vast number of nightingales, goldfinches, canary birds, larks, and other rare singing-birds which I never heard of; and the vessels that held their seed and water were of the most precious jasper or agate. Besides, this volary was so exceedingly neat, that, considering its extent, one would think there could not be less than an hundred persons to keep it so clean as it was; but all this while not one soul appeared, either here or in the gardens where I had been, and yet I could not perceive a weed or any superfluous thing there. The sun went down, and I retired, being perfectly charmed with the chirping notes of the multitude of birds, which then began to perch upon such places as were convenient for them to repose on during the night. I went to my chamber, resolving to open all the rest of the doors the day following, except the golden one.

I failed not to open a fourth door next day, and if what I had

seen before was capable of surprising me, that which I saw then put me into a perfect ecstasy. I went into a large court, surrounded with buildings of an admirable structure, the description of which I shall pass by to avoid prolixity. This building had forty doors, wide open, and through each of them there was an entrance into a treasury, several of which were of greater value than the largest kingdoms. The first contained heaps of pearls; and, what is almost incredible, the number of these stones, which are most precious, and as large as pigeons' eggs, exceeded the number of those of the ordinary size: in the second treasury there were diamonds, carbuncles, and rubies: in the third there were emeralds: in the fourth there were ingots of gold: in the fifth, money: in the sixth, ingots of silver: in the two following there was also money. The rest contained amethysts, chrysolites, topazes, opals, turquoises, and hyacinths, with all the other stones unknown to us, without mentioning agate, jasper, cornelian, and coral, of which there was a storehouse filled, not only with branches, but whole trees. Being filled with amazement and admiration, I cried out to myself, after having seen all these riches, Now, if all the treasures of the kings of the universe were gathered together in one place, they could not come near this. What good fortune have I to possess all this wealth, with so many admirable princesses!

I shall not stay, madam, to tell you the particulars of all the other rare and precious things I saw the days following: I shall only tell you, that thirty-nine days afforded me but just as much time as was necessary to open ninety-nine doors, and to admire all that presented itself to my view, so that there was only the hundredth door left, the opening of which was forbidden. I was come to the fortieth day after the departure of those charming princesses, and had I but retained so much power over myself as I ought to have had, I should have been this day the happiest of all mankind, whereas now I am the most unfortunate. They were to return the next day, and the pleasure of seeing them again ought to have restrained my curiosity; but, through my weakness, which I shall ever repent, I yielded to the temptations of the evil spirit, who gave me no rest till I had thrown myself into those misfortunes that I have since undergone. I opened that fatal door, which I promised not to meddle with, and had not moved my foot to go in, when a smell that was pleasant enough, but contrary to my constitution, made me faint away: Nevertheless, I came to myself again, and instead of taking this warning to shut the door, and forbear satisfying my curiosity, I went in, after I had stood some time in the air to carry off the scent, which did not incommode me any more. I found a large place, very well vaulted, the pavement strewed over with saffron; several candlesticks of massy gold, with lighted tapers that smelled of aloes and ambergris, lighted the place; and this light was augmented by lamps of gold and silver, that burned with oil made of several sorts of sweet-scented materials.

Among a great many objects that engaged my attention, I perceived a black horse, of the handsomest and best shape that ever was seen. I went nearer the better to observe him, and found he had a saddle and a bridle of massy gold, curiously wrought. The one side of his trough was filled with clean barley and sessems, and the other with rose water; I took him by the bridle, and led him forth to view him by the light; I got on his back, and would have

had him move; but he not stirring, I whipped him with a switch I had taken up in his magnificent stable; and he had no sooner felt the stroke, than he began to neigh with a horrible noise, and extending his wings, which I had not seen before, he flew up with me into the air quite out of sight. I thought on nothing then but to sit fast; and, considering the fear that had seized upon me, I sat very well. He afterwards flew down again towards the earth, and lighting upon the terrace of a castle, without giving me any time to get off, he shook me out of the saddle with such force, that he made me fall behind him, and with the end of his tail struck out my right eye. Thus I became blind of one eye, and then I began to remember the predictions of the ten young gentlemen. The horse flew again out of sight. I got up very much troubled at the misfortune I had brought upon myself: I walked upon the terrace, covering my eye with one of my hands, for it pained me exceedingly, and then came down and entered into the hall, which I knew presently by the ten sofas in a circle, and the eleventh in the middle, lower than the rest, to be the same castle from whence I was taken by the roc. The ten half-blind gentlemen were not in the hall when I came in, but came soon after with the old man; they were not at all surprised to see me again, nor at the loss of my eye; but said, We are sorry that we cannot congratulate you upon your return as we could have desired; but we are not the cause of your misfortune. I should be in the wrong to accuse you, said I, for I have drawn it upon myself, and I can charge the fault upon no other person. If it be a consolation to the unfortunate, said they, to have fellows, this example may afford us a subject of rejoicing; all that has happened to you, we also have undergone: we tasted all sorts of pleasure during a year successively; and we had continued to enjoy the same happiness still, had we not opened the golden door when the princesses were absent: You have been no wiser than we, and you had likewise the same punishment; we would gladly receive you among us, to do such penance as we do, though we know not how long it may continue: But we have already declared the reasons that hinder us; therefore depart from hence, and go to the court of Bagdad, where you will meet with him that can decide your destiny. They told me the way I was to travel, and so I left them. On the road I caused my beard and eye-brows to be shaved, and took on a calender's habit. I have had a long journey; but at last arrived this evening in this city, where I met these my brother calenders at the gate, being strangers as well as myself. We wondered much at one another, to see all three blind, of the same eye; but we had not leisure to discourse long of our common calamities, having only so much time as to come hither to implore those favours which you have been generously pleased to grant us.

The third calender having finished this relation of his adventures, Zobeide addressed her speech to him and his fellow-calenders thus: Go wherever you think fit; you are all three at liberty. But one of them answered, madam, we beg you to pardon our curiosity, and permit us to hear those gentlemen's stories who have not yet spoken. Then the lady turned to that side where stood the caliph, the vizier Giafar, and Mesrour, whom she knew not; but said to them, It is now your turn to tell me your adventures; therefore speak.

The grand vizier Giafar, who had always been the spokesman, answered Zobeide thus: Madam, in order to obey you, we need only

repeat what we have said already, before we entered your house. We are merchants of Moussol, that came to Bagdad to sell our merchandise, which lies in the khan where we lodge. We dined to-day, with several other persons of our profession, at a merchant's house in this city; who, after he had treated us with choice dainties and excellent wines, sent for men and women dancers and musicians. The great noise we made brought in the watch, who arrested some of the company, but we had the good fortune to escape; and it being already late, and the door of our khan shut up, we knew not whither to retire. It was our hap, as we passed along this street, to hear mirth at your house, which made us determine to knock at your gate. This is all the account that we can give you in obedience to your commands.

Zobeide, having heard this discourse, seemed to hesitate as to what she should say; which the calenders perceiving, prayed her to grant the same favour to the three Moussol merchants as she had done to them. Well, then, said she, I give my consent, for you shall be all equally obliged to me; I pardon you all, provided you depart immediately out of this house, and go whither you please. Zobeide having given this command in a tone that signified she would be obeyed, the caliph, the vizier, Mesrour, the three calenders, and the porter, departed without saying one word; for the presence of the seven slaves with their weapons kept them in awe. When they were out of the house, and the door shut, the caliph said to the calenders, without making himself known, You gentlemen strangers, that are newly come to town, which way do you design to go, since it is not yet day? It is that which perplexes us, sir, said they. Follow us, replies the caliph, and we shall bring you out of danger. After saying these words, he whispered to the vizier, Take them along with you, and to-morrow morning bring them to me; I will cause their history to be put in writing, for it deserves a place in the annals of my reign. The vizier Giafar took the three calenders along with him; the porter went to his quarters, and the caliph and Mesrour returned to the palace. The caliph went to bed, but could not get a wink of sleep, his spirits being perplexed by the extraordinary things he had seen and heard; But, above all, he was most concerned to know who Zobeide was, what reason she could have to be so severe to the two black bitches, and why Amine had her bosom so mortified. Day began to appear whilst he was thinking upon these things: he arose and went to his council-chamber, where he used to give audience, and sat upon his throne.

The grand vizier came in a little after, and paid his respects as usual. Vizier, said the caliph, the affairs we have to consider at present are not very pressing; that of the three ladies and the two black bitches is much more so. My mind cannot be at ease till I be thoroughly satisfied in all those matters that have surprised me so much. Go, bring these ladies and the calenders at the same time; make haste, and remember that I do impatiently expect your return. The vizier, who knew his master's quick and fiery temper, made haste to obey, and went to the ladies, to whom he communicated, in a civil way, the orders he had to bring them before the caliph, without taking any notice of what had passed the night before at their house. The ladies put on their veils, and went with the vizier; as he passed by his own house, he took the three calenders along with him, and they, in the mean time, had got notice that they had both seen and spoken with the caliph

without knowing him. The vizier brought them to the palace with so much diligence, that the caliph was mightily pleased at it. This prince, that he might keep a good decorum before all the officers of his court who were then present, made those ladies be placed behind the hanging of the door of the room that was next his bedchamber, and kept by him the three calenders; who, by their respectful behaviour, gave sufficient proof that they were not ignorant before whom they had the honour to appear. When the ladies were placed, the caliph turned towards them, and said, When I shall acquaint you, that I came last night, disguised in a merchant's habit, into your house, it will certainly alarm you, and make you fear that you have offended me; and perhaps you believe that I have sent for you to no other end but to show some marks of my resentment: But be not afraid; you may rest assured that I have forgotten all that has passed, and am very well satisfied with your conduct. I wish that all the ladies of Bagdad had as much discretion as you have given proof of before me. I shall always remember the moderation you made use of, after the incivility we had committed. I was then a merchant of Moussol, but am at present Haroun Alraschid, the seventh caliph of the glorious house of Abbas, who holds the place of our great prophet. I have only sent for you to know who you are, and to ask for what reason one of you, after severely whipping the two black bitches, did weep with them? and I am no less curious to know why another of you has her bosom full of scars? Though the caliph pronounced these words very distinctly, so that the three ladies heard them well enough, yet the vizier Giafar did, out of ceremony, repeat them over again.

Zobeide, after the caliph by his discourse encouraged her, satisfied his curiosity in this manner.

THE STORY OF ZOBEIDE.

Commander of the faithful, says she, the relation I am about to give to your majesty is one of the strangest that ever was heard. The two black bitches and myself are sisters by the same father and mother; and I shall acquaint you by what strange accident they came to be metamorphosed. The two ladies that live with me, and are now here, are also my sisters by the father's side, but by another mother; she that has the scars on her breast is Amine, the other is Safie, and mine is Zobeide.

After our father's death, the estate that he left us was equally divided among us; and so soon as those two sisters received their portions, they went from me to live with their mother. My other two sisters and myself staid with our mother, who was then alive, and, when she died, left each of us a thousand sequins. As soon as we received our portions, the two elder (for I am the youngest) being married, followed their husbands, and left me alone. Some time after, my eldest sister's husband sold all that he had; and with that money, and my sister's portion, they both went into Africa, where her husband, by riotous living and

debauchery, spent all; when, finding himself reduced to poverty, he found a pretext for divorcing my sister, and put her away. She returned to this city, and having suffered incredible hardships by the way, came to me in so lamentable a condition, as would have moved the hardest heart to compassion. I received her with all the tenderness she could expect; and inquiring into the cause of her sad condition, she told me, with tears, how inhumanly her husband had dealt by her. I was so much concerned at her misfortune, that tears flowed from my eyes: I put her into a bagnio, and clothed her with my own apparel, and spoke to her thus: Sister, you are the elder, and I esteem you as my mother: During your absence, God has blessed the portion that fell to my share, and the employment I follow to feed and bring up silk-worms. Assure yourself that there is nothing I have but what is at your service and as much at your disposal as my own.

We lived very comfortably together for some months; and as we were often discoursing together about our third sister, and wondering we heard no news of her, she came in as bad a condition as the elder; her husband had treated her after the same manner, and I received her with the same affection as I had done the former. Some time after, my two sisters, on pretence that they would not be chargeable to me, told me they had thoughts to marry again. I answered them, that if their putting me to charge was the only reason, they might lay those thoughts aside, and be very welcome to stay with me; for what I had would be sufficient to maintain us all three, answerably to our condition: But, said I, I rather believe you have a mind to marry again; which if you have, I am sure it will very much surprise me: After the experience you have had of the small satisfaction there is in wedlock, is it possible you dare venture a second time? You know how rare it is to meet with a husband that is a real honest man. Believe what I say, and let us stay together, and live as comfortably as we can. All my persuasion was in vain; they were resolved to marry, and so they did; but, after some months were past, they came back again, and begged my pardon a thousand times for not following my advice. You are our youngest sister, said they, and abundantly more wise than we; but if you will vouchsafe to receive us once more into your house, and account us your slaves, we shall never commit such a fault again. My answer was, Dear sisters, I have not altered my mind with respect to you since we last parted from one another; come again, and take part of what I have. Upon this, I embraced them cordially, and we lived together as formerly.

We continued thus a whole year in perfect love and tranquillity; and seeing that God had increased my small stock, I projected a voyage by sea to hazard somewhat in trade. To this end, I went with my two sisters to Balsora, where I bought a ship ready fitted for sea, and loaded her with such merchandise as I brought from Bagdad. We set sail with a fair wind, and soon got through the Persian gulph; and when got into the ocean, we steered our course for the Indies, and saw land the twentieth day. It was a very high mountain, at the bottom of which we saw a great town; and having a fresh gale, we soon reached the harbour, where we cast anchor. I had not patience to stay till my sisters were dressed to go along with me, but went ashore in the boat myself; and making directly to the gate of the town, I saw there a great number of men upon guard, some sitting and others standing, with

batons in their hands; and they had all such dreadful countenances that they frightened me; but perceiving that they had no motion, nay not so much as with their eyes, I took courage, and went nearer, and then found they were all turned into stones. I entered the town, and passed through the several streets, where there stood every where men in several postures, but all immovable and petrified. On that side where the merchants lived, I found most of the shops shut, and, in such as were open, I likewise found the people petrified. I looked up to the chimnies, but saw no smoke; which made me conjecture that those within, as well as those without, were turned into stones. Being come into a vast square in the heart of the city, I perceived a great gate covered with plates of gold, the two leaves of which stood open, and a curtain of silk stuff seemed to be drawn before it; I also saw a lamp hanging over the gate. After I had well considered the fabric, I made no doubt but it was the palace of the prince who reigned over that country; and being very much astonished that I had not met with one living creature, I went thither in hopes to find some: I entered the gate, and was still more surprised when I saw none but the guards in the porches all petrified; some standing, some sitting, and others lying. I crossed over a large court, where I saw just before me a stately building, the windows of which were enclosed with gates of massy gold: I looked upon it to be the queen's apartment, and went into a large hall, where stood several black eunuchs turned into stone. I went from thence in to a room richly hung and furnished, where I perceived a lady in the same manner. I knew it to be the queen, by the crown of gold that hung over her head, and a necklace of pearl about her neck, each of them as big as a nut: I, went up close to her to view it, and never saw any thing finer, I stood some time, and admired the richness and magnificence of the room; but, above all, the foot-cloth, the cushions, and the sofas, which were all lined with Indian stuff of gold, with pictures of men and beasts in silver, drawn to admiration. I went out of the chamber where the petrified queen was, and came through several other apartments and closets richly furnished, and at last came into a vast large room, where there was a throne of massy gold raised several steps above the floor, and enriched with large enchased emeralds, and a bed upon the throne of rich stuff embroidered with pearls. That which surprised me more than all the rest was a sparkling light which came from above the bed: Being curious to know from whence it came, I mounted the steps, and lifting up my head, I saw a diamond, as big as the egg of an ostrich, lying upon a low stool: It was so pure, that I could not find the least blemish in it; and it sparkled so bright, that I could not endure its lustre when I saw it by day. On each side of the bed-head there stood a lighted flambeau, but for what use I could not apprehend; however, it made me imagine that there was some living creature in this place; for I could not believe that these torches continued burning of themselves. Several other rarities detained me in this room, which was inestimable, were it only for the diamond I mentioned.

The doors being all open, or but half shut, I surveyed some other apartments as fine as those I had already seen. I looked into the offices and store-rooms, which were full of infinite riches; and I was so much taken with the sight of all these wonderful things, that I forgot myself, and did not think on my ship or my sisters,

my whole design being to satisfy my curiosity: Meantime night came on, which put me in mind that it was time to retire. I was for returning by the same way I came in, but could not find it; I lost myself among the apartments; and finding I was come back again to that large room where the throne, the couch, the large diamond, and the torches stood, I resolved to make my night's lodging there, and to depart the next morning betimes, in order to get on board my ship. I laid myself down upon the couch, not without some dread to be alone in a wild place, and this fear hindered my sleep.

About midnight I heard a voice like that of a man reading the alcoran, after the same manner, and in the same tone, as we used to read it in our mosques. Being extremely glad to hear it, I got up immediately, and, taking a torch in my hand to light me, I passed from one chamber to another, on that side whence the voice issued; I came to the closet-door, where I stood still, not doubting that it came from thence. I set down my torch upon the ground, and looking through a window, I found it to be an oratory. In short, it had, as we have in our mosques, a niche, which shows where we must turn to say our prayers. There were also lamps hung up, and two candlesticks with large tapers of white wax burning. I saw a little carpet laid down like those we kneel upon when we say our prayers, and a comely young man sat upon this carpet reading the alcoran, which lay before him upon a desk, with great devotion. At the sight of this I was transported with admiration; I wondered how it came to pass that he should be the only living creature in a town where all the people were turned into stones, and did not doubt but that there was something in it very extraordinary. The door being only half shut, I opened it, and went in, and, standing upright before the niche, said this prayer aloud: 'Praise be to God, who has favoured us with a happy voyage; and may he be graciously pleased to protect us in the same manner, until we arrive again in our own country. Hear me, O Lord, and grant my request.' The young man cast his eyes upon me, and said, My good lady, pray let me know who you are, and what has brought you to this desolate city? In requital I will tell you who I am, what happened to me, why the inhabitants of this city are reduced to the state you see them in, and why I alone am safe and sound in the midst of such a terrible disaster. I told him in few words from whence I came, what made me undertake the voyage, and how I safely arrived at this port, after twenty days sailing; and when I had done, prayed him to perform his promise, and told him how much I was struck by the frightful desolation which I had seen in all places as I came along.

My dear lady, says the young man, have patience for a moment. At those words he shut the alcoran, put it into a rich case, and laid it in the niche. I took that opportunity to observe him, and perceived so much good nature and beauty in him, that I felt very strange emotions. He made me sit down by him, and, before he began his discourse, I could not forbear saying to him, with an air that discovered the sentiments I was inspired with, Amiable sir, dear object of my soul, I can scarcely have patience to wait for an account of all those wonderful things that I have seen since the first time I came into your city, and my curiosity cannot be satisfied too soon; therefore, pray, sir, let me know by what miracle you alone are left alive among so many persons

who have died in so strange a manner.

Madam, says the young man, you have given me to understand you have the knowledge of a true God, by the prayer you have just now addressed to him. I will acquaint you with a most remarkable effect of his greatness and power. You must know that this city was the metropolis of a mighty kingdom, over which the king my father reigned. That prince, his whole court, the inhabitants of the city, and all his other subjects, were magi, worshippers of fire, and of Nardoun, the ancient king of the giants, who rebelled against God. Though I was begotten and born of an adulterous father and mother, I had the good fortune in my youth to have a woman-governess who was a good Mussulman; I had the alcoran by heart, and understood the explanation of it perfectly well. Dear prince, would she oftentimes say, there is but one true God; take heed that you do not acknowledge or adore any other. She learned me to read Arabic, and the book she gave me to exercise upon was the alcoran. As soon as I was capable of understanding it, she explained to me all the heads of this excellent book, and infused piety into my mind, unknown to my father or any body else. She happened to die, but not before she had perfectly instructed me in all that was necessary to convince me of the Mussulman religion. After her death, I persisted with constancy in the belief I was in; and I abhor the false god Nardoun, as well as the adoration of fire.

About three years and some months ago, a thundering voice was heard, all of a sudden, so distinctly through the whole city, that nobody could miss hearing it. The words were these: 'Inhabitants, abandon the worship of Nardoun and of fire, and worship the only God that shows mercy.' This voice was heard three years successively, but nobody was converted: So the last day of the year, at four o'clock in the morning, all the inhabitants were changed in an instant into stone, every one in the same condition and posture in which he then happened to be. The king my father had the same fate, for he was metamorphosed into a black stone, as may be seen in this palace; and the queen my mother had the like destiny. I am the only person that did not suffer under that heavy judgment; and ever since I have continued to serve God with more fervency than before. I am persuaded, dear lady, that he has sent you hither for my comfort, for which I render him infinite thanks; for I must own that this solitary life is very uneasy.

All these expressions, and particularly the last, increased my love to him extremely. Prince, said I, there is no doubt that Providence hath brought me into your port to present you with an opportunity of withdrawing from this dismal place; the ship that I am come in may in some measure persuade you that I am in some esteem at Bagdad, where I have left also a considerable estate; and I dare engage to promise you sanctuary there, until the mighty commander of the faithful, who is vice regent to our prophet, whom you acknowledge, do you the honour that is due to your merit. This renowned prince lives at Bagdad; and as soon as he is informed of your arrival in his capital, you will find that it is not in vain to implore his assistance. It is impossible you can stay any longer in a city where all the objects you see must renew your grief: My vessel is at your service, where you may absolutely command as you shall think fit. He accepted the offer,

and we discoursed the remaining part of the night about our embarkation. As soon as it was day, we left the palace, and came on board my ship, where we found my sisters, the captain, and the slaves, all very much troubled about my absence. After I had presented my sisters to the prince, I told them what had hindered my return to the vessel the day before; how I had met with the young prince; his story, and the cause of the desolation of so fine a city.

The seamen were taken up several days in unloading the merchandise I brought along with me, and embarking, instead of that, all the precious things in the palace, as jewels, gold, and money. We left the furniture and goods, which consisted of an infinite quantity of plate, etc., because our vessel could not carry it; for it would have required several vessels more to carry all the riches to Bagdad which it was in our option to take with us. After we had loaded the vessel with what we thought fit, we took such provisions and water on board as were necessary for our voyage, (for we had still a great deal of those provisions left that we had taken in at Balsora;) and at last set sail with a favourable wind.

The young prince, my sisters, and myself, enjoyed ourselves for some time very agreeably. But, alas! this good understanding did not last long; for my sisters grew jealous of the friendship between the prince and me, and maliciously asked me one day, What we should do with him when we came to Bagdad? I perceived immediately that they put this question to me on purpose to discover my inclinations; therefore resolving to put it off with a jest, I answered them, I will take him for my husband; and upon that, turning myself to the prince, Sir, I humbly beg of you to give your consent; for, as soon as we come to Bagdad, I design to offer you my person to be your slave, to do you all the service that is in my power, and to resign myself wholly to your commands. The prince answered, I know not, madam, whether you are in jest or not; but, for my own part, I seriously declare before these ladies, your sisters, that from this moment I heartily accept your offer, not with any intention to have you as a slave, but as my lady and mistress; nor will I pretend to have any power over your actions. At these words my sisters changed colour, and I could easily perceive that afterwards they did not love me as formerly.

We were come into the Persian gulph, and not far from Balsora, where I hoped, considering the fair wind, we might have arrived the day following; but in the night, when I was asleep, my sisters watched their time, and threw me overboard. They did the same to the prince, who was drowned. I swam some minutes on the water; but by good fortune, or rather miracle, I felt ground. I went towards a black place, which, by what I could discern in the dark, seemed to be land, and actually was a flat on the coast: when day came, I found it to be a desert island, lying about twenty miles from Balsora. I soon dried my clothes in the sun; and as I walked along, found several sorts of fruit, and likewise fresh water, which gave me some hopes of preserving my life. I laid myself down in a shade, and soon after I saw a winged serpent, very large and long, coming towards me wriggling to the right and to the left, and hanging out his tongue, which made me think he had got some hurt. I rose, and saw a serpent still

larger following, holding him by the tail, and endeavouring to devour him, I had compassion on him, and, instead of flying away, had the boldness and courage to take up a stone that by chance lay by me, and threw it at the great serpent with all my strength, whom I hit on the head and killed. The other, finding himself at liberty, took to his wings and flew away. I looked a long while after him in the air, as being an extraordinary thing; but he flew out of sight, and I lay down again in another place in the shade, and fell asleep. When I awaked, judge how I was surprised to see a black woman by me, of a lively and agreeable complexion, who held two bitches tied together in her hand, of the same colour. I sat up, and asked her who she was? I am, said she, the serpent whom you delivered not long since from my mortal enemy. I know not how to acknowledge the great kindness you did me, except by doing what I have done. I know the treachery of your sisters, and, to revenge you as soon as I was set at liberty by your generous assistance, I called several of my companions together, fairies like myself. We have carried the loading that was in your vessel into your storehouses at Bagdad, and afterwards sunk it. These two black bitches are your sisters, whom I have transformed into this shape: but this punishment is not sufficient, for I will have you to treat them after such a manner as I shall direct.

At these words, the fairy took me fast under one of her arms, and the two bitches in the other, and carried me to my house at Bagdad, where I found all the riches, which were loaded on board my vessel, in my store-houses. Before she left me, she delivered me the two bitches, and told me, If you wish not to be changed into a bitch, as they are, I ordain you, in the name of him that governs the sea, to give each of your sisters every night a hundred lashes with a rod, for the punishment of the crime they have committed against your person, and the young prince whom they have drowned. I was forced to promise that I would obey her order. Since that time I have whipped them every night, though with regret, whereof your majesty has been a witness. I give evidence, by my tears, with how much sorrow and reluctance I must perform this cruel duty; and in this your majesty may see I am more to be pitied than blamed. If there be any thing else, with relation to myself, that you desire to be informed of, my sister Amine will give you the full discovery of it by the relation of her story.

The caliph heard Zobride with a great deal of astonishment, and desired his grand vizier to pray fair Amine to acquaint him wherefore her breast was marked with so many scars. Upon this, Amine addressed herself to the caliph, and began her story after this manner:

THE STORY OF AMINE.

Commander of the faithful, says she, to avoid repeating what your majesty has already heard from my sister's story, I shall only

add, that after my mother had taken a house for herself to live in during her widowhood, she gave me in marriage, with the portion my father left me, to a gentleman that had one of the best estates in this city. I had scarcely been a year married when I became a widow, and was left in possession of all my husband's estate, which amounted to ninety thousand sequins. The interest of this money was sufficient to maintain me very honourably. In the mean time, when my first six months' mourning was over, I caused to be made me ten suits of clothes, very rich, so that each suit came to a thousand sequins; and, when the year was past, I began to wear them.

One day, as I was busy all alone about my private affairs, one came to tell me that a lady desired to speak with me. I ordered that she should be brought in: She was a person well stricken in years; she saluted me by kissing the ground, and told me, kneeling, Dear lady, pray excuse the freedom I take; the confidence I have in your charity makes me thus bold: I must acquaint your ladyship that I have a daughter, an orphan, who is to be married this day; she and I are both strangers, and have no acquaintances at all in this town: this puts me in a perplexity, for we would have the numerous family with whom we are going to ally ourselves to think we are not, altogether strangers, and without credit: Therefore, most beautiful lady, if you would vouchsafe to honour the wedding with your presence, we shall be infinitely obliged to you; because the ladies of your country will then know that we are not looked upon here as despicable wretches, when they shall come to understand that a lady of your quality did us that honour. But, alas! madam, if you refuse this request, we shall be altogether disgraced, and dare not address ourselves to any other.

The poor woman's discourse, mingled with tears, moved my compassion. Good woman, said I, do not afflict yourself; I am willing to grant you the favour you desire; tell me what place I must come to, and I will meet you as soon as I am dressed. The old woman was so transported with joy at my answer, that she kissed my feet, without my being able to hinder her. Good charitable lady, said she, rising up, God will reward the kindness you have shown to your servants, and make your heart as joyful as you have made theirs. It is too soon yet to give yourself that trouble; it will be time enough when I come to call you in the evening: So farewell, madam, said she, until I have the honour to see you again. As soon as she was gone, I took the suit I liked best, with a necklace of large pearls, bracelets, pendants in my ears, and rings set with the finest and most sparkling diamonds; for my mind presaged what would befall me. When night drew on, the old woman came to call me with a countenance full of joy; she kissed my hands, and said, My dear lady, the relations of my son-in-law, who are the principal ladies of the town, are now met together; you may come when you please, I am ready to wait on you. We went immediately, she going before, and I followed her with a good number of my maids and slaves, very well dressed. We stopped in a large street, newly swept and watered, at a large gate, with a lantern before it, by the light of which I could read this inscription over the gate in golden letters: 'Here is the abode of everlasting pleasures and content.' The old woman knocked, and the gate was opened immediately. They brought me to the lower end of the court into a

large hall, where I was received by a young lady of admirable beauty; she came up to me, and after having embraced me, and made me sit down by her upon a sofa, where there was a throne of precious wood beset with diamonds, Madam, said she, you are brought hither to assist at a wedding; but I hope this marriage will prove otherwise than you expect. I have a brother, one of the handsomest men in the world; he has fallen so much in love with your beauty, that his fate depends wholly upon you, and he will be the unhappiest of men, if you do not take pity on him. He knows your quality, and I can assure you he is not unworthy of your alliance. If my prayers, madam, can prevail, I shall join them with his, and humbly beg you will not refuse the offer of being his wife.

After the death of my husband, I had no thoughts of marrying again; but I had not power to refuse the offer made by so charming a lady. As soon as I had given consent by silence, accompanied with a blush, the young lady clapped her hands, and immediately a closet-door opened, out of which came a young man of a majestic air, and of so graceful a behaviour, that I thought myself happy to have made so great a conquest. He sat down by me, and, by the discourse we had together, I found that his merits far exceeded the account his sister had given me of him. When she saw that we were satisfied one with another, she clapped her hands a second time, and out came a cad, or scrivener, who wrote our contract of marriage, signed it himself, and caused it to be attested by four witnesses he brought along with him. The only thing that my new spouse made me promise was, that I should not be seen nor speak with any other man but himself; and he vowed to me, upon that condition, that I should have no reason to complain of him. Our marriage was concluded and finished after this manner; so I became the principal actress in a wedding to which I was invited only as a guest.

After we had been married about a month, I had occasion for some stuffs; I asked my husband's leave to go out to buy them which he granted; and I took that old woman along with me of whom I spoke before, she being one of the family, with two of my own female slaves. When we came to the street where the merchants dwell, the old woman told me, Dear mistress, since you want silk stuffs, I must carry you to a young merchant of my acquaintance who has of all sorts, which will prevent your wearying yourself by going from one shop to another. I can assure you that he is able to furnish you with that which nobody else can. I was easily persuaded, and we entered into a shop belonging to a young merchant. I sat down and bid the old woman desire him to show me the finest silk stuffs he had: The woman bid me speak myself; but, I told her it was one of the articles of my marriage-contract not to speak to any man but my husband, and that I must keep to it. The merchant showed me several stuffs, of which one pleased me better than the rest. I bid her ask the price. He answered the old woman, I will not sell it for gold or money, but I will make her a present of it, if she will give me leave to kiss her cheek. I bid the old woman tell him that he was very rude to propose such a thing. But, instead of obeying me, she said, What the merchant desires of you is no such great matter; you need not speak, but only present him your cheek, and the business will soon be done. The stuff pleased me so much, that I was foolish enough to take her advice. The old woman and

my slaves stood up, that nobody might see, and I put up my veil; but, instead of a kiss, the merchant bit me till the blood came. The pain and surprise were so great, that I fell down in a swoon, and continued in it so long, that the merchant had time to shut his shop, and fly for it. When I came to myself, I found my cheek all bloody: The old woman and my slaves took care to cover it with my veil, lest the people who came about us should perceive; but they supposed it only a fainting-fit. The old woman that was with me, being extremely troubled at the accident, endeavoured to comfort me: My dear mistress, said she, I beg your pardon, for I am the cause of this misfortune, having brought you to this merchant because he is my countryman; but I never thought he could be capable of so vile an action. But do not grieve; let us make haste to go home. I will give you a medicine that will perfectly cure you in three days time, so that the least mark will not be seen. The fit had made me so weak, that I was scarcely able to walk; but at last I got home, where I had a second fit as I went into my chamber. Meanwhile the old woman applied her remedy, so that I came to myself, and went to bed.

My husband came to me at night, and seeing my head bound up, asked the reason. I told him I had the headache, and hoped he would inquire no further; but he took a candle, and saw that my cheek was hurt: How comes this wound? said he. Though I was not very guilty, yet I could not think of owning the thing: besides, to make such confession to a husband, was somewhat indecent; therefore I told him, that as I was going to seek for that stuff you gave me leave to buy, a porter carrying a load of wood came so close by me, as I went through a narrow street, that one of the sticks gave me a rub on my cheek; but it is not much hurt. This put my husband into such a passion, that he vowed it should not go unpunished; for he should to-morrow give orders to the lieutenant of the police to seize upon all those brutes of porters, and cause them to be hanged. Being afraid to occasion the death of so many innocent persons, I told him, Sir, I should be sorry that so great a piece of injustice should be committed. Pray, do not do it; for I should judge myself unpardonable, if I were the cause of so much mischief. Then tell me sincerely, said he, how you came by this wound? I answered, that it came through the inadvertency of a broom-seller upon an ass, who coming behind me, and looking another way, his ass gave me such a push, that I fell down, and hurt my cheek upon some glass. Is it so? said my husband, then to-morrow morning, before sun-rise, the grand vizier Giafar shall have an account of this insolence, and he shall cause all the broom-sellers to be put to death. For the love of God, sir, said I, let me beg of you to pardon them, for they are not guilty. How, madam, said he, what is it I must believe? Speak, for I am absolutely resolved to know the truth from your own mouth. Sir, said I, I was taken with a giddiness, and fell down; and that is the whole matter. At these last words, my husband lost all patience. Oh! cried he, I have given ear to your lies too long. With that, clapping his hands, in came three slaves: Pull her out of bed, said he, and lay her in the middle of the floor. The slaves obeyed his orders, one holding me by the head, and another by the feet: he commanded the third to fetch him a scimitar, and when he had brought it, Strike, said he, cut her in two in the middle, and then throw her into the Tigris to feed the fishes. This is the punishment I give to those to whom I have given my heart, if they falsify their promise. When he saw

that the slave made no haste to obey his orders, Why do not you strike? said he; who is it that holds you? what art thou waiting for?

Madam, then, said the slave, as you are near the last moment of your life, consider if you have, any thing to dispose of before you die. I begged to be allowed to speak one word, which was granted me. I lifted up my head, and looking wistfully to my husband, Alas, said I, to what condition am I reduced? must I then die in the prime of my youth? I could say no more, for my tears and sighs prevented me. My husband was not at all moved, but to the contrary, went on to reproach me; so that to have made an answer would have been in vain. I had recourse to entreaties and prayers; but he had no regard to them, and commanded the slaves to proceed to execution. The old woman that had been his nurse came in just at that moment, fell down upon her knees, and endeavoured to appease his wrath: My son, said she, since I have been your nurse, and brought you up, let me beg the favour of you to grant me her life; consider that he who kills shall be killed, that you will stain your reputation, and lose the esteem of mankind. What will not the world say of such a bloody rage? She spoke these words in such a taking away, accompanied with tears, that she gained upon him at last. Well, then, says he to his nurse, for your sake I will spare her life; but she shall carry some marks along with her, to make her remember her crime. With that, one of the slaves, by his order, gave me so many blows, as hard as he could strike, with a little cane, upon my sides and breast, that he fetched both skin and flesh away, so that I lay senseless: after that he caused the same slaves, the executioners of his fury, to carry me into a house, where the old woman took care of me. I kept my bed four months; at last I recovered; but the scars you saw yesterday have remained ever since.

As soon as I was able to walk and go abroad, I resolved to go to the house which was my own by my first husband, but I could not find the place. My second husband, in the heat of his wrath, was not content to have it razed to the ground, but caused all the street where it stood to be pulled down. I believe such a violent proceeding was never heard of before; but against whom should I make my complaint? The author had taken such care, that he was not to be found, neither could I know him again if I saw him; and suppose I had known him, is it not easily seen that the treatment I met with proceeded from absolute power? How then dared I make any complaints.

Being destitute and unprovided of every thing, I had recourse to my dear sister Zobeide, who gave your majesty just now an account of her adventures; to her I made known my misfortune; she received me with her accustomed goodness, and advised me to bear it with patience. This is the way of the world, said she, which either robs us of our means, our friends, or our lovers, and oftentimes of all at once; and at the same time, to confirm what she had said, she gave me an account of the loss of the young prince, occasioned by the jealousy of her two sisters; she told me also by what accident they were transformed into bitches; and, in the last place, after a thousand testimonials of her love towards me, she showed me my youngest sister, who had likewise taken sanctuary wish her after the death of her mother.

Thus we gave God thanks, who had brought us together again, resolving to live a single life, and never to separate any more, for we have enjoyed this peaceable way of living many years; and as it was my business to mind the affairs of the house, I always took pleasure to go myself, and buy in what we wanted. I happened to go abroad yesterday, and the things I bought I caused to be brought home by a porter, who proved to be a sensible and jocose fellow, and we kept him by us for a little diversion. Three calenders happened to come to our door as it began to grow dark, and prayed us to give them shelter until next morning: we gave them entrance upon certain conditions, to which they agreed; and after we had made them sit down at the table by us, they gave us a concert of music after their fashion, and at the same time we heard a knocking at our gate. These were the three merchants of Moussol, men of a very good mien, who begged the same favour which the calenders had obtained before: we consented upon the same conditions, but neither of them kept their promise; and though we had power as well as justice on our side to punish them, yet we contented ourselves with demanding from them the history of their lives, and consequently bounded our revenge with dismissing them after they had done, and depriving them of the lodging they demanded.

The caliph Haroun Alraschid was very well satisfied with these strange stories, and declared publicly his astonishment at what he had heard. Having satisfied his curiosity, he thought himself obliged to give some marks of grandeur and generosity to the calender princes, and also to give the three ladies some proofs of his bounty. He himself, without making use of his minister the grand vizier, said to Zobeide, Madam, did not this fairy, that showed herself to you in the shape of a serpent, and imposed such a rigorous command upon you, tell you where her place of abode was? or rather did she not promise to see you, and restore those bitches to their natural shape? Commander of the faithful, answered Zobeide, I forgot to tell your majesty, that the fairy left with me a bundle of hair, saying withal that her presence would one day stand me in stead; and then, if I only burnt two tufts of this hair, she would be with me in a moment, though she were beyond mount Caucasus. Madam, says the caliph, where is the bundle of hair? She answered, Ever since that time, I have had such a particular care of it, that I always carry it about with me: Upon which she pulled it out, opened the case a little where it was, and showed it him. Well, then, said the caliph, let us make the fairy come hither; you could not call her in a better time, for I long to see her. Zobeide having consented to it, fire was brought in, and she threw the whole bundle of hair into it. The Palace began to shake at that very instant, and the fairy appeared before the caliph in the shape of a lady very richly dressed. Commander of the faithful, said she to the prince, you see I am ready to come and receive your commands. The lady that gave me this call by your order, did me a particular piece of service: to make my gratitude appear, I revenged her of her sisters' inhumanity by changing them into bitches; but, if your majesty command, I shall restore them to their former shape. Handsome fairy, said the caliph, you cannot do me a greater pleasure; vouchsafe them that favour, and after that I will find out some means to comfort them for their hard penance; But, besides, I have another boon to ask in favour of this lady who has had such cruel usage from an unknown husband; and as you

undoubtedly know a great many things, we have reason to believe you cannot, be ignorant of this; oblige me with the name of this unfeeling fellow, who could not be contented to exercise his cruelty upon her person, but has also most unjustly taken from her all the substance she had I only wonder that such an unjust and inhuman action could be performed in spite of my authority, and not come to my ears. To serve your majesty, answered the fairy, I will restore the two bitches to their former state, and cure the lady of her scars, so that it will never appear she was so beaten; after which I will tell you who it was that did it. The caliph sent for the two bitches from Zobeide's house, and when they came, a glass of water was brought to the fairy at her desire: she pronounced some words over it which nobody understood; then throwing some part of it upon Amine, and the rest upon the bitches, the latter became two ladies of surprising beauty, and the scars that were upon Amine vanished away. After which the fairy said to the caliph, Commander of the faithful, I must now discover to you, the unknown husband you inquire after: he is very nearly related to yourself; for it is Prince Amin, your eldest son, who, falling passionately in love with this lady by the fame he had heard of her beauty, by an intrigue got her brought to his house, where he married her. As to the strokes he caused to be given her, he is in some measure excusable; for his spouse had been a little too easy, and the excuses she made were calculated to make him believe that she was more faulty than she really was. This is all I can say to satisfy your curiosity. At these words she saluted the caliph, and vanished.

The prince, being filled with admiration, and having much satisfaction the changes that had happened through his means, did such things as will perpetuate his memory to future ages. First, he sent for his son Amin, and told him that he was informed of his secret marriage, and how he had wounded Amine upon a very slight cause; upon which the prince did not wait for his father's commands, but received her again immediately. After this, the caliph declared that he would give his own heart and hand to Zobeide, and offered the other three sisters to the calenders, who accepted them with a great deal of joy. The caliph assigned to each a magnificent palace in the city of Bagdad, promoted them to the highest dignities, and admitted them to his councils. The town-clerk of Bagdad, being called with witnesses, wrote the contracts of marriage; and the famous caliph Haroun Alraschid, by making the fortunes of so many persons who had undergone such incredible misfortunes, drew a thousand blessings upon himself.

THE STORY OF SINDBAD THE SAILOR.

Dinarzade having awaked her sister the sultaness as usual, prayed her to tell her another story. Scheherazade asked leave of the sultan, and having obtained it, began thus: Sir, in the reign of the same caliph Haroun Alraschid, whom I formerly mentioned, there lived at Bagdad a poor porter called Hindbad. One day, when the weather was very hot, he was employed to carry a heavy burden

from one end of the town to the other. Being very weary, and having still a great way to go, he came into a street, where the delicate western breeze blew on his face, and the pavement of the street being sprinkled with rose water, he could not desire a better place to rest in; therefore, laying off his burden, he sat down by it near a great house. He was mightily pleased that he had stopped in this place, for an agreeable smell of wood of aloes and of pastils, that came from the house, mixing with the scent of the rose water, did completely perfume the air. Besides, he heard from within a concert of several sorts of instrumental music, accompanied with the harmonies of nightingales, and other birds peculiar to that climate. This charming melody, and the smell of several sorts of victuals, made the porter think there was a feast, with great rejoicings within. His occasions leading him seldom that way, he knew not who dwelt in the house; but, to satisfy his curiosity, he went to some of the servants, whom he saw standing at the gate in magnificent apparel, and asked the name of the master of the house. How, replied one of them, do you live in Bagdad, and know not that this is the house of Signior Sindbad, the sailor, that famous traveller who has sailed round the world? The porter, who had heard of Sindbad's riches, could not but envy a man whose condition he thought to be as happy as his own was deplorable; and his mind being fretted with these reflections, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and says, loud enough to be heard, Almighty Creator of all things, consider the difference between Sindbad and me. I am every day exposed to fatigues and calamities, and can scarcely get coarse barley bread for myself and family, whilst happy Sindbad profusely expends immense riches, and leads a life of continual pleasure. What has he done to obtain from thee a lot so agreeable, and what have I done to deserve one so miserable? Having finished this

expostulation, he struck his foot against the ground, like a man overwhelmed with grief and despair. While the porter was thus indulging his melancholy, a servant came out of the house, and taking him by the arm, bid him follow him, for Signior Sindbad, his master, wanted to speak with him.

Your majesty may easily imagine that poor Hindbad was not a little surprised at this compliment; for, considering what he had said, he was afraid Sindbad had sent for him to punish him; therefore he would have excused himself, alleging that he could not leave his burden in the middle of the street. But Sindbad's servants assured him they would look to it, and pressed the porter so that he was obliged to yield. The servants brought him into a large hall, where a number of people sat round a table covered with all sorts of fine dishes. At the upper end there sat a grave, comely, venerable gentleman, with a long white beard, and behind him stood officers and domestics ready to serve him; this grave gentleman was Sindbad. The porter, whose fear was increased at the sight of so many people, and of a banquet so sumptuous, saluted the company tremblingly. Sindbad bid him draw near, and setting him down at his right hand, served him himself, and gave him excellent wine, of which there was good store upon the side-board.

When dinner was over, Sindbad began his discourse to Hindbad; and calling him brother, according to the manner of the Arabians when they are familiar one to another, he asked him his name and

employment. Signior, answered he, my name is Hindbad. I am very glad to see you, replies Sindbad; and I dare to say the same for all the company: but I would be glad to hear, from your own mouth, what it was you said a while ago in the street; for Sindbad had heard it himself through the window before he sat down to table; and that occasioned his calling for him. Hindbad, being surprised at the question, hung down his head, and replied, Signior, I confess that my weariness put me out of humour, and occasioned me to speak some indiscreet words, which I beg you to pardon. Oh, do not you think I am so unjust, replies Sindbad, to resent such a thing as that; I consider your condition, and, instead of upbraiding you with your complaints, I am sorry for you; but I must rectify your mistake concerning myself. You think, no doubt, that I have acquired, without labour or trouble, the ease and conveniency which I now enjoy. But do not mistake yourself; I did not attain to this happy condition without enduring more trouble of body and mind for several years than can well be imagined. Yes, gentleman, adds he, speaking to the company, I can assure you my troubles were so extraordinary, that they were capable of discouraging the most covetous men from undertaking such voyages as I did to acquire riches. Perhaps you have never heard a distinct account of the wonderful adventures and dangers I met with in my seven voyages; and, since I have this opportunity, I am willing to give you a faithful account of them, not doubting that it will be acceptable. And because Sindbad was to tell this story particularly on the porter's account, he ordered his burden to be carried to the place appointed, and began thus:

THE STORY OF SINDBAD THE SAILOR.

His First Voyage.

My father left me a considerable estate, most part of which I spent in debauches during my youth; but I perceived my error, and called to mind that riches were perishable, and quickly considered, that by my irregular way of living, I wretchedly misspent my time, which is the most valuable thing in the world. I remembered the saying of the great Solomon, which I frequently heard from my father, that death is more tolerable than poverty. Being struck with those reflections, I gathered together the ruins of my estate, and sold all my moveables in the public market to the highest bidder. Then I entered into a contract with some merchants that traded by sea, took the advice of those whom I thought most capable to give it, and resolving to improve what money I had, went to Balsora, a port in the Persian gulph, and embarked with several merchants, who joined with me in fitting out a ship on purpose.

We set sail, steering our course towards the East Indies through the Persian gulph, which is formed by the coasts of Arabia Felix

on the right, by those of Persia on the left, and, according to common account, is seventy leagues in the broadest place. The eastern sea, like that of the Indies, is very spacious. It is bounded on one side by the coast of Abyssinia, and 4500 leagues in length to the isles of Vakvak[Footnote: These islands, according; to the Arabians, are beyond China: and are so called from a tree which bears a fruit of that name. They are, without doubt, the isles of Japan; but they are not, however, so far from Abyssinia.]. At first I was troubled with sea-sickness, but speedily recovered, and was not afterwards troubled with that disease.

In our voyage we touched at several islands, where we sold or exchanged our goods. One day, whilst under sail, we were becalmed near a little island, even almost with the surface of the water, which resembled a green meadow. The captain ordered his sails to be furled, and suffered such persons as had a mind to land upon the island, amongst whom I was one. But while we were diverting ourselves with eating and drinking, and refreshing ourselves from the fatigue of the sea, the island trembled all of a sudden, and shook us terribly. They perceived the trembling of the island on board the ship, and called to us to re-embark speedily, else we should be all lost; for what we took for an island was only the back of a whale. The nimblest got into the sloop, others betook themselves to swimming; but, for my part, I was still upon the back of the whale, when he dived into the sea, and I had time only to catch hold of a piece of wood that we had brought out of the ship to make a fire. Meanwhile the captain, having received those on board who were in the sloop, and taken up some of those that swam, resolved to improve the favourable gale that was just risen, and, hoisting his sails, pursued his voyage, so that it was impossible to recover the ship. Thus was I exposed to the mercy of the waves, and struggled for my life all the rest of the day and the following night. Next morning I found my strength gone, and despaired of saving my life, when a wave threw me happily against an island. The bank was high and rugged, so that I should scarcely have got up, had it not been for some roots of trees which fortune seemed to have preserved in this place for my safety. Being got up, I lay down upon the ground half dead, until such time as the sun appeared. Then, though I was very feeble, both by reason of my hard labour and want of victuals, I crept along to seek for some herbs fit to eat, and had not only the good luck to find some, but likewise a spring of excellent water, which contributed much to recover me. After this I advanced further into the island, and came at last into a fine plain, where I perceived a horse feeding at a great distance. I went towards him between hope and fear, not knowing whether I was going to lose my life or to save it. When I came near, I perceived it to be a very fine mare tied to a stake. Whilst I looked upon her, I heard the voice of a man from under ground, who immediately appeared to me, and asked who I was? I gave him an account of my adventure; after which, taking me by the hand, he led me into a cave, where there were several other people, no less amazed to see me than I was to see them. I ate some victuals which they offered me; and then, having asked them what they did in such a desert place, they answered, that they were grooms belonging to King Mihrage, sovereign of the island; and that every year, at the same season, they brought thither the king's mares, and fastened them as I saw that mare, until they were

covered by a horse that came out of the sea, who, after he had done so, endeavoured to destroy the mares, but they hindered him by their noise, and obliged him to return to the sea; after which they carried home the mares, whose foals were kept for the king's use, and called sea-horses. They added, that we were to get home to-morrow, and had I been one day later, I must have perished, because the inhabited part of the island was at a great distance, and it would have been impossible for me to have got thither without a guide.

Whilst they entertained me thus, the horse came out of the sea, as they had told me, covered the mare, and afterwards would have devoured her; but, upon a great noise made by the grooms, he left her, and went back to the sea.

Next morning they returned with their mares to the capital of the island, took me with them, and presented me to King Mihrage. He asked me who I was, and by what adventure I came into his dominions? After I had satisfied him, he told me he was much concerned for my misfortune, and at the same time ordered that I should want nothing; which his officers were so generous and careful as to see exactly fulfilled.

Being a merchant, I frequented men of my own profession, and particularly inquired for those who were strangers, if perhaps I might hear any news from Bagdad, or find an opportunity to return thither; for King Mihrage's capital is situate on the bank of the sea, and has a fine harbour, where ships arrive daily from different quarters of the world. I frequented also the society of the learned Indians, and took delight to hear them discourse; but withal I took care to make my court regularly to the king, and conversed with the governors and petty kings, his tributaries, that were about him. They asked me a thousand questions about my country; and being willing to inform myself as to their laws and customs, I asked them every thing which I thought worth knowing. There belongs to this king an island named Cassel; they assured me, that every night a noise of drums was heard there, whence the mariners fancied that it was the residence of Degial [Footnote: Degial, to the Mahometans, is the same with antichrist to us. According to them, he is to appear about the end of the world, and will conquer all the earth, except Mecca, Medina, Tarsus, and Jerusalem, which are to be preserved by angels, whom he shall set round them.]. I had a great mind to see this wonderful place, and in my way thither saw fishes of an hundred and two hundred cubits long, that occasion more fear than hurt; for they are so fearful, that they will fly upon the rattling of two sticks or boards. I saw likewise other fishes about a cubit in length, that had heads like owls.

As I was one day at the port after my return, a ship arrived. As soon as she cast anchor, they began to unload her, and the merchants on board ordered their goods to be carried into the magazine. As I cast my eye upon some bales, and looked to the name I found my own, and perceived the bales to be the same that I had embarked at Balsora. I also knew the captain; but, being persuaded that he believed me to be drowned, I went and asked him whose bales these were? He replied, that they belonged to a merchant of Bagdad, called Sindbad, who came to sea with him; but one day, being near an island, as we thought, he went ashore,

with several other passengers, upon this supposed island, which was only a monstrous whale that lay asleep upon the surface of the water; but as soon as he felt the heat of the fire they had kindled upon his back to dress some victuals, he began to move, and dived under water, when most of the persons who were upon him perished, and among them the unfortunate Sindbad. These bales belong to him, and I am resolved to trade with them, until I meet with some of his family, to whom I may return the profit.

Captain, says I, I am that Sindbad whom you thought to be dead, and these bales are mine. When the captain heard me speak thus, O heaven, says he, whom can we ever trust now-a-days? There is no faith left among men. I saw Sindbad perish with my own eyes, and the passengers on board saw it as well as I, and yet you tell me that you are that Sindbad? What impudence is this? To look on you, one would take you to be a man of probity; and yet you tell a horrible falsehood, in order to possess yourself of what does not belong to you. Have patience, captain, replied I; do me the favour to hear what I have to say. Very well, says he, speak; I am ready to hear you. Then I told him how I escaped, and by what adventure I met with the grooms of King Mihrage, who brought me to his court.

The captain began to abate of his confidence upon my discourse, and was soon persuaded that I was no cheat; for there came people from his ship who knew me, made me great compliments, and testified a great deal of joy to see me alive. At last he knew me himself, and embracing me, Heaven be praised, says he, for your happy escape! I cannot enough express my joy for it; there are your goods, take and do with them what you will. I thanked him, acknowledged his probity, and in requital offered him part of my goods as a present, which he generously refused. I took out what was most valuable in my bales, and presented it to King Mihrage, who, knowing my misfortune, asked me how I came by such rarities? I acquainted him with the whole story. He was mightily pleased at my good luck, accepted my present, and gave me one much more considerable in return. Upon this, I took leave of him, and went on board the same ship, after I had exchanged my goods for the commodities of the country. I carried with me the wood of aloes, sanders, camphire, nutmegs, cloves, pepper, and ginger. We passed by several islands, and at last arrived at Balsora, from whence I came to this city, with the value of one hundred thousand sequins[Footnote: The Turkish sequin is about nine shillings sterling.]. My family and I received one another with all the transport that can arise from true and sincere friendship. I bought slaves of both sexes, fine lands, and built me a great house. Thus I settled myself, resolving to forget the miseries I had suffered, and to enjoy the pleasures of life.

Sindbad stopped here, and ordered the musicians to go on with their concert, which his story had interrupted. The company continued to eat and drink until the evening, when it was time to retire. Sindbad sent for a purse of one hundred sequins, and, giving it to the porter, says, Take this, Hindbad, return to your home, and come back to-morrow to hear some more of my adventures. The porter went home, astonished at the honour done him, and the present made him. The relation of it was very agreeable to his wife and children, who did not fail to return God thanks for what he had sent them by the hands of Sindbad. Hindbad put on his best clothes next day, and returned to the bountiful traveller, who

received him with a pleasant air, and caressed him mightily. When all the guests were come, dinner was set upon the table, and continued a long time. When it was ended, Sindbad, addressing himself to the company, says, Gentlemen, be pleased to give me audience, and listen to the adventures of my second voyage; they better deserve your attention than the first. Upon this, every one held his peace, and Sindbad proceeded:

The Second Voyage of Sindbad the Sailor.

I intended, after my first voyage, to spend the rest of my days at Bagdad, as I had the honour to tell you yesterday; but it was not long ere I grew weary of a quiet life. My inclination to travel revived. I bought goods proper for the commerce I designed, and put to sea a second time with merchants of known probity. We embarked on board a good ship, and, after recommending ourselves to God, set sail: We traded from island to island, and exchanged commodities with great profit. One day we landed upon an isle covered with several sorts of fruit-trees, but so deserted that we could see neither man nor horse upon it. We went to take a little fresh air in the meadows, and along the streams that watered them. Whilst some diverted themselves with gathering flowers, and others with gathering fruits, I took my wine and provisions, and sat down by a stream betwixt two great trees which formed a curious shade. I made a very good meal, and afterwards fell asleep. I cannot tell how long I slept, but, when I awaked, the ship was gone. I was very much surprised, but got up, looking about every where, and could not see one of the merchants who landed with me. At last I perceived the ship under sail, but at such a distance, that I lost sight of her in a very little time.

I leave you to guess at my melancholy reflections in this sad condition, I was like to die of grief, cried out sadly, beat my head and breast, and threw myself down upon the ground, where I lay some time in terrible agony, one afflicting thought being succeeded by another still more afflicting. I upbraided myself an hundred times for not being content with the product of my first voyage, that might very well have served me all my life. But all this was vain, and my repentance out of season. At last I resigned myself to the will of God; and, not knowing what to do, I climbed to the top of a great tree, from whence I looked about on all sides to see if there were any thing that could give me hopes. When I looked towards the sea, I could see nothing but sky and water; but, on looking towards the land, I saw something white; coming down from the tree I took up what provisions I had left, and went towards it, the distance being so great that I could not distinguish what it was.

When I came nearer, I thought it to be a white bowl, of a prodigious height and bigness; and when I came up to it, I touched it, and found it to be very smooth. I went round to see if it was open on any side, but saw it was not, and it was so

smooth that there was no climbing to the top of it. It was at least fifty paces round.

By this time the sun was ready to set, and all of a sudden the sky became as dark as if it had been covered with a thick cloud. I was much astonished at this sudden darkness, but much more when I found it occasioned by a bird of monstrous size, that came flying towards me. I remembered a fowl called *roc, that I had often heard mariners speak of, and conceived that the great bowl, which I so much admired, must needs be its egg. In short, the bird lighted, and sat over the egg to hatch it. As I perceived her coming, I crept close to the egg, so that I had before me one of the legs of the bird, that was as big as the trunk of a tree; I tied myself strongly to it with the cloth that went round my turban, in hopes that when the roc [Footnote: Mark Paul in his Travels, and Father Martini in his History of China, speak each of this bird, and say it will take up an elephant and a rhinoceros.] flew away next morning, she would carry me with her out of this desert island. After having passed the night in this condition, the bird actually flew away next morning as soon as it was day, and carried me so high that I could not see the earth; she afterwards descended all of a sudden, and with so much rapidity, that I lost my senses. But when the roc was sat, and I found myself on the ground, I speedily untied the knot, and had scarcely done so, when the bird, having taken up a serpent of a monstrous length in her bill, flew straight away. The place where it left me was a very deep valley, encompassed on all sides with mountains so high, that they seemed to reach above the clouds, and so full of steep rocks, that there was no possibility to get out of the valley. This was a new perplexity upon me; so that, when I compared this place with the desert island the roc brought me from, I found that I had gained nothing by the change.

As I walked through this valley, I perceived that it was strewed with diamonds, some of which were of a surprising bigness. I took a great deal of pleasure to look upon them, but speedily saw at a distance such objects as very much diminished my satisfaction, and which I could not look upon without terror; there were a great number of serpents, so big, and so long, that the least of them was capable of swallowing an elephant. They retired in the day-time to their dens, where they hid themselves from the roc, their enemy, and did not come out but in the night-time. I spent the day in walking about the valley, resting myself at times, in such places as I thought most commodious. When night came on, I went into a cave, where I thought I might be in safety; I stopped the mouth of it, which was low and straight, with a great stone, to preserve me from the serpents, but not so exactly fitted as to hinder light from coming in. I supped on part of my provisions; but the serpents, which began to appear, hissing about in the mean time, put me into such extreme fear, that you may easily imagine I did not sleep. When day appeared, the serpents retired, and I came out of the cave trembling; I can truly say, that I walked a long time upon diamonds, without having a mind to touch any of them. At last I sat down, and, notwithstanding my uneasiness, not having shut my eyes during the night, I fell asleep, after having ate a little more of my provisions. But I had scarcely shut my eyes, when something that fell by me with a great noise awakened me, and this was a great piece of fresh meat; at the same time I saw several others fall down from the

rocks in different places.

I always looked upon it to be a fable, when I heard mariners and others discourse of the valley of diamonds, and of the stratagems made use of by some merchants to get jewels from thence; but I found it to be true; for, in reality, those merchants come to the neighbourhood of this valley when the eagles have young ones, and throwing great joints of meat into it, the diamonds upon whose points they fall stick to them: The eagles, which are stronger in this country than any where else, fall down with great force upon these pieces of meat, and carry them to their nests upon the top of the rocks, to feed their young ones with; at which time the merchants, running to these nests, frighten the eagles by their noise, and take away the diamonds that stick to the meat. And this stratagem they made use of to get the diamonds out of the valley, which is surrounded with such precipices that nobody can enter it. I believed, till then, that it was not possible for me to get out of this abyss, which I looked upon as my grave; but then I changed my mind, for the falling in of those pieces of meat put me in hopes of a way to save my life. I began to gather together the greatest diamonds I could see, and put them into a leather bag in which I used to carry my provisions. I afterwards took the largest piece of meat I could find, tied it close round me with the cloth of my turban, and then laid myself upon the ground with my face downward, the bag of diamonds being tied fast to my girdle, so that it could not possibly drop off. I had scarcely laid me down when the eagles came; each of them seized a piece of meat, and one of the strongest having taken me up with the piece of meat on my back, carried me to his nest on the top of the mountain. The merchants fell straightway a-shooting to frighten the eagles; and when they had forced them to quit their prey, one of them came up to the nest where I was: He was very much afraid when he saw me; but recovering himself, instead of inquiring how I came hither, he began to quarrel with me, and asked why I stole his goods? You will treat me, replied I, with more civility, when you know me better. Do not trouble yourself; I have diamonds enough for you and me too, more than all the merchants together. If they have any, it is by chance; but I chose myself, in the bottom of the valley, all those which you see in this bag; and, having spoken these words, I showed him them. I had scarcely done speaking, when the other merchants came trooping about us, very much astonished to see me; but they were much more surprised when I told them my story; yet they did not so much admire my stratagem to save myself, as my courage to attempt it. They carried me to the place where they staid all together, and there having opened my bag, they were surprised at the largeness of my diamonds, and confessed, that in all the courts where they had been, they never saw any that came near them. I prayed the merchant, to whom the nest belonged whither I was carried, (for every merchant had his own,) to take as many for his share as he pleased: He contented himself with one, and that too the least of them; and when I pressed him to take more without fear of doing me any injury, No, says he, I am very well satisfied with this, which is valuable enough to save me the trouble of making any more voyages, and to raise as great a fortune as I desire.

I spent the night with these merchants, to whom I told my story a second time, for the satisfaction of those who had not heard it.

I could not moderate my joy, when I found myself delivered from the danger I have mentioned; I thought myself to be in a dream, and could scarcely believe myself to be out of danger. The merchants had thrown their pieces of meat into the valley for several days; and each of them being satisfied with the diamonds that had fallen to his lot, we left the place next morning all together, and travelled near high mountains, where there were serpents of a prodigious length, which we had the good fortune to escape. We took the first port, and came to the isle of Ropha, where trees grow that yield camphire. This tree is so large, and its branches so thick, that a hundred men may easily sit under its shade. The juice, of which the camphire is made, runs out from a hole bored in the upper part of the tree, is received in a vessel, where it grows to a consistency, and becomes what we call camphire; and the juice being thus drawn out, the tree withers and dies. There is here also the rhinoceros, a creature less than the elephant, but greater than the buffalo: it has a horn upon its nose about a cubit long; which is solid, and cleft in the middle from one end to the other, and there are upon it white draughts, representing the figure of a man. The rhinoceros fights with the elephant, runs his horn into his belly, and carries him off upon his head; but the blood and the fat of the elephant running into his eyes, and making him blind, he falls to the ground; and, what is astonishing, the roc comes and carries them both away in her claws, to be meat for her young ones.

I pass over many other things peculiar to this island, lest I should be troublesome to you. Here I exchanged some of my diamonds for good merchandise. From thence we went to other isles; and at last, having traded at several trading towns off the firm land, we landed at Balsora, from whence I went to Bagdad. There I immediately gave great alms to the poor, and lived honourably upon the vast riches I had brought, and gained with so much fatigue. Thus Sindbad ended the story of his second voyage, gave Hindbad another hundred sequins, and invited him to come next day to hear the story of the third. The rest of the guests returned to their homes, and came again the next day at--the same hour; and certainly the porter did not fail, having almost forgotten his former poverty. When dinner was over, Sindbad demanded attention, and gave them the following account of his third voyage.

Sindbad the Sailor's Third Voyage.

The pleasures of the life which I then led soon made me forget the risks I had run in my two former voyages; but being then in the flower of my age, I grew weary of living without business; and hardening myself against the thoughts of any danger I might incur, I went from Bagdad with the richest commodities of the country to Balsora. There I embarked again with other merchants. We made a long navigation, and touched at several ports, where we drove a considerable commerce. One day being out in the main ocean, we were attacked by a horrible tempest, which made us lose

our course. The tempest continued several days, and brought us before the port of an island, which the captain was very unwilling to enter; but we were obliged to cast anchor there. When we had furled our sails, the captain told us, that this and some other neighbouring islands were inhabited by hairy savages, who would speedily attack us; and though they were but dwarfs, yet our misfortune was such, that we must make no resistance, for they were more in number than the locusts; and if we happened to kill one of them, they would all fall upon us and destroy us. This discourse of the captain put the whole equipage into a great consternation, and we found very soon, to our cost, that what he had told us was too true; an innumerable multitude of frightful savages, covered over with red hair, and about two feet high, came swimming towards us, and encompassed our ship in a little time. They spoke to us as they came near, but we understood not their language; they climbed up the sides of the ship with so much agility as surprised us. We beheld all this with fear, without daring to offer at defending ourselves, or to speak one word to divert them from their mischievous design. In short, they took down our sails, cut the cable, and, hauling to the shore, made us all get out, and afterwards carried the ship into another island from whence they came. All travellers carefully avoided that island where they left us, it being very dangerous to stay there, for a reason you shall hear anon; but we were forced to bear our affliction with patience. We went forward into the island, where we found some fruits and herbs to prolong our lives as long as we could; but we expected nothing but death. As we went on, we perceived at a distance a great pile of building, and made towards it. We found it to be a palace, well built and very high, with a gate of ebony of two leaves, which we thrust open. We entered the court, where we saw before us a vast apartment, with a porch, having on one side a heap of men's bones, and on the other a vast number of roasting spits. We trembled at this spectacle, and being weary with travelling, our legs failed under us, we fell to the ground, and lay a long time immoveable. The sun was set, and whilst we were in this lamentable condition the gate of the apartment opened with a great noise, and there came out the horrible figure of a black man, as high as a palm-tree. He had but one eye, and that in the middle of his forehead, where it looked as red as burning coal. His foreteeth were very long and sharp, and came without his mouth, which was deep like that of a horse. His upper lip hung down upon his breast. His ears resembled those of an elephant, and covered his shoulders; and his nails were as long and crooked as the talons of the greatest birds.

At last we came to ourselves, and saw him sitting in the porch looking at us: when he had considered us well, he advanced towards us, and laying his hand upon me, he took me up by the nape of the neck, turned me round as a butcher would do a sheep's head; and, after having viewed me well, and perceiving me to be so lean that I had nothing but skin and bone, he let me go. He took up all the rest one by one, viewing them in the same manner: and the captain being the fattest, he held him with one hand, as I would do a sparrow, and thrusting a spit through him, kindled a great fire, and roasted him in his apartment for supper; which being done, he returned to the porch, where he lay and fell asleep, snoring louder than thunder: he slept thus till morning; for our parts, it was not possible for us to enjoy any rest, so

that we passed the night in the most cruel fear that can be imagined. Day being come, the giant awaked, got up, went out, and left us in the palace. When we thought him at a distance, we broke the melancholy silence we had kept all night; and, every one grieving more than another, we made the palace resound with our complaints and groans. Though there were a great many of us, and we had but one enemy, we had not at first the presence of mind to think of delivering ourselves from him by his death. This enterprise, however, though hard to put in execution, was the only design we ought naturally to have formed. We thought upon several other things, but determined nothing; so that, submitting to what it should please God to order concerning us, we spent the day in running about the island for fruit and herbs to sustain our lives. When evening came, we sought for a place to lie in, but found none; so that we were forced, whether we would or not, to return to the palace.

The giant failed not to come back, and supped once more upon one of our companions; after which he slept and snored till day, and then went out and left us as formerly. Our condition was so very terrible, that some of my comrades designed to throw themselves into the sea, rather than die so strange a death; and those who were of this mind argued with the rest to follow their example. Upon this, one of the company answered, that we were forbidden to destroy ourselves; but, allowing it to be lawful, it was more reasonable to think of a way to rid ourselves of the barbarous tyrant who designed so cruel a death for us. Having thought of a project for that end, I communicated the same to my comrades, who approved it. Brethren, said I, you know there is a great deal of timber floating upon the coast; if you will be advised by me, let us make several floats of it that may carry us, and, when they are done, leave them there till we think fit to make use of them. In the mean time we will execute the design to deliver ourselves from the giant; and, if it succeed, we may stay here with patience till some ship pass by that may carry us out of this fatal island; but, if it happen to miscarry, we may speedily get to our floats, and put to sea. I confess, that, by exposing ourselves to the fury of the waves, we run a risk of losing our lives; but, if we do, is it not better to be buried in the sea than in the entrails of this monster, who has already devoured two of us? My advice was relished, and we made floats capable of carrying three persons each.

We returned to the palace towards evening, and the giant arrived a little while after. We were forced to submit to see a number of our comrades roasted; but at last revenged ourselves on the brutish giant thus. After he had made an end of his cursed supper, he lay down on his back, and fell asleep. As soon as we heard him snore^[Footnote: It would seem the Arabian author has taken this story from Homer's Odyssey.] according to his custom, nine of the boldest among us, with myself, took each a spit, and putting the points of them into the fire till they were burning hot, we thrust them into his eye all at once, and blinded him. The pain occasioned him to make a frightful cry, and to get up and stretch out his hands, in order to sacrifice some of us to his rage; but we ran to such places as he could not find us; and, after having sought for us in vain, he groped for the gate, and went out howling dreadfully. We went out of the palace after the giant, and came to the shore, where we had left our floats, and

put them immediately into the sea. We waited till day, in order to get upon them, in case the giant came towards us with any guide of his own species; but we hoped, if he did not appear by sun-rise, and give over his howling which we still heard, that he would die; and if that happened to be the case, we resolved to stay in the island, and not to risk our lives upon the floats. But day had scarcely appeared when we perceived our cruel enemy, accompanied with two others, almost of the same size, leading him; and a great number more coming before him with a very quick pace. When we saw this, we made no delay, but got immediately upon our floats, and rowed off from the shore. The giants, who perceived this, took up great stones, and running to the shore, entered the water up to the middle, and threw so exactly, that they sunk all the floats but that I was upon; and all my companions, except the two with me, were drowned. We rowed with all our might, and got out of the reach of the giants. When we got to sea, however, we were exposed to the mercy of the waves and the winds, tossed about sometimes on one side and sometimes on another, and spent that night and the following day under a cruel uncertainty as to our fate; but next morning we had the good luck to be thrown upon an island, where we landed with much joy. We found excellent fruit there that gave us great relief, so that we pretty well recovered our strength. In the evening we fell asleep on the bank of the sea, but were awaked by the noise of a serpent as long as a palmtree, whose scales made a rustling as he creeped along. He swallowed up one of my comrades, notwithstanding his loud cries, and the efforts he made to rid himself of the serpent; which, shaking him several times against the ground, crushed him, and we could hear him gnaw and tear the poor wretch's bones, when we had fled at a great distance from him. Next day we saw the serpent again, to our great terror, when I cried out, O Heaven, to what dangers are we exposed! We rejoiced yesterday at our having escaped from the cruelty of a giant, and the rage of the waves, and now are fallen into another danger equally as terrible.

As we walked about, we saw a large tall tree, upon which we intended to pass the following night for our security; and, having satisfied our hunger with fruit, we mounted it accordingly. A little while after, the serpent came hissing to the root of the tree, raised itself up against the trunk of it, and meeting with my comrade, who sat lower than I, swallowed him at once, and went off; I staid upon the tree till it was day, and then came down, more like a dead man than one alive, expecting the same fate with my two companions. This filled me with horror, so that I was going to throw myself into the sea; but as nature prompts us to a desire to live as long as we can, I withstood this temptation to despair, and submitted myself to the will of God, who disposes of our lives at pleasure.

In the mean time I gathered together a quantity of small wood, brambles, and dry thorns, and making them up into faggots, made a great circle with them round the tree, and tied some of them to the branches over my head. Having done this, when the evening came, I shut myself up within the circle, with this melancholy piece of satisfaction, that I had neglected nothing which could preserve me from the cruel destiny with which I was threatened. The serpent failed not to come at the usual hour, and went round the tree, seeking for an opportunity to devour me, but was

prevented by the rampart I had made; so that he sat till day, like a cat watching in vain for a mouse, that has retired to a place of safety. When day appeared, he retired, but I dared not leave my fort until the sun rose. I was fatigued with the toil he had put me to, and suffered so much by his poisonous breath, that death seemed more eligible to me than the horror of such a condition. I came down from the tree and, not thinking on the resignation I had made to the will of God the preceding day, I ran towards the sea with a design to throw myself headlong into it. God took compassion on my desperate state; for, just as I was going to throw myself, into the sea, I perceived a ship at a considerable distance. I called as loud as I could, and taking the linen from my turban, displayed it so as they might observe me. This had the desired effect; the crew perceived me, and the captain sent me his boat. As soon as I came on board, the merchants and seamen flocked about me to learn how I came into that desert island; and after I had told them all that befell me, the oldest among them said to me, they had several times heard of the giants that dwelt in that island; that they were cannibals, and ate men raw as well as roasted. As to the serpents, they added, that there were abundance in the isle, that they hid themselves by day, and came abroad at night.

After having testified their joy at my escaping so many dangers, they brought me the best of what they had to eat; and the captain, seeing that I was in rags, was so generous as to give me one of his own suits. We were at sea for some time, touched at several islands, and at last landed at that of Salabat, where grows sanders, a wood of great use in physic. We entered the port, and came to anchor. The merchants began to unload their goods, in order to sell or exchange them. In the meantime the captain came to me, and said, Brother, I have here a parcel of goods that belonged to a merchant, who sailed some time on board this ship; and he being dead, I design to dispose of them for the benefit of his heirs, when I know them. The bales he spoke of lay on the deck; and showing them to me, he says, There are the goods; I hope you will take care to sell them, and you shall have factorage. I thanked him for giving me an opportunity to employ myself, because I hated to be idle. The clerk of the ship took an account of all the bales, with the names of the merchants to whom they belonged; and when he asked the captain in whose name he should enter those he gave me the charge of, Enter them, says the captain, in the name of Sindbad the sailor. I could not hear myself named without some emotion; and looking steadfastly on the captain, I knew him to be the person who, in my second voyage, had left me in the island, where I fell asleep by a brook, and set sail without me, or sending to see for me. But I could not remember him at first, he being so much altered since I saw him. As for him, who believed me to be dead, I could not wonder at his not knowing me. But captain, says I, was the merchant's name, to whom those bales belonged, Sindbad? Yes, replies he, that was his name; he came from Bagdad, and embarked on board my ship at Balsora. One day when we landed at an island to take in water and other refreshments, I know not by what mistake, I set sail without observing that he did not re-embark with us; neither I nor the merchants perceived it till four hours after. We had the wind in our stern, and so fresh a gale, that it was not then possible for us to tack about for him. You believe him then to be dead, said I? Certainly answered he. No, captain, said I; look

upon me, and you may know that I am Sindbad, whom you left in the desert island: I fell asleep by a brook, and, when I awaked, I found all the company gone. At these words the captain looked steadfastly upon me; and, having considered me attentively, knew me at last, embraced me, and said, God be praised that fortune has supplied my defect. There are your goods, which I always took care to preserve, and to make the best of them at every port where I touched. I restore them to you, with the profit I have made on them. I took them from him, and at the same time acknowledged how much I owed to him.

From the isle of Salabat we went to another, where I furnished myself with cloves, cinnamon, and other spices. As we sailed from the island, we saw a tortoise that was twenty cubits in length and breadth. We observed also a fish which looked like a crow, and gave milk, and its skin is so hard that they usually make bucklers of it. I saw another which had the shape and colour of a camel. In short, after a long voyage, I arrived at Balsora, and from thence returned to this city of Bagdad, with so great riches, that I knew not what I had. I gave a great deal to the poor, and added another great estate to those I had already.

Thus Sindbad finished the history of his third voyage; gave another hundred sequins to Hindbad, and invited him to dinner next day, to hear the history of his fourth voyage. Hindbad and the company retired: and next day when they returned, Sindbad, after dinner, continued the relation of his adventures.

The Fourth Voyage of Sindbad the Sailor.

The pleasure, says he, and the divertisements I took after my third voyage, had not charms enough to divert me from another. I was again prevailed upon by my passion for traffic, and curiosity to see new things. I therefore put my affairs in order, and having provided a stock of goods fit for the places I designed to trade, I set out on my journey. I took the way of Persia, of which I travelled several provinces, and then arrived at a port, where I embarked. We set sail, and having touched at several ports of Terra Firma, and some of the eastern islands, we put out to sea, and were seized by such a sudden gust of wind, as obliged the captain to furl his sails, and to take all other necessary precautions, to prevent the danger that threatened us; but all was in vain; our endeavours took no effect; the sails were torn in a thousand pieces, and the ship was stranded, so that a great many of the merchants and seamen were drowned, and the cargo lost. I had the good fortune, with several of the merchants and mariners, to get a plank, and we were carried by the current to an island which lay before us. There we found fruit and fountain water, which preserved our lives. We staid all night near the place where the sea cast us ashore, without consulting what we should do, our misfortune having dispirited us so much.

Next morning, as soon as, the sun was up, we walked from the

shore, and, advancing into the island, saw some houses to which we went; and as soon as we came thither, we were encompassed by a great number of blacks, who seized us, shared us amongst them, and carried us to their respective habitations. I, and five of my comrades, were carried to one place: they made us sit down immediately, and gave us a certain herb, which they made signs for us to eat. My comrades, not taking notice that the blacks ate none of it themselves, consulted only the satisfying their own hunger, and fell to eating with greediness. But I, suspecting some trick, would not so much as taste it, which happened well for me; for in a little time after I perceived my companions had lost their senses, and that when they spoke to me, they knew not what they said. The blacks filled us afterwards with rice, prepared with oil of cocoas; and my comrades, who had lost their reason, ate of it greedily. I ate of it also, but very sparingly. The blacks gave us that herb at first on purpose to deprive us of our senses, that we might not be aware of the sad destiny prepared for us; and they gave us rice on purpose to fatten us; for, being cannibals, their design was to eat us as soon as we grew fat. They accordingly ate my comrades, who were not sensible of their condition; but my senses being entire, you may easily guess, gentlemen, that instead of growing fat, like the rest, I grew leaner every day. The fear of death, under which I laboured, turned all my food into poison. I fell into a languishing distemper, which proved my safety; for the blacks having killed and eaten my companions, seeing me to be withered, lean, and sick, deferred my death till another time.

Meanwhile I had a great deal of liberty, so that there was scarcely any notice taken of what I did; and this gave me an opportunity one day to get at a distance from the houses, and to make my escape. An old man who saw me, and suspected my design, called to me as loud as he could to return; but, instead of obeying him, I redoubled my pace, and, quickly got out of sight. At that time there was none but an old man about the houses, the rest being abroad, and not to come home till night, which was pretty usual with them. Therefore, being sure that they could not come time enough to pursue me, I went on till night, when I stopped to rest a little, and to eat some of the provisions I had taken care of; but I speedily set forward again, and travelled seven days, avoiding those places which seemed to be inhabited, and lived for the most part upon cocoa nuts, which served me both for meat and drink. On the eighth day I came near the sea, and saw all of a sudden white people like myself gathering pepper, of which there was great plenty in that place; this I took to be a good omen, and went to them without any scruple. The people who gathered pepper came to meet me, and, as soon as they saw me, asked me in Arabic, who I was, and whence I came? I was overjoyed to hear them speak in my own language, and willingly satisfied their curiosity by giving them an account of my shipwreck, and how I fell into the hands of the blacks. Those blacks, replied they, eat men; but by what miracle did you escape their cruelty? I told them the same story I now told you, at which they were wonderfully surprised. I staid with them till they had gathered their quantity of pepper, and then sailed with them to the island from whence they came. They presented me to their king, who was a good prince: He had the patience to hear the relation of my adventures, which surprised him; and he afterwards gave me clothes, and commanded care to be taken of me. The island was

very well peopled, plentiful of everything, and the capital was a place of great trade. This agreeable place of retreat was very comfortable to me after my misfortune, and the kindness of this generous prince towards me completed my satisfaction. In a word, there was not a person more in favour with him than myself, and by consequence every man in court and city sought how to oblige me; so that in a very little time I was looked upon rather as a native than a stranger. I observed one thing which to me appeared very extraordinary; all the people, the king himself not excepted, rode their horses without bridles or stirrups. This made me one day take the liberty to ask the king how that came to pass. His majesty answered, that I talked to him of things which nobody knew the use of in his dominions. I went immediately to a workman, and gave him a model for making the stock of a saddle. When that was done, I covered it myself with velvet and leather, and embroidered it with gold. I afterwards went to a locksmith, who made me a bridle according to the pattern I showed him, and then he also made me some stirrups. When I had all things completed, I presented them to the king, and put them upon one of his horses. His majesty mounted immediately, and was so mightily pleased with them, that he testified his satisfaction by large presents to me. I could not avoid making several others for his ministers and principal officers of his household, who all of them made me presents that enriched me in a little time. I also made for the people of quality in the city, so that I gained great reputation and regard from everybody.

As I made my court very exactly to the king, he says to me one day, Sindbad, I love thee; and all my subjects, who know thee, treat thee according to my example. I have one thing to demand of thee, which thou must grant. Sir, answered I, there is nothing but what I will do as a mark of my obedience to your majesty, whose power over me is absolute. I have a mind thou shouldst marry, replies he, that thou mayst stay in my dominions, and think no more of thy own country. I dared not resist the prince's will, and he gave me one of the ladies of his court, a noble, beautiful, chaste, and rich lady. The ceremonies of marriage being over, I went and dwelt with the lady, and for some time we lived in perfect harmony. I was not, however, very well satisfied with my condition, and therefore designed to make my escape on the first occasion, and to return to Bagdad, winch my present establishment, however advantageous, could not make me forget. While I was thinking on this, the wife of one of my neighbours, with whom I had contracted a very strict friendship, fell sick and died. I went to see and comfort him in his affliction; and finding him swallowed up with sorrow, I said to him as soon as I saw him, God preserve you, and grant you a long life. Alas! replies he, how do you think I should obtain that favour you wish me? I have not above an hour to live. Pray, says I, do not entertain such a melancholy thought; I hope it will not be so, but that I shall enjoy your company for many years. I wish you, says he, a long life; but for me, my days are at an end, for I must be buried this day with my wife. This is a law which our ancestors established in this land, and always observed it inviolably. The living husband is interred with the dead wife, and the living wife with the dead husband. Nothing can save me; every one must submit to this law. While he was entertaining me with an account of this barbarous custom, the very hearing of which frightened me cruelly, his kindred, friends, and

neighbours, came in a body to assist at the funeral. They put on the corpse the woman's richest apparel, as if it had been her wedding-day, and dressed her with all her jewels; then they put her into an open coffin, and, lifting it up, began their march to the place of burial. The husband walked at the head of the company, and followed the corpse. They went up to an high mountain, and, when they came thither, took up a great stone, which covered the mouth of a very deep pit, and let down the corpse with all its apparel and jewels. Then the husband, embracing his kindred and friends, suffered himself to be put into another open coffin without resistance, with a pot of water and seven little loaves, and was let down in the same manner as his wife. The mountain was pretty long, and reached to the sea. The ceremony being ever, they covered the hole again with the stone, and returned.

It is needless, gentlemen, for me to tell you that I was the only melancholy spectator of this funeral; whereas the rest were scarcely moved at it, the thing being customary to them. I could not forbear speaking my thoughts of this matter to the king: Sir, says I, I cannot enough admire the strange custom in this country of burying the living with the dead. I have been a great traveller, and seen many countries, but never heard of so cruel a law. What do you mean, Sindbad? says the king; it is a common law. I shall be interred with the queen my wife, if she die first. But, sir, says I, may I presume to demand of your majesty, if strangers be obliged to observe this law? Without doubt, replies the king, (smiling at the occasion of my question,) they are not exempted, if they be married in this island. I went home very melancholy at this answer, from fear of my wife dying first, and lest I should be interred alive with her, which occasioned me very mortifying reflections. But there was no remedy; I must have patience, and submit to the will of God. I trembled, however, at every little indisposition of my wife: but, alas! in a little time my fears came upon me all at once; for she fell sick, and died in a few days. You may judge of my sorrow: to be interred alive seemed to me as deplorable an end as to be devoured by cannibals. But I must submit; the king and all his court would honour the funeral with their presence, and the most considerable people of the city would do the like. When all was ready for the ceremony, the corpse was put into a coffin, with all the jewels and magnificent apparel. The cavalcade was begun; and, as second actor in this doleful tragedy, I went next the corpse, with my eyes full of tears, bewailing my deplorable fate. Before I came to the mountain, I made an essay on the minds of the spectators; I addressed myself to the king in the first place, and then to all those who were round me, and, bowing before them to the earth to kiss the border of their garments, I prayed them to have compassion upon me. Consider, said I, that I am a stranger, and ought not to be subject to this rigorous law, and that I have another wife and children in my own country[Footnote: He was a Mahometan, and this sect allows polygamy.]. It was to no purpose for me to speak thus, for no soul was moved at it; on the contrary, they made haste to let down my wife's corpse into the pit, and put me down the next moment in an open coffin, with a vessel full of water, and seven loaves. In short, the fatal ceremony being performed, they covered up the mouth of the pit, notwithstanding the excess of my grief, and my lamentable cries. As I came near the bottom, I discovered, by help of the little

light that came from above, the nature of this subterraneous place; it was a vast long cave, and might be about fifty fathoms deep. I immediately felt an insufferable stench, proceeding from the multitude of dead corpses which I saw on the right and left; nay, I fancied that I heard some of them sigh out their last. However, when I got down, I immediately left my coffin, and getting at a distance from the corpse, held my nose, and lay down upon the ground, where I staid a long time, bathed in tears. Then reflecting upon my sad lot, It is true, said I, that God disposes all things according to the decrees of his providence; but, poor Sindbad, art not thou thyself the cause of being brought to die so strange a death? Would to God thou hadst perished in some of those tempests which thou hast escaped; then thy death would not have been so lingering and terrible in all its circumstances. But thou hast drawn all this upon thyself by thy cursed avarice. Ah, unfortunate wretch! shouldst thou not rather have staid at home, and quietly enjoyed the fruits of thy labour?

Such were the vain complaints with which I made the cave to echo, beating my head and stomach out of rage and despair, and abandoning myself to the most afflicting thoughts. Nevertheless, I must tell you, that instead of calling death to my assistance in that miserable condition, I felt still an inclination to live, and to do all I could to prolong my days. I went groping about, with my nose stopped, for the bread and water that was in my coffin, and took some of it. Though the darkness of the cave was so great that I could not distinguish day and night, yet I always found my coffin again, and the cave seemed to be more spacious and fuller of corpses than it appeared to be at first. I lived for some days upon my bread and water; which being all spent, at last I prepared for death. As I was thinking of death, I heard the stone lifted from the mouth of the cave, and immediately the corpse of a man was let down. When men are reduced to necessity, it is natural for them to come to extreme resolutions. While they let down the woman, I approached the place where her coffin was to be put, and as soon as I perceived they were covering the mouth of the cave, I gave the unfortunate wretch two or three great blows over the head with a large bone that I found; which stunned, or, to say the truth, killed her. I committed this horrid action merely for the sake of the bread and water that were in her coffin, and thus I had provisions for some days more. When that was spent, they let down another dead woman, and a living man; I killed the man in the same manner; and, as good luck would have it for me, there was then a sort of mortality in the town, so that by this means I did not want for provisions.

One day, as I had despatched another woman, I heard something walking, and blowing or panting as it walked. I advanced towards that side from whence I heard the noise, and, upon my approach, the thing puffed and blew harder, as if it had been running away from me. I followed the noise, and the thing seemed to stop sometimes, but always fled and blew as I approached. I followed it so long and so far, that at last I perceived a light resembling a star: I went on towards the light, and sometimes lost sight of it, but always found it again; and at last discovered that it came through a hole in the rock, large enough for a man to get out at. Upon this, I stopped for some time to rest myself, being much fatigued with pursuing this discovery so fast: Afterwards coming up to the hole, I went out at it, and

found my self upon the banks of the sea. I leave you to guess at the excess of my joy; it was such, that I could scarcely persuade myself of its being real. But when I recovered from my surprise, and was convinced of the truth of the matter, I found the thing which I had followed, and heard puff and blow, to be a creature which came out of the sea, and was accustomed to enter at that hole to feed upon the dead carcasses. I considered the mountain, and perceived it to be situate betwixt the sea and the town, but without any passage or way to communicate with the latter, the rocks on the side of the sea being rugged and steep. I fell down upon the shore to thank God for his mercy, and afterwards entered the cave again to fetch bread and water, which I did by daylight, with a better appetite than I had done since my interment in the dark hole. I returned thither again, and groped about among the biers for all the diamonds, rubies, pearls, gold, bracelets, and rich stuffs I could find; these I brought to the shore, and tying them up neatly into bales with the cords that let down the coffins, I laid them together upon the bank, waiting till some ship passed by, without any fear of rain, for it was not then the season. After two or three days, I perceived a ship that had but just come out of the harbour, and passed near the place where I was. I made signs with the linen of my turban, and called to them as loud as I could: they heard me, and sent a boat to bring me on board. When the mariners asked by what misfortune I came thither, I told them that I suffered shipwreck two days ago, and made shift to get ashore with the goods they saw. It was happy for me that these people did not consider the place where I was, nor inquire into the probability of what I told them, but, without any more ado, took me on board with my goods. When I came to the ship, the captain was so well pleased to have saved me, and so much taken up with his own affairs, that he also took the story of my pretended shipwreck upon trust, and generously refused some jewels which I offered him.

We passed by several islands, and, among others, that called the isle of Bells, about ten days sail from Serendib, with a regular wind, and six from that of Kela, where we landed. This island produces lead mines, Indian canes, and excellent camphire. The king of the isle of Kela is very rich and potent, and the isle of Bells[Footnote: Now Ceylon.], which is about two days journey in extent, is also subject to him. The inhabitants are so barbarous, that they still eat human flesh. After we had finished our commerce in that island, we put to sea again, and touched at several other ports, and at last arrived happily at Bagdad with infinite riches, of which it is needless to trouble you with the detail. Out of thankfulness to God for his mercies, I gave great alms for the entertainment of several mosques, and for the subsistence of the poor, and employed myself wholly in enjoying my kindred and friends, making good cheer with them.

Here Sindbad finished the relation of his fourth voyage, which was more surprising to the company than all the three former. He gave a new present of a hundred sequins to Hindbad, whom he prayed to return next day at the same hour to dine with him, and to hear the story of his fifth voyage. Hindbad and the rest of his guests took leave of him, and retired. Next day, when all met, they sat down at table; and when dinner was over, Sindbad began the relation of his fifth voyage.

The Fifth Voyage of Sindbad the Sailor.

The pleasures I enjoyed had charms enough again to make me forget all the troubles and calamities I had undergone, without curing me of my inclination to make new voyages; therefore I bought goods, ordered them to be packed and loaded, and set out with them for the best sea-ports; and there, that I might not be obliged to depend upon a captain, but have a ship at my own command, I staid till one was built on purpose at my own charge. When the ship was ready, I went on board with my goods; but, not having enough to load her, I took on board several merchants of different nations with their merchandise. We sailed with the first fair wind, and, after a long navigation, the first place we touched at was a desert island, where we found the egg of a roc, equal in bigness to that I formerly mentioned. There was a young roc in it just ready to be hatched, and the bill of it began to appear. The merchants whom I had taken on board my ship, and who landed with me, broke the egg with hatches, and made a hole in it, from whence they pulled out the young roc, piece after piece, and roasted it. I had earnestly dissuaded them from meddling with the egg, but they would not listen to me. Scarcely had they made an end of their treat, when there appeared in the air, at a considerable distance from us, two great clouds. The captain, whom I hired to sail my ship, knowing by experience what it meant, cried that it was the he and the she roc that belonged to the young one, and pressed us to re-embark with all speed, to prevent the misfortune which he saw would otherwise befall us. We made haste to do so, and set sail with all possible diligence. In the mean time the two rocs approached with a frightful noise, which they redoubled when they saw the egg broken, and their young one gone. But, having a mind to avenge themselves, they flew back towards the place from whence they came; and disappeared for some time, while we made all the sail we could to prevent that which unhappily befell us. They returned, and we observed that each of them carried between their talons stones, or rather rocks, of a monstrous size. When they came directly over my ship, they hovered, and one of them let fall a stone; but, by the dexterity of the steersman, who turned the ship with the rudder, it missed us, and falling by the side of the ship into the sea, divided the water so that we could almost see to the bottom. The other roc, to our misfortune, threw the stone so exactly upon the middle of the ship, that it split it in a thousand pieces. The mariners and passengers were all killed by the stone, or sunk. I myself had the last fate; but as I came up again, I caught hold, by good fortune, of a piece of the wreck; and swimming sometimes with one hand, and sometimes with the other, but always holding fast my board, the wind and the tide being for me, I came to an island whose banks were very steep; I overcame that difficulty, however, and got ashore. I sat down upon the grass to recover myself a little from my fatigue, after which I got up, and went into the island to view it. It seemed to be a delicious garden. I found trees everywhere, some of them bearing green, and others ripe fruits, and streams of fresh pure

water, with pleasant windings and turnings. I ate the fruits, which I found excellent, and drank of the water, which was very pleasant.

Night being come, I lay down upon the grass, in a place convenient enough; but I could not sleep an hour at a time, my mind being disturbed with the fear of being alone in so desert a place. Thus I spent the best part of the night in fretting and reproaching myself for my imprudence in not staying at home, rather than undertake this last voyage. These reflections carried me so far, that I began to form a design against my own life; but daylight dispersed those melancholy thoughts, and I got up and walked among the trees, but not without apprehensions of danger. When I was a little advanced into the island, I saw an old man, who seemed very weak and feeble. He sat upon the banks of a stream, and at first I took him to be one who had been shipwrecked like myself. I went towards him, and saluted him; but he only bowed his head a little. I asked him what he did there; but instead of answering me, he made a sign for me to take him upon my back, and carry him over the brook, signifying that it was to gather fruit. I believed him really to stand in need of help; so I took him upon my back, and having carried him over, bid him get down, and, for that end, stooped, that he might get off with ease; but, instead of that, he, who to me appeared very decrepit, clasped his legs nimbly about my neck, when I perceived his skin to be like that of a cow. He sat astride me upon my shoulders, and held my throat so strait, that I thought he would have strangled me, the fright of which made me faint away and fall down. Notwithstanding my fainting, the ill-natured old fellow kept fast about my neck, but opened his legs a little to give me some time to recover my breath. When I had done so, he thrust one of his feet against my stomach, and struck me so rudely on the side with the other, that he forced me to rise up against my will. Having got up, he made me walk up under the trees, and forced me now and then to stop to gather and eat such fruits as we found. He never left me all day; and when I lay down to rest me by night, he laid himself down by me, holding always fast about my neck. Every morning he pushed me to make me awake; and afterwards obliged me to get up and walk, and pressed me with his feet. You may judge then, gentlemen, what trouble I was in, to be charged with such a burden as I could no ways rid myself from.

One day I found in my way several dry calabashes that had fallen from a tree: I took a large one, and, after cleaning it, pressed into it some juice of grapes, which abounded in the island; having filled the calabash, I set it in a convenient place, and, coming hither again some days after, I took up the calabash, and, setting it to my mouth, found the wine to be so good, that it made me presently not only forget my sorrow, but I grew vigorous, and was so light-hearted, that I began to sing and dance as I walked along. The old man, perceiving the effect which this drink had upon me, and that I carried him with more ease than I did before, made a sign for me to give him the calabash; and the liquor pleasing his palate, he drank it all off. There being enough of it to stupify him, he became drunk immediately; and the fumes getting into his head, he began to sing after his manner, and to dance with his breech upon my shoulders. His jolting made him vomit, and he loosened his legs from me by degrees; so that,

finding he did not press me as before, I threw him upon the ground, where he lay without motion, when I took up a great stone, with which I crushed his head to pieces.

I was extremely rejoiced to be freed thus for ever from this cursed old fellow, and walked upon the bank of the sea, where I met the crew of a ship that had cast anchor to take in water and refresh themselves. They were extremely surprised to see me, and to hear the particulars of my adventures. You fell, said they, into the hands of the old man of the sea, and are the first that ever escaped strangling by him. He never left those he had once made himself master of till he destroyed them; and he has made this island famous by the number of men he has slain, so that the merchants and mariners who landed upon it dared not to advance into the island but in numbers together. After having informed me of those things, they carried me with them to the ship; the captain received me with great satisfaction when they told him what had befallen me. He put out again to sea; and, after some days sail, we arrived at the harbour of a great city, the houses of which were built with good stone.

One of the merchants of the ship, who had taken me into his friendship, obliged me to go along with him, and carried me to a place appointed as a retreat for foreign merchants. He gave me a great bag, and having recommended me to some people of the town who used to gather cocoas, he desired them to take me with them to do the like. Go, says he, follow them, and do as you see them do, and do not separate from them, otherwise you endanger your life. Having thus spoken, he gave me provisions for the journey, and I went with them. We came to a great forest of trees, extremely straight and tall, the trunks of which were so smooth that it was not possible for any man to climb up the branches that bore the fruit. All the trees were cocoa ones; and when we entered the forest, we saw a great number of apes of several sizes, that fled as soon as they perceived us, climbing up to the tops of the trees with surprising swiftness. The merchants with whom I was, gathered stones, and threw them at the apes on the tops of the trees. I did the same, and the apes, out of revenge, threw cocoa nuts at us so fast, and with such gestures, as sufficiently testified their anger and resentment: we gathered up the cocoas, and from time to time threw stones to provoke the apes; so that, by this stratagem, we filled our bags with cocoa nuts, which it had been impossible for us to have done otherwise. When we had gathered our number, we returned to the city, where the merchant who sent me to the forest gave me the value of the cocoas I brought: Go on, says he, and do the like every day, until you have got money enough to carry you home. I thanked him for his good advice, and insensibly gathered together as many cocoas as amounted to a considerable sum.

The vessel in which I arrived sailed with the merchants, who loaded her with cocoas. I expected the arrival of another, which landed speedily for the like loading. I embarked on board the same all the cocoas that belonged to me, and when she was ready to sail, I went and took leave of the merchant who had been so kind to me; but he could not embark with me, because he had not finished his affairs. We set sail towards those islands where pepper grows in great plenty. From thence we went to the isle of Comarij[Footnote: This island, or peninsula, ends at the cape

which we now call Cape Comorin. It is also called Comar and Comor.], where the best kind of wood of aloes grows, and whose inhabitants have made it an inviolable law to themselves to drink no wine, nor to suffer any place of debauch. I exchanged my cocoas in these two islands for pepper and wood of aloes, and went with other merchants a pearl-fishing. I hired divers, who fetched me up those that were very large and pure. I embarked joyfully in a vessel that happily arrived at Balsora; from thence I returned to Bagdad, where I made vast sums of my pepper, wood of aloes, and pearls. I gave the tenth of my gains in alms, as I had done upon my return from other voyages, and endeavoured to ease myself from my fatigues by diversions of all sorts.

When Sindbad had finished his story, he ordered one hundred sequins to Hindbad, who retired with all the other guests; but next day the same company returned to dine with rich Sindbad, who, after having treated them as formerly, demanded audience, and gave the following account of his sixth voyage.

The Sixth Voyage of Sindbad the Sailor.

Gentlemen, says he, you long, without doubt, to know how, after being shipwrecked five times, and escaping so many dangers, I could resolve again to try my fortune, and expose myself to new hardships. I am astonished at it myself when I think on it, and must certainly have been induced to it by my stars. But, be that as it will, after a year's rest I prepared for a sixth voyage, notwithstanding the prayers of my kindred and friends, who did all that was possible to prevent me. Instead of taking my way by the Persian gulph, I travelled once more through several provinces of Persia and the Indies, and arrived at a sea-port, where I embarked on board a ship, the captain of which was resolved on a long voyage. It was very long, indeed, but at the same time so unfortunate, that the captain and pilot lost their course, so that they knew not where they were. They found it at last, but we had no ground to rejoice. We were all seized with extraordinary fear, when we saw the captain quit his post, and cry out. He threw off his turban, pulled the hair off his beard, and beat his head like a madman. We asked him the reason, and he answered, that he was in the most dangerous place in all the sea: a rapid current carries the ship along with it, and we shall all perish in less than a quarter of an hour. Pray to God to deliver us from this danger; we cannot escape it, if he do not take pity on us. At these words he ordered the sails to be changed; but all the ropes broke, and the ship, without any possibility of helping it, was carried by the current to the foot of an inaccessible mountain, where she was run ashore, and broken to pieces, yet so as we saved our lives, our provisions, and the best of our goods. This being over, the captain says to us, God has now done what he pleased; we may every man dig our grave here, and bid the world adieu; for we are all in so fatal a place, that none shipwrecked here did ever return to their homes again. His discourse afflicted us mortally, and we embraced one another with tears in

our eyes, bewailing our deplorable lot.

The mountain at the foot of which we were cast, was the coast of a very long and large island. This coast was covered over with wrecks: and, by the vast number of men's bones we saw every where, and which filled us with horror, we concluded that abundance of people had died there. It is also incredible to tell what a quantity of goods and riches we found cast ashore there. All those objects served only to augment our grief. While, in all other places, rivers run from their channels into the sea, here a great river of fresh water runs out of the sea into a dark cave, whose entrance is very high and large. What is most remarkable in this place is, that the stones of the mountain are of crystal, rubies, or other precious stones. Here also is a sort of fountain of pitch or bitumen that runs into the sea, which the fishes swallow, and then vomit up again turned into ambergris; this the waves throw upon the beach in great quantities. Here grow also trees, most of which are wood of aloes, equal to those of Comari.

To finish the description of this place, which may well be called the gulph, as nothing ever returns from it, it is not possible for ships to get off from it, when once they come within ft certain distance of it. If they be driven thither by a wind from the sea, the wind and the current ruin them; and if they come into it when a land wind blows, which might seem to favour their getting out again, the height of the mountain stops the wind, and occasions a calm, so that the force of the current drives them ashore, where they are broken in pieces, as ours was; and what completes the misfortune, there is no possibility of getting to the top of the mountain, or getting out in any manner of way. We continued upon the shore like men out of their senses, and expected death every day. At first we divided our provisions as equally as we could, so that every one lived a longer or shorter time, according to his temperance, and the use he made of his provisions. Those who died first were interred by the rest; and for my part, I paid the last duty to all my companions. Nor need you wonder at this; for, besides that I husbanded the provision that fell to my share better than they, I had provisions of my own which I did not share with my comrades; yet, when I buried the last, I had so little remaining, that I thought it could not hold out long: So I dug a grave, resolving to lie down in it, because there was none left alive to inter me. I must confess to you, at the same time, that, while I was thus employed, I could not but reflect upon myself as the cause of my own ruin, and repented that I had ever undertaken this last voyage. Nor did I stop at reflections only, but had well nigh hastened my own death, and began to tear my hands with my teeth. But it pleased God once more to take compassion on me, and put it in my mind to go to the bank of the river which ran into the great cave, where, considering the river with great attention, I said to myself, This river, which runs thus under the ground, must come out somewhere or other. If I make a float, and leave myself to the current, it will bring me to some inhabited country, or drown me. If I be drowned, I lose nothing, but only change one kind of death for another; and if I get out of this fatal place, I shall not only avoid the fate of my comrades, but perhaps find some new occasion of enriching myself. Who knows but fortune waits, upon my getting off this dangerous shelve, to compensate my shipwreck with usury? After this, I immediately went to work on a float. I

made it of good large pieces of timber and cables, for I had choice of them, and tied them together so strong, that I had made a very solid little float. When I had finished it, I loaded it with some bales of rubies, emeralds, ambergris, rock crystal, and rich stuffs. Having balanced all my cargo exactly, and fastened them well to the float. I went on board it with two little oars that I had made: and leaving it to the course of the river, I resigned myself to the will of God.

As soon as I came into the cave, I lost all light, and the stream carried me I knew not whither. Thus I sailed some days in perfect darkness, and once found the arch so low, that it almost broke my head, which made me very cautious afterwards to avoid the like danger. All this while I ate nothing but what was just necessary to support nature; yet, notwithstanding this frugality, all my provisions were spent. Then a pleasant sleep seized upon me: I cannot tell how long it continued; but when I awaked, I was surprised to find myself in the middle of a vast country, on the brink of a river, where my float was tied amidst a great number of negroes. I got up as soon as I saw them, and saluted them. They spoke to me, but I did not understand their language. I was so transported with joy, that I knew not whether I was asleep or awake; but being persuaded that I was not asleep, I recited the following words in Arabic aloud: Call upon the Almighty, and he will help thee; thou needest not perplex thyself about any thing else; shut thine eyes, and, while thou art asleep, God will change thy bad fortune into good. One of the blacks who understood Arabic, hearing me speak thus, came towards me, and said, Brother, do not be surprised at us: we are inhabitants of this country, and came hither to day to water our fields, by digging little canals from this river, which comes out of the neighbouring mountain. We perceived something floating upon the water, went speedily to see what it was, and perceiving your float, one of us swam into the river, and brought it hither, where we fastened it as you see until you should awake. Pray tell us your history, for it must be extraordinary; how did you venture yourself into this river, and whence did you come? I begged of them first to give me something to eat, and then I would satisfy their curiosity. They gave me several sorts of food; and when I had satisfied my hunger, I gave them a true account of all that had befallen me, which they listened to with admiration. As soon as I had finished my discourse, they told me, by the person who spoke Arabic, and interpreted to them what I said, that it was one of the most surprising stories they ever heard, and that I must go along with them, and tell it to their king myself; for the thing was too extraordinary to be told by any other than the person to whom it happened. I told them I was ready to do whatever they pleased. They immediately sent for a horse, which was brought them in a little time; and having made me get up upon him, some of them walked before me to show me the way, and the rest took my float and cargo, and followed me. We marched thus all together, till we came to the city of Serendib, for it was in that island where I landed. The blacks presented me to their king. I approached his throne, and saluted him as I used to do the kings of the Indies; that is to say, I prostrated myself at his feet, and kissed the earth. The prince ordered me to rise up, received me with an obliging air, and made me come and sit down near him. He first asked me my name: I answered, They call me Sindbad the sailor, because of the many voyages I

had undertaken; and that I was a citizen of Bagdad. But, replies he, how came you into my dominions, and from whence came you last? I concealed nothing from the king; I told him all that I have now told you; and his majesty was so surprised and charmed with it, that he commanded my adventures to be written in letters of gold, and laid up in the archives of the kingdom. At last my float was brought to him, and the bales opened in his presence; he admired the quantity of wood of aloes and ambergris, but, above all, the rubies and emeralds; for he had none in his treasury that came near them. Observing that he looked on my jewels with pleasure, and viewed the most remarkable among them one after another, I fell prostrate at his feet, and took the liberty to say to him, Sir, not only my person is at your majesty's service, but the cargo of the float, and I would beg of you to dispose of it as your own. He answered me with a smile, Sindbad, I will take care not to covet any thing of yours, nor to take any thing from you that God has given you; far from lessening your wealth, I design to augment it, and will not let you go out of my dominions without marks of my liberality. All the answer I returned was by praying for the prosperity of the prince, and commendations of his generosity and bounty. He charged one of his officers to take care of me, and ordered people to serve me at his own charge. The officer was very faithful in the execution of his orders, and made all the goods to be carried to the lodgings provided for me. I went every day at a set hour to make my court to the king, and spent the rest of my time in seeing the city, and what was most worthy of my curiosity.

The isle of Serendib[Footnote: Geographers place it on this side of the line, in the first climate.] is situate just under the equinoctial line; so that the days and nights there are always twelve hours each, and the island is eighty[Footnote: The eastern geographers make a parasang longer than a French league.] parasangs in length, and as many in breadth. The capital city stands in the middle of a fine valley formed by a mountain, in the middle of the island, which is the highest in the world. It is seen three days sail off at sea. There are rubies and several sorts of minerals in it, and all the rocks for the most part emerald, a metal line stone made use of to cut and smooth other precious stones. Here grow all kinds of rare plants and trees, especially cedars and cocoas. There is also pearl-fishing in the mouth of its river, and in some of its vallies there are found diamonds. I made, by way of devotion, a pilgrimage to the place where Adam was confined after his banishment from Paradise, and had the curiosity to go to the top of it.

When I came back to the city, I prayed the king to allow me to return to my country, which he granted me in the most obliging and honourable manner. He would needs force a rich present upon me; and when I went to take leave of him, he gave me one much more considerable, at the same time charging me with a letter for the commander of the faithful, our sovereign, and said, I pray you give this present from me, and this letter, to Caliph Haroun Alraschid, and assure him of my friendship. I took the present and letter in a very respectful manner, and promised his majesty punctually to execute the commission with which he was pleased to honour me. Before I embarked, this prince sent to seek for the captain and the merchants who were to go with me, and ordered

them to treat me with all possible respect.

The letter from the king of Serendib was written on the skin of a certain animal of great value, because of its being so scarce, and of a yellowish colour. The characters of this letter were of azure, and the contents thus: "The King of the Indies, before whom march 100 elephants, who lives in a palace that shines with 100,000 rubies, and who has in his treasury 20,000 crowns enriched with diamonds, to Caliph Haroun Alraschid. Though the present which we send you be inconsiderable, receive it, as a brother and a friend, in consideration of the hearty friendship which we bear you, and of which we are willing to give you proof. We desire the same part in your friendship, considering that we believe it to be our merit, being of the same dignity with yourself. We conjure you thus in the quality of a brother. Adieu." The present consisted, in the first place, of one single ruby made into a cup, about half a foot high, an inch thick, and filled with round pearls of half a dram each. 2. Of the skin of a serpent, whose scales were as large as an ordinary piece of gold, and had the virtue to preserve from sickness those who lay upon it. 3. In 50,000 drams of the best wood of aloes, with 30 grains of camphire as big as pistachios. And, 4. A female slave of ravishing beauty, whose apparel was covered with jewels.

The ship set sail, and, after a very long and successful navigation, we landed at Balsora, from whence I went to Bagdad, where the first thing I did was to acquit myself of my commission. I took the king of Serendib's letter, continued Sindbad, and went to present myself at the gate of the commander of the faithful, followed by the beautiful slave, and such of my own family as carried the presents. I gave an account of the reason of my coming, and was immediately conducted to the throne of the caliph. I made my reverence by prostration, and, after a short speech, gave him the letter and present. When he had read what the king of Serendib wrote to him, he asked me if that prince was really so rich and potent as he had said in his letter? I prostrated myself a second time, and rising again, Commander of the faithful, says I, I can assure your majesty he does not exceed the truth on that head; I am witness of it. There is nothing more capable of raising a man's admiration than the magnificence of his palace. When the prince appears in public, he has a throne fixed on the back of an elephant, and marches betwixt two ranks of his ministers, favourites, and other people of his court: Before him, upon the same elephant, an officer carries a golden lance in his hand; and behind the throne there is another, who stands upright, with a column of gold, on the top of which there is an emerald half a foot long, and an inch thick; before him there marches a guard of one thousand men clad in cloth of gold and silk, and mounted on elephants richly caparisoned. While the king is on his march, the officer who is before him on the same elephant cries, from time to time, with a loud voice, Behold the great monarch, the potent and redoubtable sultan of the Indies, whose palace is covered with 100,000 rubies, and who possesses 20,000 crowns of diamonds. Behold the crowned monarch, greater than the great Solima[Footnote: Solomon.] and the great Mihrage[Footnote: An ancient king of a great island, of the same name, in the Indies, and much famed among the Arabians for his power and wisdom.]. After he has pronounced these words, the officer behind the throne cries in

his turn, This monarch, so great and so powerful, must die, must die, must die. And the officer before replies, Praise be to him that lives for ever. Further, the king of Serendib is so just, that there are no judges in his dominions; his people have no need of them; they understand and observe justice exactly of themselves. The caliph was much pleased with my discourse. The wisdom of that king, says he, appears in his letter; and, after what you tell me, I must confess that his wisdom is worthy of his people, and his people deserve so wise a prince. Having spoken thus, he discharged me, and sent me home with a rich present.

Sindbad left off speaking, and his company retired, Hindbad having first received one hundred sequins; and next day they returned to hear the relation of his seventh and last voyage.

The Seventh and last Voyage of Sindbad the Sailor.

Being returned from my sixth voyage, I absolutely laid aside all thoughts of travelling any further. For, besides that my years did now require rest, I was resolved no more to expose myself to such risks as I had run: So that I thought of nothing but to pass the rest of my days in quiet. One day, as I was treating some of my friends, one of my servants came and told me that an officer of the caliph asked for me. I rose from the table, and went to him. The caliph, says he, has sent me to tell you that he must speak with you. I followed the officer to the palace; where being presented to the caliph, I saluted him by prostrating myself at his feet. Sindbad, says he to me, I stand in need of you; you must do me the service to carry my answer and present to the king of Serendib. It is but just I should return his civility. This command of the caliph to me was like a clap of thunder. Commander of the faithful, replied I, I am ready to do whatever your majesty shall think fit to command me; but I beseech you most humbly to consider what I have undergone; I have also made a vow never to go out of Bagdad. Hence I took occasion to give him a large and particular account of all my adventures, which he had the patience to hear out. As soon as I had finished, I confess, says he, that the things you tell me are very extraordinary, yet you must, for my sake, undertake this voyage which I propose to you. You have nothing to do but to go to the isle of Serendib, and deliver the commission which I give you; after that, you are at liberty to return. But you must go; for you know it would be indecent, and not suitable to my dignity, to be indebted to the king of the island. Perceiving that the caliph insisted upon it, I submitted, and told him that I was willing to obey. He was very well pleased at it, and ordered me a thousand sequins for the charge of my journey.

I prepared for my departure in a few days; and as soon as the caliph's letter and present were delivered to me, I went to Balsora, where I embarked, and had a very happy voyage. I arrived at the isle of Serendib, where I acquainted the king's ministers with my commission, and prayed them to get me a speedy audience.

They did so, and I was conducted to the palace in an honourable manner, where I saluted the king by prostration, according to custom. The prince knew me immediately, and testified very great joy to see me. O Sindbad, says he, you are welcome; I swear to you I have many times thought of you since you went hence. I bless the day upon which we see one another once more. I made my compliment to him; and, after having thanked him for his kindness to me, I delivered him the caliph's letter and present, which he received with all imaginable satisfaction.

The caliph's present was a complete set of cloth of gold, valued at a thousand sequins; fifty robes of rich stuff, a hundred others of white cloth, the finest of Cairo, Suez^[Footnote: A port on the Red Sea.], Cusa^[Footnote: A town of Arabia.], and Alexandria; a royal crimson bed, with a second of another fashion; a vessel of agate, broader than deep, of an inch thick, and half a foot wide, the bottom of which represented, in bass-relief, a man with one knee on the ground, who held a bow and arrow, ready to let fly at a lion. He sent him also a rich table, which, according to tradition, belonged to the great Solomon. The caliph's letter was as follows: "Greeting, in the name of the sovereign guide of the right way, to the potent and happy sultan from Abdallah Haroun Alraschid, whom God hath set in the place of honour after his ancestors of happy memory. We received your letter with joy, and send you this from the council of our port, the garden of superior wits. We hope, when you look upon it, you will find our good intention, and be pleased with it. Adieu."

The king of Serendib was mightily pleased that the caliph answered his friendship. A little time after this audience, I solicited leave to depart, and obtained the same with much difficulty. I got it, however, at last; and the king, when he discharged me, made me a very considerable present. I embarked immediately to return to Bagdad, but had not the good fortune to arrive there as I hoped. God ordered it otherwise; for, three or four days after my departure, we were attacked by corsairs, who easily seized upon our ship, because it was no vessel of force. Some of the crew offered resistance, which cost them their lives. But for me and the rest, who were not so imprudent, the corsairs saved us on purpose to make slaves of us. We were all stripped; and, instead of our own clothes, they gave us sorry rags, and carried us into a remote island, where they sold us. I fell into the hands of a rich merchant, who, as soon as he bought me, carried me to his house, treated me well, and clad me handsomely for a slave. Some days after, not knowing who I was, he asked me if I knew any trade? I answered, that I was no mechanic, but a merchant; and that the corsairs, who sold me, robbed me of all I had. But tell me, replies he, Can you shoot with a bow? I answered, that the bow was one of the exercises of my youth, and I had not forgotten it. Then he gave me a bow and arrows, and taking me behind him upon an elephant, carried me to a vast forest some leagues from the town. We went a great way into the forest, and when he thought to stop, he bid me alight: then showing me a great tree, Climb up that tree, says he, and shoot at the elephants as you see them pass by; for there is a prodigious number of them in this forest, and if any of them fall, come and give me notice of it. Having spoken thus, he left me victuals, and returned to the town and I continued upon the tree all night, during which I saw no elephants, but next

morning, as soon as the sun was up, I saw a great number; I shot several arrows among them, and at last one of the elephants fell; the rest retired immediately, and left me at liberty to go and acquaint my patron with my booty. When I had told him the news, he gave me a good meal, commended my dexterity, and caressed me mightily. We went afterwards together to the forest, where we dug a hole for the elephant; my patron designing to return when it was rotten, and to take his teeth, &c. to trade with. I continued this game for two months, and killed an elephant every day, getting sometimes upon one tree, sometimes upon another. One morning, as I looked for the elephants, I perceived, with extreme amazement, that, instead of passing by me across the forest, as usual, they stopped, and came to me, with a horrible noise, in such a number that the earth was covered with them, and shook under them. They encompassed the tree where I was, with their trunks extended, and their eyes all fixed upon me. At this frightful spectacle I continued immovable, and was so much frightened, that my bow and arrows fell out of my hands. My fears were not vain; for, after the elephants had stared upon me some time, one of the largest of them put his trunk round the root of the tree, and pulled so strong, that he plucked it up, and threw it on the ground: I fell with the tree, and the elephant, taking me up with his trunk, laid me on his back, where I sat more like one dead than alive, with my quiver on my shoulder. He put himself afterwards at the head of the rest, who followed him in troops, and carried me to a place where he laid me down on the ground, and retired with all his companions. Conceive, if you can, the condition I was in: I thought myself to be in a dream; at last, after having lain some time, and seeing the elephants gone, I got up, and found I was upon a long and broad hill, covered all over with the bones and teeth of elephants. I confess to you that this object furnished me with abundance of reflections. I admired the instinct of those animals; I doubted not but that was their burying-place, and they carried me thither on purpose to tell me that I should forbear to persecute them, since I did it only for their teeth. I did not stay on the hill, but turned towards the city, and, after having travelled a day and a night, I came to my patron. I met no elephant in my way, which made me think they had retired further into the forest, to leave me at liberty to come back to the hill without any obstacle.

As soon as my patron saw me, Ah, poor Sindbad, says he, I was in great trouble to know what was become of you. I have been at the forest, where I found a tree newly pulled up, and a bow and arrows on the ground; and, after having sought for you in vain, I despaired of ever seeing you more. Pray tell me what befel you, and by what good hap thou art still alive. I satisfied his curiosity; and going both of us next morning to the hill, he found, to his great joy, that what I had told him was true. We loaded the elephant upon which we came with as many teeth as he could carry; and when we were returned, Brother, says my patron, (for I will treat you no more as a slave, after having made such a discovery as will enrich me,) God bless you with all happiness and prosperity. I declare before him, that I give you your liberty. I concealed from you what I am now going to tell you. The elephants of our forest have every year killed us a great many slaves whom we sent to seek ivory. For all the cautions we gave them, these crafty animals killed them one time or other.

God has delivered you from their fury, and has bestowed that favour upon you only. It is a sign that he loves you, and has use for your services in the world. You have procured me incredible gain. We could not have ivory formerly, but by exposing the lives of our slaves; and now our whole city is enriched by your means. Do not think I pretend to have rewarded you by giving you liberty; I will also give you considerable riches. I could engage all our city to contribute towards making your fortune, but will have the glory of doing it myself.

To this obliging discourse, I replied, Patron, God preserve you. Your giving me liberty is enough to discharge what you owe me; and I desire no other reward for the service I have had the good fortune to do to you and your city, but leave to return to my own country. Very well, says he, the Mocon [Footnote: A regular wind that comes six months from the east, and as many from the west.] will in a little time bring ships for ivory. I will send you home then, and give you wherewith to bear your charges. I thanked him for my liberty, and his good intention towards me. I staid with him, expecting the Mocon; and during that time we made so many journies to the hill, that we filled our warehouses with ivory. The other merchants, who traded in it, did the same thing, for it could not be long concealed from them. The ships arrived at last, and my patron himself, having made choice of the ship wherein I was to embark, loaded half of it with ivory on my account; he laid in provisions in abundance for my passage; and besides obliged me to accept a present of the curiosities of the country, of great value. After I had returned him a thousand thanks for all his favours, I went on board. We set sail; and as the adventure which procured me this liberty was very extraordinary, I had it continually in my thoughts. We stopped at some islands to take in fresh provisions; our vessel being come to a port on the Terra Firma in the Indies, we touched there, and not being willing to venture by sea to Balsora, I landed my proportion of the ivory, resolving to proceed on my journey by land. I made vast sums of my ivory, bought several rarities which I intended for presents, and, when my equipage was got ready, I set out in company with a large caravan of merchants. I was a long time on the way, and suffered very much; but endured all with patience, when I considered that I had nothing to fear from the seas, from pirates, from serpents, nor of the other perils I had undergone. All these fatigues, however, ended at last, and I came safe to Bagdad. I went immediately to call upon the caliph, and gave him an account of my embassy. That prince told me he had been uneasy because I was so long of returning, but he always hoped God would preserve me. When I told him the adventure of the elephants, he seemed to be much surprised at it, and would never have given any credit to it, had he not known my sincerity. He reckoned this story, and the other relations I had given him, to be so curious, that he ordered one of his secretaries to write them in characters of gold, and lay them up in his treasury. I retired very well satisfied with the honours I had received, and the presents which he gave me; and after that I gave myself up wholly to my family, kindred, and friends.

Sindbad here finished the relation of his seventh and last voyage; and then addressing himself to Hindbad, Well, friend, says he, did you ever hear of any person that suffered so much as I have done, or of any mortal that has gone through so many

perplexities? Is it not reasonable, that, after all this, I should enjoy a quiet and pleasant life? As he said this, Hindbad drew near to him, and, kissing his hand, said, I must acknowledge, sir, that you have gone through terrible dangers; my troubles are not comparable to yours; if they afflict me for a time, I comfort myself with the thoughts of the profit I get by them. You not only deserve a quiet life, but are worthy besides of all the riches you enjoy, because you make such a good use of them. May you therefore continue to live in happiness and joy till the day of your death. Sindbad gave him a hundred sequins more, received him into the number of his friends, and desired him to quit his porter's employment, and come and dine every day with him, that he might all his days have reason to remember Sindbad the sailor.

Scheherazade, perceiving it was not yet day, continued her discourse, and began another story.

THE THREE APPLES.

Sir, said she, I have already had the honour to entertain your majesty with a ramble which the Caliph Haroun Alraschid made one night from his palace; I will give you an account of one more. This prince one day commanded the grand vizier Giafar to come to his palace the night following. Vizier, says he, I will take a walk round the town, to inform myself what people say, and particularly how they are pleased with my officers of justice. If there be any against whom they have reason of just complaint, we will turn them out, and put others in their stead, who may officiate better: If, on the contrary, there be any that have gained their applause, we will have that esteem for them which they deserve. The grand vizier being come to the palace at the hour appointed, the caliph, he, and Mesrour the chief of the eunuchs, disguised themselves so as they could not be known, and went out ail together. They passed through several places, and by several markets; and as they entered a small street, they perceived, by the light of the moon, a tall man, with a white beard, who carried nets on his head; he had a folding basket of palm leaves on his arm, and a club in his hand. This old man, says the caliph, does not seem to be rich; let us go to him, and inquire into his circumstances. Honest man, said the vizier, who art thou? The old man replied, Sir, I am a fisher, but one of the poorest and most miserable of the trade; I went from my house about noon to go a-fishing, and from that time to this I have not been able to catch one fish; at the same time I have a wife and small children, and nothing to maintain them. The caliph, moved with compassion, says to the fisherman, Hast thou the courage to go back and cast thy nets once more? We will give thee a hundred sequins for what thou shall bring up. At this proposal, the fisherman, forgetting all his day's toil, took the caliph at his word, and with him, Giafar, and Mesrour, returned to the Tigris; he saying to himself, These gentlemen seem to be too honest and reasonable not to reward my pains; and if they give me the

hundredth part of what they promise me, it will be a great deal. They came to the bank of the river; and the fisherman throwing in his net, when he drew it again, brought up a trunk close shut, and very heavy. The caliph made the grand vizier pay him a hundred sequins immediately, and sent him away. Mesrour, by his master's order, carried the trunk on his shoulder; and the caliph was so very eager to know what was in it, that he returned to the palace with all speed. When the trunk was opened, they found in it a large basket made of palm leaves, shut up, and the covering of it sewed with red thread. To satisfy the caliph's impatience, they would not take time to unrip it, but cut the thread with a knife, and they took out of the basket a bundle wrapt up in a sorry piece of hanging, and bound round with a rope, which being untied, and the bundle opened, they found, to their great amazement, the corpse of a young lady, whiter than snow, all cut in pieces.

Your majesty may imagine, a great deal better than I am able to express the astonishment of the caliph at this dreadful spectacle. His surprise was instantly changed into passion, and darting an angry look at the vizier, Ah! thou wretch, said he, is this your inspection into the actions of my people? Do they commit such impious murders under thy ministry in my capital city, and throw my subjects into the Tigris, that they may cry for vengeance against me at the day of judgment? If thou dost not speedily revenge the murder of this woman, by the death of her murderer, I swear by Heaven, that I will cause thee to be hanged, and forty more of thy kindred. Commander of the faithful, replied the grand vizier, I beg your majesty to grant me time to make inquiry. I will allow thee no more, said the caliph, than three days; therefore thou must look to it. The vizier Giafar went home in great confusion of mind. Alas, said he, how is it possible that, in such a vast and populous city as Bagdad, I should be able to detect a murderer, who undoubtedly committed the crime without witness, and perhaps may be already gone from hence? Any other person but me would take some wretched person out of prison, and cause him to die, to satisfy the caliph; but I will not burden my conscience with such a barbarous action; I will rather die than save my life at this rate. He ordered the officers of police and justice to make strict search for the criminal: they sent their servants about, and they themselves were not idle, for they were no less concerned in this matter than the vizier. But all their endeavours turned to nothing; what pains soever they took, they could not find out the murderer; so that the vizier concluded his life to be gone, unless some remarkable providence hindered it. The third day being come, an officer came to this unfortunate minister with a summons to follow him, which the vizier obeyed. The caliph asked him for the murderer. He answered, with tears in his eyes, Commander of the faithful, I have not found any person that could give me the least account of him. The caliph, full of fury and rage, gave him many reproachful words, and ordered that he and forty Bermecides^[Footnote: The Bermecides were a family come out of Persia, and of them the grand Vizier was descended.] more should be hanged up at the gate of the palace.

In the mean while the gibbets were preparing, and orders were sent to seize forty Bermecides more in their houses; a public crier was sent about the city to cry thus, by the caliph's order,

Those who have a desire to see the grand vizier Giafar hanged, and forty more Bermecides of his kindred, let them come to the square before the palace. When all things were ready, the judge criminal, and a great many officers belonging to the palace, brought out the grand vizier with forty Bermecides, and set each of them at the foot of the gibbet designed for them, and a rope was put about each of their necks. The multitude of people that filled the square could not, without grief and tears, behold this tragical sight; for the grand vizier and the Bermecides were loved and honoured on account of their probity, bounty, and impartiality, not only in Bagdad, but through all the dominions of the caliph.

Nothing could prevent the execution of this prince's too severe and irrevocable sentence; and the lives of the most honest people in the city were just going to be taken away, when a young man, of handsome mien and good apparel, pressed through the crowd till he came to the place where the grand vizier was; and after he had kissed his hand, said, Most excellent vizier, chief of the emirs of this court, and comforter of the poor, you are not guilty of the crime for which you stand here. Withdraw, and let me expiate the death of the lady who was thrown into the Tigris. It was I who murdered her, and deserve to be punished for it. Though these words occasioned great joy to the vizier, yet he could not but pity the young man, in whose look he saw something that, instead of being ominous, was engaging; but as he was about to answer him, a tall man, pretty well in years, who had likewise forced his way through the crowd, came up to him, saying, Sir, do not believe what this young man tells you; I killed that lady who was found in the trunk; and this punishment ought only to fall upon me. I conjure you, in the name of God, not to punish the innocent for the guilty. Sir, says the young man to the vizier, I do protest that I am he who committed this vile act, and nobody else had any hand in it. My son, said the old man, it is despair that brought you hither, and you would anticipate your destiny. I have lived a long time in the world, and it is time for me to be gone; let me therefore sacrifice my life for yours. Sir, said he again to the vizier, I tell you once more I am the murderer; let me die without any more ado. The controversy between the old man and the young one obliged the grand vizier Giafar to carry them both before the caliph, to which the criminal judge consented, being very glad to serve the vizier. When he came before the prince, he kissed the ground seven times, and spoke after this manner: Commander of the faithful, I have brought here before your majesty this old man, and this young one, who both confess themselves to be the sole murderers of the lady. Then the caliph asked the criminals which of them it was that so cruelly murdered the lady, and threw her into the Tigris? The young man assured him it was he, but the old man maintained the contrary. Go, says the caliph to the grand vizier, and cause them both to be hanged. But, sir, says the vizier, if only one of them be guilty, it would be unjust to take the lives of both. At these words the young man spoke again: I swear by the great God, who has raised the heavens so high as they are, that I am the man who killed the lady, cut her in quarters, and threw her into the Tigris about four days ago. I renounce my part of happiness among the just at the day of judgment, if what I say be not truth; therefore I am he that ought to suffer. The caliph, being surprised at this oath, believed him, especially as the old man made no answer to

this. Whereupon, turning to the young man, Thou wretch, said he, what was it that made thee to commit that detestable crime, and what is it that moves thee to offer thyself voluntarily to die? Commander of the faithful, said he, if all that has passed between that lady and me were set down in writing, it would be a history that would be very useful to other men. I command you then to relate it, said the caliph. The young man obeyed, and began.

THE STORY OF THE LADY THAT WAS MURDERED, AND OF THE YOUNG MAN HER HUSBAND.

Commander of the faithful, your majesty may be pleased to know, that this murdered lady was my wife, the daughter of this old man you see here, who is my uncle by the father's side. She was not above twelve years old when he gave her to me, and it is now eleven years ago. I have three children by her, all boys, yet alive; and I must do her the justice to say, that she never gave me the least occasion of offence; she was chaste, of good behaviour, and made it her whole business to please me. For my part, I loved her entirely, and rather prevented her, in granting any thing she desired, than opposed it. About two months ago she fell sick; I took all imaginable care of her, and spared nothing that could procure a speedy recovery. After a month, she began to grow better, and had a mind to go to the bagnio. Before she went out of the house, Cousin, said she, (for so she used to call me from familiarity), I long for some apples; if you could get me any, you would please me extremely; I have longed for them a great while, and I must own it is come to that height, that if I be not satisfied very soon, I fear some misfortune will befall me. With all my heart, said I, I will do all that is in my power to make you easy, and went immediately round all the markets and shops in the town to seek for apples, but could not get one, though I offered a sequin for each. I returned home very much dissatisfied at my disappointment. As for my wife, when she returned from the bagnio, and saw no apples, she became so very uneasy, that she could not sleep all night: I rose betimes in the morning, and went through all the gardens, but had no better success than the day before; only I happened to meet an old gardener, who told me that all my pains would signify nothing, for I could not expect to find apples any where but in your majesty's garden at Balsora. As I loved my wife passionately, and would not have any thing of neglect to satisfy her chargeable upon me, I put myself in a traveller's habit, and after I had told her my design, I went to Balsora, and made my journey with so great diligence, that I returned at the end of fifteen days with three apples, which cost me a sequin each; there were no more left in the garden, so that the gardener would let me have them no cheaper. As soon as I came home, I presented them to my wife, but her longing was over; so she satisfied herself with receiving them, and laid them down by her. In the mean time she continued sickly, and I knew not what remedy to get for her.

A few days after I returned from my journey, as I was sitting in my shop, in the public place where all sorts of fine stuffs are sold, I saw an ugly tall black slave come in with an apple in his hand, which I knew to be one of those I had brought from Balsora. I had no reason to doubt it, because I was certain there was not one to be had in all Bagdad, nor in any garden about it. I called to him, and said, Good slave, pray thee tell me where thou hadst this apple? It is a present (said he, smiling) from my mistress. I was to see her to-day, but found her indisposed. I saw three apples lying by her, and asked where she had them? She told me, the good man her husband had made a fortnight's journey on purpose for them, and brought them to her. We had a collation together; and, when I took my leave of her, I brought away this apple that you see. This discourse put me out of my senses; I rose, shut up my shop, ran home with all speed, and going to my wife's chamber, looked immediately for apples, and seeing only a couple, asked what was become of the third? Then my wife turning her head to the place where the apples lay, and perceiving there were but two, answered me coldly, Cousin, I know not what is become of it. At this answer I did verily believe what the slave told me to be true; and at the same time giving myself up to madness and jealousy, I drew my knife from my girdle, and thrust it into the unfortunate creature's throat; I afterwards cut off her head, and divided her body into four quarters, which I packed up in a bundle, and hiding it in a basket, sewed it up with a thread of red yarn, put all together in a trunk, and, when night came, carried it on my shoulder down to the Tigris, where I sunk it.

The two youngest of my children were already put to bed, and asleep, the third being gone abroad; but, at my return, I found him sitting by my gate, weeping very much. I asked him the reason: Father, said he, I took this morning from my mother, without her knowledge, one of those three apples you brought her, and I kept it a long while; but, as I was playing some time ago with my little brother in the street, a tall slave that went by snatched it out of my hands, and carried it with him: I ran after him, demanding it back; and besides, told him that it belonged to my mother, who was sick; and that you had made a fortnight's journey to fetch it; but all to no purpose, he would not restore it. And whereas I still followed him, crying out, he turned and beat me, and then ran away as fast as ever he could from one lane to another, till at length I lost sight of him. I have since been walking without the town, expecting your return, to pray you, dear father, not to tell my mother of it, lest it should make her worse. When he had said these words, he fell a weeping again more bitterly than before.

My son's discourse afflicted me beyond measure: I then found myself guilty of an enormous crime, and repented too late of having so easily believed the calumnies of a wretched slave, who, from what he had learned of my son, invented that fatal lie. My uncle, here present, came just at the time to see his daughter; but, instead of finding her alive, understood from me that she was murdered, for I concealed nothing from him; and, without staying for his censure, declared myself the greatest criminal in the world. Upon this, instead of reproaching me, he joined his tears with mine, and we wept three days together without intermission; he for the loss of a daughter whom he always loved

tenderly, and I for the loss of a dear wife, of whom I had deprived myself after so cruel a manner, by giving too easy credit to the report of a lying slave.

This, commander of the faithful, is the sincere confession your majesty commanded from me. You have now heard all the circumstances of my crime, and I most humbly beg of you to order the punishment which it merits; and, however severe it may be, I shall not in the least complain, but esteem it too easy and gentle.

The caliph was very much astonished at the young man's relation; but this just prince, finding he was to be pitied rather than condemned, began to speak in his favour. This young man's crime, said he, is pardonable before God, and excusable with men. The wicked slave is the sole cause of this murder; it is he alone that must be punished. Wherefore, said he, looking upon the grand vizier, I give you three days time to find him out; if you do not bring him within that space, you shall die in his stead. The unfortunate Giafar, who thought himself now out of danger, was terribly perplexed at this new order of the caliph; but not daring to return any answer to the prince, whose hasty temper he well knew, he departed from his presence, and retired to his house with tears in his eyes, persuading himself he had but three days to live; for he was so fully convinced that he should not find the slave, that he made not the least inquiry about him. Is it possible, said he, that in such a city as Bagdad, where there

is such an infinite number of negro slaves, I should be able to find out him who is guilty? So that, unless God be pleased to bring it about, as he has already detected the murderer, nothing can possibly save my life! The vizier spent the two first days in mourning with his family, who sat round him weeping, and complaining of the caliph's cruelty. The third day being come, he prepared himself to die with courage, as an honest minister, and one who had nothing to trouble his conscience with: he sent for notaries and witnesses, who signed the last will he made in their presence; after which he took leave of his wife and children, and bade them the last farewell. All his family were drowned in tears, so that there never was a more sorrowful spectacle; At last the messenger came from the caliph to tell him that he was out of all patience, having heard nothing from him, nor concerning the negro slave, whom he had commanded him to search for: I am therefore ordered, said he, to bring you before his throne. The afflicted vizier made ready to follow the messenger; but, as he was going but, they brought him his youngest daughter, who was about five or six years of age. The nurses who attended her, presented her to her father to receive his last blessing. Having a particular love to the child, he prayed the messenger to give him leave to stop for a moment, and, taking his daughter in his arms, kissed her several times; as he was embracing her the last time, he perceived she had somewhat in her bosom that looked bulky, and a sweet scent. My dear little one, said he, what hast thou in thy bosom? My dear father, said she, it is an apple, upon which is written the name of our lord and master the caliph; our slave Rihan[Footnote: This word signifies, in Arabic, basilic, an odoriferous plant; and the Arabians call their slaves by this name, as the custom in France is to give the name of jessamin to a footman.] sold it to me for two sequins.

At the words apple and slave, the grand vizier cried out with surprise intermixed with joy, and, putting his hand into the child's bosom, pulled out the apple. He caused the slave, who was not far off, to be brought immediately; and when he came, Rascal! said he, where hadst thou this apple? My lord, said the slave, I swear to you that I neither stole it in your house, nor out of the commander of the faithful's garden; but the other day, as I was going through a street where three or four children were at play, one of them having it in his hand, I snatched it from him, and carried it away. The child ran after me, telling me it was none of his own, but belonged to his mother, who was sick; and that his father, to save her longing, had made a long journey, and brought home three apples, whereof this was one, which he had taken from his mother without her knowledge. He said what he could to make me give it him back, but I would not; I brought it home, and sold it for two sequins to the little lady your daughter; and this is the whole truth of the matter.

Giafar could not enough admire how the roguery of a slave had been the cause of an innocent woman's death, and almost of his own. He carried the slave along with him, and, when he came before the caliph, gave the prince an exact account of all that the slave had told him, and the chance that brought him to the discovery of his crime. Never was any surprise so great as the caliph's, yet he could not prevent himself from falling into excessive fits of laughter. At last he recovered himself, and, with a serious mien, told the vizier, That, since his slave had been the occasion of so strange an accident, he deserved an exemplary punishment. Sir, I must own it, said the vizier, but his guilt is not irremissible; I remember a strange story of a vizier of Cairo, called Nouredin[Footnote: Nouredin signifies, in Arabic, the light of religion.] Ali and of his son Bedreddin[Footnote: Bedreddin signifies the full moon of religion.] Hassan of Balsora; and as your majesty delights to hear such things, I am ready to tell it on this condition, that if your majesty find it more astonishing than that which gives me occasion to tell it, you will be pleased to pardon my slave. I am content, said the caliph; but you undertake a hard task, for I do not believe you can save your slave, the story of the apples being so very singular. Upon this Giafar began his story thus:

THE STORY OF NOUREDDIN ALI AND BEDREDDIN HASSAN.

Commander of the faithful, there was in former days a sultan of Egypt, a strict observer of justice, gracious, merciful, and liberal; and his valour made him terrible to his neighbours. He loved the poor, and protected the learned, whom he advanced to the highest dignities. This sultan had a vizier, who was prudent, wise, sagacious, and well versed in the sciences. This minister had two sons, very handsome men, and who in every thing followed his own footsteps. The eldest was called Schemseddin[Footnote:

That is to say, the sun of religion.] Mohammed, and the younger Nouredin Ali. The last especially was endowed with all the good qualities that any man could have. The vizier their father being dead, the sultan sent for them; and after he had caused them both to put on the usual robes of a vizier, I am as sorry, says he, for the loss of your father as yourselves; and because I know you live together, and love one another entirely, I will bestow his dignity upon you conjunctly; go and imitate your father's conduct. The two new viziers humbly thanked the sultan, and went home to their house to make due preparation for their father's interment. They did not go abroad for a month, and then went to court, where they appeared continually on council-days; when the sultan went a hunting, one of the brothers went along with him and this honour they had by turns. One evening, as they were talking after supper, the next day being the elder brother's turn to go a hunting with the sultan, he said to his younger brother, since neither of us is yet married, and as we live so lovingly together, a thought is come into my head; Let us both marry in one day, and let us choose two sisters out of some family that may suit our quality: What do you think of this fancy? I must tell you, brother, answered Nouredin, that it is very suitable to our friendship; there cannot be a better thought; for my part, I am ready to agree to any thing you shall think fit. But hold, this is not all, says Schemseddin; my fancy carries me further. Suppose both our wives should conceive the first night of marriage, and should happen to be brought to bed on one day, yours of a son and mine of a daughter, we will give them to one another in marriage when they come of age. Nay, says Nouredin aloud, I must acknowledge that this project is admirable; such a marriage will perfect our union, and I willingly consent to it. But then, brother, says he further, if this marriage should happen, would you expect that my son should settle a jointure on your daughter? There is no difficulty in that, replies the elder; for I am persuaded, that, besides the usual articles of marriage-contract, you will not fail to promise in his name at least three thousand sequins, three good manors, and three slaves. No, said the younger, I will not consent to that; are we not brethren, and equal in title and dignity? Do not you and I both know what is just? The male being nobler than the female, it is your part to give a large dowry with your daughter. By what I perceive, you are a man that would have your business done at another's charge.

Though Nouredin spoke these words in jest, his brother, being of an ill temper, was offended; and falling into a passion, A mischief upon your son, said he, since you prefer him before my daughter; I wonder you had so much confidence as to believe him worthy of her; you must needs have lost your judgment, to think that you are my equal, and say we are colleagues: I would have you to know, you fool, that, since you are so impudent, I would not marry my daughter to your son, though you would give him more than you are worth. This pleasant quarrel between two brothers, about the marriage of their children before they were born, went so far, that Schemseddin concluded with threatening: Were I not to-morrow, says he, to attend the sultan, I would treat you as you deserve; but, at my return, I shall make you sensible that it does not become a younger brother to speak so insolently to his elder brother as you have done to me. Upon this he retired to his apartment, and his brother went to bed.

Schemseddin rose very early next morning, and goes to the palace to attend the sultan, who went to hunt about Cairo, near the pyramids. As for Nouredin, he was very uneasy all night, and considering that it would not be possible for him to live longer with a brother who treated him with so much haughtiness, he provided a good mule, furnished himself with money, jewels, provisions, and victuals; and having told his people that he was going a private journey for two or three days, he departed. When he was out of Cairo, he rode by the desert toward Arabia; but his mule happening to tire by the way, he was forced to pursue his journey on foot. A courier that was going to Balsora, by good fortune overtaking him, took him up behind him. As soon as the courier came to Balsora, Nouredin alighted, and returned him thanks for his kindness. As he went about to seek for a lodging, he saw a person of quality, with a great retinue, coming along, to whom all the people showed a mighty respect, and stood still till he passed by, Nouredin stopping among the rest. This was the grand vizier to the sultan of Balsora, who walked through the city, to see that the inhabitants kept good order and discipline. This minister, casting his eye by chance on Nouredin, and finding something extraordinary in his aspect, looked very attentively upon him, and as he came near him, and saw him in a traveller's habit, he stood still, asked him who he was, and from whence he came? Sir, said Nouredin, I am an Egyptian, born at Cairo, and have left my country, because of the unkindness of a near relation, and am resolved to travel through the world, and rather to die than return home again. The grand vizier, who was a reverend old gentleman, after hearing those words, says to him, Son, beware, do not pursue your design; there is nothing but misery in the world; you are not sensible of the hardships you must endure; come follow me, I may perhaps make you forget the thing that has forced you to leave your own country. Nouredin followed the grand vizier, who soon perceived his good qualities, and fell so much in love with him, that one day he said to him in private, My son, I am, as you see, so far gone in years, that there is no likelihood I shall live much longer. Heaven has bestowed only one daughter upon me, who is beautiful as you are handsome, and now fit for marriage. Several people of the greatest quality at this court have desired her for their sons, but I could not grant their request. I have a love for you, and think you so worthy to be received into my family, that, preferring you before all those that have sought her, I am ready to accept you for my son-in-law. If you like the proposal, I will acquaint the sultan my master that I have adopted you by this marriage, and will pray him to grant you the reversion of my dignity of grand vizier in the kingdom, of Balsora. In the meantime, nothing being more requisite for me than ease in my old age, I will not put you in possession of my estate, but leave the administration of public affairs to your management. Having made an end of this kind and generous proposal, Nouredin fell at his feet, and expressing himself in terms that demonstrated his joy and gratitude, told the vizier that he was at his command in every thing. Upon this the vizier sent for his chief domestics, ordered them to furnish the great hall of his palace, and to prepare a great feast. He afterwards sent to invite the nobility of the court and city to honour him with their company, and when they were all met, (Nouredin having now told him who he was,) he said to those lords, for he thought it proper to speak thus on

purpose to satisfy such of them to whom he had refused his alliance: I am now, my lords, to discover a thing to you which I have hitherto kept a secret. I have a brother who is grand vizier to the sultan of Egypt, as I am to the sultan of this kingdom. This brother has but one son, whom he would not marry in the court of Egypt, but sent him hither to marry my daughter, that both our branches may be reunited. His son, whom I knew to be my nephew as soon as I saw him, is the young gentleman whom I here present to you, and is to be my son-in-law. I hope you will do me the honour to be present at his wedding, which I am resolved to celebrate this day. The noblemen, who could not take it ill that he preferred his nephew before all the great matches that had been proposed to him, said, that he had very good reasons, for what he did, were willing to be witnesses to the ceremony, and wished that God might prolong his days to enjoy the satisfaction of the happy match.

The lords met at the vizier's, having testified their satisfaction at the marriage of his daughter with Nouredin, sat down to dinner, which lasted a good while; and the latter course was sweet-meats, of which every one, according to custom, took what he thought fit. The notaries came in with the marriage-contract, when the chief lords signed it; and, after the company departed, the grand vizier ordered his servants to prepare a bagnio, and have every thing else provided for Nouredin in the best manner: When he had washed and dried himself, he was going to put on his former apparel, but had an extraordinary rich suit brought him. Being dressed and perfumed with the most odoriferous essence, he went to see the grand vizier, his father-in-law, who was exceedingly well pleased with his genteel mien; and having made him sit down, My son, said he, you have declared unto me who you are, and the quality you had at the court of Egypt. You have also told me of a difference betwixt you and your brother, which occasioned you to leave your country. I desire you to make me your entire confident, and to acquaint me with the cause of your quarrel; for now you have no reason either to doubt me, or to conceal any thing from me. Nouredin accordingly gave him an account of every circumstance of the quarrel; at which the vizier burst out into a fit of laughter, and said, This is one of the oddest things that I ever heard: Is it possible, my son, that your quarrel should rise so high about an imaginary marriage? I am sorry you fell out with your elder brother upon such a frivolous matter; but I find he is in the wrong to be angry at what you only spoke in jest, and I ought to thank Heaven for that difference which has procured me such a son-in-law. But, said the old gentleman, it is late, and time for you to retire; go to your bride, my son; she expects you; to-morrow I will present you to the sultan, and hope he will receive you in such a manner as shall satisfy us both. Nouredin took leave of his father-in-law, and went to his spouse's apartment. It is remarkable, continued Giafar, that Schemseddin happened also to marry at Cairo the very same day that this marriage was solemnized at Balsora; the particulars are as follow. After Nouredin left Cairo, with an intention never to return, Schemseddin, who was gone a hunting with the sultan of Egypt, did not come back in a month; for the Sultan loved the game extremely, and continued the sport all that while. Schemseddin, on his return, ran to Nouredin's apartment, but was much surprised when he understood, that, under pretence of taking

a journey of two or three days, he had gone away on a mule the same day that the sultan went a hunting, and never appeared since. This circumstance vexed him so much the more, because he did not doubt that the hard words he had used were the cause of his going away. He sent a messenger in search of him, who went to Damascus, and as far as Aleppo, but Nouredin was then at Balsora. When the courier returned, and brought word that he heard no news of him, Schemseddin intended to make further inquiry after him in other parts; but in the mean time had a fancy to marry, and obtained the daughter of one of the greatest lords in Cairo upon the same day that his brother married the daughter of the grand vizier of Balsora.

But this is not all, said Giafar; at the end of nine months, Schemseddin's wife was delivered of a daughter at Cairo, and on the same day Nouredin's wife had a son at Balsora, who was named Bedreddin Hassan. The grand vizier of Balsora testified his joy for the birth of his grandson by great gifts and public entertainments; and, to show his son-in-law the great esteem he had for him, he went to the palace, and begged the sultan to grant Nouredin his office, that he might have the comfort, before his death, to see his son-in-law made grand vizier his stead. The sultan, who had taken a great liking to Nouredin when his father presented him after his marriage, and had ever since heard every body speak well of him, readily granted his father-in-law's request, and caused Nouredin immediately to put on the robe of a grand vizier. The next day, when the father saw his son-in-law preside in council as he himself had done, and perform all the offices of grand vizier, his joy was complete. Nouredin behaved himself so well in every thing, that one would have thought he had been all his lifetime employed in such affairs. He continued afterwards to assist in council every time when the infirmities of age would not permit his father-in-law to appear. The old gentleman died about four years after, and Nouredin performed the last duties to him with all possible love and gratitude. As soon as his son Bedreddin had attained to seven years of age, he provided him a most excellent tutor, who taught him as became his birth. The child had a ready wit, a genius capable of receiving all the instructions that could be given, and, after having been two years under the tuition of his master, learned the alcoran by heart. His father Nouredin put him afterwards to other tutors, by whom his mind was cultivated to such a degree, that, when he was twelve years of age, he had no more occasion for them; and then, as his physiognomy promised wonders, he was admired by all.

Nouredin had hitherto kept him to his studies, and had not yet brought him into public; but now he carried him to the palace, on purpose to have the honour of kissing the hand of the sultan, who received him very graciously. The people who saw him in the streets were charmed with his genteel mien, and gave him a thousand blessings. His father, purposing to make him capable of supplying his place, spared no cost for that end, brought him up to business of the greatest moment, and in short omitted nothing to advance a son he loved so well. But as he began to enjoy the fruits of his labour, he was all of a sudden taken with a violent fit of sickness; and, finding himself past recovery, disposed himself to die like a good Mussulman. In his last moments he forgot not his son Bedreddin, but called for him, and said, My

son, you see this world is transitory; there is nothing durable but that to which I shall speedily go. You must therefore from henceforth begin to fit yourself for this change, as I have done; you must prepare for it without murmuring, so as to have no trouble of conscience for not acting the part of a really honest man. As for your religion, you are sufficiently instructed in it by what you have learned from your tutors, and by your own study. As to what belongs to an honest man, I shall give you some instructions, of which I hope you will make good use; and as it is a necessary thing to know one's self, and you cannot come to that knowledge unless you first understand who I am, I shall now tell you. I am a native of Egypt; my father, your grandfather, was first minister to the sultan of that kingdom. I myself had the honour to be vizier to that same sultan, and so has my brother, your uncle, who, I suppose, is yet alive; his name is Schemseddin. I was obliged to leave him, and come into this country, where I have raised myself to the high dignity which I now enjoy. But you will understand all these matters more fully by a manuscript which I shall leave you. Noureddin pulled out his pocket-book, which he had written with his own hand, and carried always about him, and giving it to Bedreddin, Take it, says he, and read it at your leisure; you will find, among other things, the day of my marriage, and that of your birth; these are such circumstances as perhaps you may hereafter have occasion to know; therefore you must keep it very carefully. Bedreddin, being most afflicted to see his father in that condition, and sensibly touched with his discourse, could not but weep when he received the pocket-book, and promised never to part with it.

That very moment Noureddin fainted, so that it was thought he would have expired; but he came to himself again, and uttered these words: My son, the first instruction I give you is, not to make yourself familiar with all sorts of people. The way to live happy is to keep your mind to yourself, and not tell your thoughts too freely. Secondly, Not to do violence to any body whatever, for in that case you will draw every body's hatred upon you. You ought to consider the world as a creditor, to whom you owe moderation, compassion, and forbearance. Thirdly, Not to say a word when you are reproached; for, as the proverb says, he that keeps silence is out of danger. In this case particularly you ought to practise it. You also know what one of our poets says upon this subject, That silence is the ornament and safeguard of life; and that our speech ought not to be like a storm of rain that spoils all. Never did any man yet repent of having spoken too little, though many have been sorry that they spoke too much. Fourthly, To drink no wine, for that is the source of all vices. Fifthly, To be frugal in your way of living; if you do not squander your estate away, it will maintain you in time of necessity. I do not mean you should be either too liberal or too niggardly; for though you have but little, if you husband it well, and lay it out upon proper occasions, you will have many friends; but if, on the contrary, you have great riches, and make a bad use of them, the world will forsake you, and leave you to yourself.

In short, Noureddin Ali continued, till the last moment of his breath, to give good advice to his son, by whom he was magnificently interred.

Bedreddin Hassan of Balsora, for so he was called because born in that town, was so overwhelmed with grief for the death of his father, that instead of a month's time to mourn, according to custom, he kept himself closely shut up in tears and solitude about two months without seeing any body, or so much as going abroad to pay his duty to the sultan of Balsora, who, being displeased at his neglect, and regarding it as a slight put upon his court and person, suffered his passion to prevail, and in his fury called for the new grand vizier, (for he had created a new one as soon as Nouredin died,) commanded him to go to the house of the deceased, and seize upon it, with all his other houses, lands, and effects, without leaving any thing for Bedreddin Hassan, and to bring him prisoner along with him. The new grand vizier, accompanied by a great many messengers belonging to the palace, justices and other officers, went immediately to execute his commission; but one of Bedreddin's slaves, happening accidentally to come into the crowd, no sooner understood the vizier's errand, than he ran in all haste to give his master warning. He found him sitting in the porch of his house, as melancholy as if his father had been but newly dead. He fell down at his feet quite out of breath; and, after he had kissed the hem of his garment, cried out, My lord, save yourself immediately. Bedreddin, lifting up his head, said, What is the matter? what news dost thou bring? My lord, said he, there is no time to be lost; the sultan, horribly incensed against you, has sent people to take all you have, and to seize your person.

The words of this faithful and affectionate slave put Bedreddin into great confusion. May not I have so much time, said he, as to take some money and jewels along with me? No, sir, replied the slave; the grand vizier will be here this moment. Begone immediately; save yourself. Bedreddin rose up from the sofa in haste, put his feet in his sandals, and, after covering his head with the tail of his gown, that his face might not be known, he fled, without knowing what way to go, in order to avoid the impending danger.

The first thought that came into his head was to get out at the next gate with all speed. He ran without stopping till he came to the public church-yard; and, as it was growing dark, he resolved to pass the night on his father's tomb. It was a large edifice in the form of a dome, which Nouredin Ali built when he was alive. Bedreddin met by the way a very rich Jew, who was a banker and merchant, and was returning to the city from a place where his affairs had called him. The Jew, knowing Bedreddin, halted, and saluted him very courteously.

The caliph was very attentive to the discourse of the grand vizier, who went on after this manner. Isaac the Jew, after he had paid his respects to Bedreddin Hassan by kissing his hand, says, My lord, dare I be so bold as to ask whither you are going at this time of night alone, and so much troubled? Has any thing disquieted you? Yes, said Bedreddin, a while ago I was asleep, and my father appeared to me in a dream, looking fiercely upon me, as if he were very angry; I started out of my sleep very much frightened, and came out immediately to go and pray upon his tomb. My lord, said the Jew, who did not know the true reason why Bedreddin left the town, your father of happy memory, and my good lord, had store of merchandise in several vessels which are yet

at sea, and belong to you; I beg the favour of you to grant me the first refusal of them before any other merchant. I am able to lay down ready money for all the goods that are in your ships; and to begin, if you will give me those that happen to come in the first ship that arrives in safety, I will pay you down, in part payment, a thousand sequins. Drawing out a bag from under his gown, he showed it him sealed up with one seal.

Bedreddin, banished from home, and dispossessed of all he had in the world, looked upon this proposal of the Jew as a favour from Heaven, and therefore accepted it with a great deal of joy. My lord, said the Jew, then you sell unto me, for a thousand sequins, the lading of the first of your ships that shall arrive in port? Yes, answered Bedreddin, I sell it to you for a thousand sequins; it is done. Upon this, the Jew delivered him the bag of a thousand sequins, and offered to count them; but Bedreddin saved him the trouble, and said, he would trust his word. Since it is so, my lord, be pleased to favour me with a small note, in writing, of the bargain we have made. Having said this, he pulled his ink-horn from his girdle, and taking a small reed out of it, neatly cut for writing, he presented it to him, with a piece of paper he took out of his letter-case, and, whilst he held the ink-horn, Bedreddin Hassan wrote these words: 'This writing is to testify, that Bedreddin Hassan of Balsora has sold to Isaac the Jew, for the sum of one thousand sequins, received in hand, the lading of the first of his ships that shall arrive in this port.' This note he delivered to the Jew, who put it in his letter-case, and then took leave of him.

While Isaac pursued his journey to the city, Bedreddin made the best of his way to his father's tomb. When he came to it, he bowed his face to the ground, and, with his eyes full of tears, deplored his miserable condition. Alas! said he, unfortunate Bedreddin, what will become of thee? Whither canst thou fly for refuge against the unjust prince who persecutes thee? Was it not enough to be afflicted for the death of so dear a father? Must fate add new misfortunes to just complaints? He continued a long time in this posture; but at last rose up again, and, leaning his head upon his father's sepulchre, his sorrows returned more violently than before; so that he sighed and mourned, till, overcome with heaviness, he stretched himself upon the floor, and fell asleep. He had not slept long when a genius, who had retired to the church-yard during the day, and was intending, according to custom, to range about the world at night, espying this young man in Nouredin's tomb, entered, and finding Bedreddin lying on his back, was surprised at his beauty. When he had attentively considered Bedreddin, he said to himself, To judge of this creature by his good mien, he seems to be an angel of the terrestrial paradise, whom God has sent to put the world in a flame with his beauty. At last, after he had satisfied himself with looking upon him, he took a flight into the air, where meeting by chance with a fairy, they saluted each other; after which he said to her, Descend with me into the church-yard where I stay, and I will show you a prodigious beauty, who is worthy of your admiration as well as mine. The fairy consented, and both descended in an instant; they came into the tomb: Look ye, said the genius to the fairy, showing him Bedreddin, did you ever see a young man of a better shape, and more beautiful than this? The fairy, having attentively observed Bedreddin, answered, I must

confess that he is a very handsome man, but I am just come from seeing an object at Cairo still more admirable; and if you hear me, I will tell you a strange story concerning her. You will very much oblige me by so doing, answered the genius. You must know then, said the fairy, that the sultan of Egypt has a vizier called Schemseddin Mohammed, who has a daughter of about twenty years of age, the most beautiful and complete person that ever was known. The sultan having heard of this young lady's beauty, sent the other day for her father, and said, I understand you have a daughter; I have a mind to marry her; will you consent to it? The vizier, who did not expect this proposal, was troubled at it; and, instead of accepting it joyfully, which another in his place would certainly have done, he answered the sultan, May it please your majesty, I am not worthy of the honour you confer upon me, and I most humbly beseech you to pardon me if I do not agree to your request. You know I had a brother called Nouredin Ali, who had the honour, as well as myself, to be one of your viziers: We had some difference together, which was the cause of his leaving me on a sudden, and since that time I have had no account of him till within these four days, when I heard he died at Balsora, being grand vizier to the sultan of that kingdom. He has left a son behind him; and there having been an agreement between us to match our children together, should we have any, I am persuaded he intended the match when he died. Being desirous to fulfil the promise on my part, I conjure your majesty to grant me leave; you have in your court many other lords who have daughters on whom you may please to bestow that honour.

The sultan of Egypt was incensed against Schemseddin to the highest degree, and said to him in a passion, which he could not restrain, Is this the way you requite my condescension to stoop so low as to desire your alliance? I know how to revenge your daring to prefer another to me, and I swear that your daughter shall be married to the most contemptible and ugly of all my slaves. Having spoken these words, he angrily bid the vizier begone, who went home to his house full of confusion, and very sad. The same day the sultan sent for one of his grooms, who is hump-backed, big-bellied, crook-legged, and as ugly as a hobgoblin; and, after having commanded Schemseddin to consent to marry his daughter to this ghastly slave, he caused the contract to be made out and signed by witnesses in his own presence. The preparations for this fantastical wedding, says the fairy, are all ready, and at this moment all the slaves belonging to the lords of the court of Egypt are waiting at the door of the bagnio, each with a flambeau in his hand, for the crook-backed groom to go along with them to his bride, who is already dressed to receive him. When I departed from Cairo, the ladies, met for that purpose, were going to conduct her, in all her nuptial attire, to the hall, where she is to receive her hump-backed bridegroom, and is this minute now expecting him; I have seen her, and do assure you that no person can look upon her without admiration.

When the fairy left off speaking, the genius says to her, Whatever you think or say, I cannot be persuaded that the girl's beauty exceeds that of this young man. I will not dispute it with you, answered the fairy, for I must confess he deserves to be married to that charming creature whom they design for Hump-back; and I think it were a deed worthy of us to obstruct the sultan of

Egypt's injustice, and put this young gentleman in the room of the slave. You are in the right, answered the genius; I am extremely obliged to you for so good a thought; let us deceive him: I consent to your revenge upon the sultan of Egypt; let us comfort a distressed father, and make his daughter as happy as she thinks herself miserable; I shall do my utmost to make this project take, and am persuaded you will not be backward; I shall carry him to Cairo before he awakes, and afterwards leave it to you to carry him elsewhere when we have accomplished our design. The plan being thus concerted, the genius lifted Bedreddin gently, carried him with an inconceivable swiftness through the air, and set him down at the door of a public-house next to the bagnio, whence Hump-back was to come with the train of slaves that waited for him. Bedreddin awaked that very moment, and was mightily surprised to find himself in the middle of a city which he knew not: He was going to cry out, and to ask where he was; but the genius touched him gently on the shoulder, and forbade him to speak a word. Then he put a torch in his hand, bid him mix with the crowd at the bagnio door, and follow them till he came into a hall, where they were to celebrate a marriage. The bridegroom is a hump-backed fellow, and by this description you will easily know him. Place yourself at the right hand as you go in, then immediately open the purse of sequins you have in your bosom, and distribute them among the musicians and dancers as they go along. When you have got into the hall, give money also to the female slaves you see about the bride, when they come near you; but every time you put your hand in your purse, be sure to take out a whole handful, and be not sparing. Observe to do every thing exactly as I have told you, with great presence of mind; be not afraid of any person or thing, but leave the rest to a superior power, who will order matters as he thinks fit.

Young Bedreddin, thus instructed in all that he was to do, advanced towards the door of the bagnio: the first thing he did was to light his torch like a slave; then mixing among them, as if he belonged to some nobleman of Cairo, he marched along as they did, following Hump-back, who came out of the bagnio, and mounted a horse from the sultan's own stable. Being come near the musicians and men and women-dancers, who preceded the bridegroom, Bedreddin pulled out, time after time, whole handfuls of sequins, which he distributed among them. As he gave his money with an unparalleled grace and engaging mien, those who received it cast their eyes upon him, and, after they had taken a full view of his face, found him so handsome and comely, that they could not look off again.

At last they came to Schemseddin's gate. Schemseddin was Bedreddin's uncle, and little thought his nephew was so near. The door-keepers, to prevent any disorder, kept back all the slaves who carried torches, and would not let them come in. Bedreddin was likewise refused; but the musicians, who had free entrance, stood still, and protested they would not go in without him. He is not one of the slaves, said they; look upon him, and you will soon be satisfied as to that; he is certainly a young stranger, who is curious to see the ceremonies observed at weddings in this city. Saying thus, they put him in the midst of them, and carried him in; they took his torch out of his hand, and gave it to the first they met. Having brought him into the hall, they placed him at the right hand of the hump-backed bridegroom, who sat near the

vizier's daughter on a throne most richly adorned. She appeared very lovely in her dress, but in her face there was nothing to be seen but poignant grief. The cause was easy to be guessed at, when she had by her side a bridegroom so very deformed, and so unworthy of her love. The throne of that ill-matched couple was in the midst of a sofa. The ladies of the emirs, viziers, those of the sultan's bed-chamber, and several other ladies of the court and city, were placed on each side, a little lower, every one according to rank, and all of them so fine and richly dressed, that it was one of the pleasantest sights that could be seen, each of them holding a large wax taper. As soon as they saw Bedreddin come into the room, all fixed their eyes upon him, admiring his shape, his behaviour, and the beauty of his face. When he was set down, they left their seats, and came near him, to have a full view of his face; and almost all of them, as they returned to their seats, found themselves moved with tender passion.

The disparity between Bedreddin and the hump-backed groom, who made such a horrible figure, occasioned a great murmuring among the company, insomuch that the ladies cried out, We must give our bride to this handsome young gentleman, and not to this ugly hump-back. Nor did they rest here, but uttered imprecations against the sultan, who, abusing his absolute power, would unite ugliness and beauty together. They also upbraided the bridegroom, and put him quite out of countenance, to the great satisfaction of the spectators, whose shouts for some time put a stop to the concert of music in the hall. At last the musicians began again, and the women who had dressed the bride came round her. Each time she changed her habit, she rose up from her seat, followed by her bride-women, and passed by Hump-back without giving him one look; but went towards Bedreddin, before whom she presented herself in her new attire. On this occasion Bedreddin, according to the instructions given him by the genius, failed not to put his hand in his purse, and pulled out handfuls of sequins, which he distributed among the women that followed the bride; nor did he forget the players and dancers, but also threw money to them. They showed themselves very thankful, and made signs that the young bride should be for him, and not for the hump-back fellow. The women who attended her told her the same thing, and did not care whether the groom heard them or not; for they put a thousand tricks upon him, which very much pleased the spectators.

The ceremony of changing habits being over, the musicians ceased and went away, but made a sign to Bedreddin Hassan to stay behind. The ladies did the same, and went all home, except those belonging to the house. The bride went into a closet, whither her women followed to undress her, and none remained in the hall but the hump-back groom, Bedreddin, and some of the domestics. Hump-back, who was furiously mad at Bedreddin, suspecting him to be his rival, gave him a cross look, and said, And thou, what dost thou wait for? Why art thou not gone as well as the rest? Begone. Bedreddin, having no pretence to stay, withdrew, not knowing what to do with himself. But he had not got out of the porch, when the genius and the fairy met and stopped him. Whither art thou going? said the fairy; stay, for Hump-back is not in the hall, but has gone out about some business; you have nothing to do but to return, and introduce yourself into the bride's chamber: As soon as you are alone with her, tell her boldly that

you are her husband; that the sultan's intention was only to make sport with the groom; and, to make this pretended bridegroom some amends, you had caused to be prepared for him, in the stable, a good dish of cream: Then tell her all the fine things you can think of to persuade her, for, with your handsomeness, little persuasion will do, and she will think herself happy in being deceived so agreeably. In the mean time we shall take care that Hump-back return not, and let nothing hinder you from passing the night with your bride, for she is yours.

While the fairy thus encouraged Bedreddin, and instructed him how he should behave himself, Hump-back was really gone out of the room; for the genius went to him in the shape of a great cat, miauling at a most fearful rate: The fellow called to the cat, and clapped his hands to make her flee; but, instead of that, the cat stood upon her hind feet, staring with her eyes like fire, looking fiercely at him, miauling louder than she did at first, and growing bigger, till she was as large as an ass. At this sight Hump-back would have cried out for help, but his fear was so great that he stood gaping, and could not utter one word. That he might have no time, however, to recover, the genius changed himself immediately into a large buffalo, and in this shape called to him with a voice that redoubled his fear, Thou hump-backed villain! At these words the affrighted groom cast himself on the ground, and covering his face with his gown, that he might not see this dreadful beast, Sovereign prince of buffaloes, said he, what is it you want with me? Woe be to thee, replies the genius, hast thou the boldness to venture to marry my mistress? O my lord, said Hump-back, I pray you to pardon me; if I am guilty, it, is through ignorance; I did not know that this lady had a buffalo for her sweetheart: Command me in any thing you please; I give you my oath that I am ready to obey you. By death, replied the genius, if thou goest out from hence, or speakest a word till the sun rises, I will crush thy head to pieces; but then I give thee leave to go from hence: I warn thee to hasten, and not to look back; but if thou hast the impudence to return, it shall cost thee thy life. When the genius had done speaking, he transformed himself into the shape of a man, took Hump-back by the legs, and after having set him against the wall, with his head downwards, If thou stir, said he, before the sun rises, as I have told thee already, I will take thee by the heels again, and dash thy head in a thousand pieces against the wall.

To return to Bedreddin: Being prompted by the genius and the presence of the fairy, he got into the hall again, from whence he slipped into the bride-chamber, where he sat down expecting the success of his adventure. After a while the bride arrived, conducted by an old matron, who came no further than the door, exhorting the bridegroom to do his duty like a man, without looking to see if it was Hump-back or another; she then locked the door, and retired. The young bride was mightily surprised, instead of Hump-back to find Bedreddin Hassan, who came up to her with the best grace in the world. What! my dear friend, said she, by your being here at this time of night, you must be my husband's comrade? No, madam, said Bedreddin, I am of another sort of quality than that ugly hump-back. But, said she, you do not consider that you speak degradingly of my husband. He your husband, madam? replied he; can you retain these thoughts so long? Be convinced of your mistake, madam, for so much beauty

must never be sacrificed to the most contemptible of mankind: It is I, madam, that am the happy mortal for whom it is reserved. The sultan had a mind to make himself merry by putting this trick upon the vizier your father, but he chose me to be your real husband. You might have observed how the ladies, the musicians, the dancers, your women, and all the servants of your family, were pleased with this comedy. I have sent that hump-back fellow to his stable again, where he is just now eating a dish of cream; and you may rest assured that he will never appear any more before you.

At this discourse, the vizier's daughter, who was more like one dead than alive when she came into the bride-chamber, put on a gay air, which made her so handsome that Bedreddin was perfectly charmed with her. I did not expect, said she, to meet with so pleasing a surprise, and had condemned myself to live unhappy all my days; but my good fortune is so much the greater, as I possess in you a man that is worthy of my tenderest affection. Having spoken thus, she undressed herself, and stepped into bed. Bedreddin, overjoyed to see himself possessor of so many charms, made haste to follow her, and laid his clothes upon a chair, with a bag that he got from the Jew, which, notwithstanding all the money he pulled out, was still full. He likewise threw off his turban, and put on a night-cap that had been ordered for Hump-back, and so went to bed in his shirt and drawers[Footnote: All the eastern nations lie in their drawers; but this circumstance will serve Bedreddin in the sequel.]; the latter were of blue satin, tied with a lace of gold. Whilst the two lovers were asleep, the genius, who had met again with the fairy, says to him, That it was high time to finish what was begun, and hitherto so successfully carried on; then let us not be overtaken by day-light, which will soon appear; go you, and bring off the young man again without awaking him. The fairy went into the bed-chamber where the two lovers were fast asleep, and took up Bedreddin just as he was, that is to say, in his shirt and drawers, and, in company with the genius, with a wonderful swiftness flew away with him to the gates of Damascus in Syria, where they arrived when the officer of the mosques, appointed for that end, was calling the people to come to prayers at break of day. The fairy laid Bedreddin softly on the ground, and, leaving him close by the gate, departed with the genius. The gate of the city being opened, and a great many people assembled to get out, they were mightily surprised to see Bedreddin lying in his shirt and drawers upon the ground. One said, He has been so hard put to it to get away from his mistress, that he had not time to put on his clothes. Look ye, says another, how people expose themselves; sure enough he has spent the most part of the night in drinking with his friends, till he has got drunk, and then perhaps, having occasion to go out, instead of returning, is come this length, and, not having his senses about him, was overtaken with sleep. Others were of different opinions; but nobody could guess the occasion of his being there. A small puff of wind happening to blow at the time, uncovered his breast, which was whiter than snow. Every one, being struck with admiration at the fineness of his complexion, spoke so loud as to awake him. His surprise was as great as theirs, when he found himself at the gate of a city where he had never been before, and encompassed by a crowd of people gazing at him. Gentlemen, said he, for God's sake tell me where I am, and what you would have of me. One of the crowd said

to him, Young man, the gates of the city were just now opened, and, as we came out, we found you lying here in this condition, and stood to look on you: Have you lain here all night? and do you not know that you are at one of the gates of Damascus? At one of the gates of Damascus! answered Bedreddin; sure you mock me: When I lay down to sleep last night, I was at Cairo. When he said these words, some of the people, moved with compassion for him, said, It is a pity such a handsome young man should have lost his senses; and so went away. My son, says an old gentleman to him, you know not what you say: How is it possible that you, being this morning at Damascus, could be last night at Cairo? It is true for all that, said Bedreddin; for I swear to you that I was all yesterday at Balsora. He had no sooner said these words, than all the people fell into a fit of laughter, and cried out, He is a fool, he is a madman. There were some, however, who pitied him because of his youth; and one among the company said to him, My son, you must certainly be crazed; you do not consider what you say; how is it possible that a man could yesterday be at Balsora, the same night at Cairo, and next morning at Damascus? Sure you are asleep still; come, rouse up your spirits. What I say, answered Bedreddin, is so true, that last night I was married in the city of Cairo. All those that laughed before could not forbear laughing again when he said so. Recollect yourself, says the same person that spoke before; you have dreamed all this, and that fancy still possesses your brain. I am sensible of what I say, answered the young man: Pray can you tell me how it was possible to go in a dream to Cairo, where I am very certain I was in person, and where my bride was seven times brought before me, each time dressed in a different habit, and where I saw an ugly hump-backed fellow to whom they intended to give her? Besides, I want to know what is become of my gown, my turban, and the bag of sequins I had at Cairo. Though he assured them that all these things were matters of fact, yet they could not forbear laughing at him, which put him into such confusion that he knew not well what to think.

After Bedreddin had confidently affirmed all that he said to be true, he rose up to go into the town, and every one that followed him called out, A madman, a fool. Upon this, some looked out at their windows, some came to their doors, and others joined with those that were about him, calling out as they did, but not knowing for what. In this perplexity Bedreddin happened to reach a pastry-cook's shop, and went into it to avoid the rabble. This pastry-cook had formerly been captain of a troop of Arabian robbers who plundered the caravans; and though he was become a citizen of Damascus, where he behaved himself with decorum, yet he was dreaded by all those who knew him; wherefore, as soon as he came out to the rabble that followed Bedreddin, they dispersed. The pastry-cook, seeing them all gone, asked him what he was, and who brought him hither? Bedreddin told him all, not even concealing his birth, nor the death of his father the grand vizier: He afterwards gave him an account why he left Balsora; how, after he fell asleep the night following upon his father's tomb, he found himself, when he awaked, at Cairo, where he had married a lady; and, finally, in what amazement he was when he found himself at Damascus, without being able to penetrate into all those wonderful events.

Your history is one of the most surprising (said the

pastry-cook); but, if you follow my advice, you will let no man know the matters you have revealed to me, but patiently expect till Heaven think fit to put an end to your misfortunes: You are free to stay with me till then; and as I have no children, I will own you for my son, if you consent to it; and when you are so adopted, you may freely walk up and down the city, without being further exposed to the insults of the rabble. Though this adoption was below the son of a grand vizier, Bedreddin was glad to accept of the pastry-cook's proposal, judging it the best thing he could do in his then circumstances. The cook clothed him, called witnesses, and sent for a notary, before whom he acknowledged him as his son. After this, Bedreddin staid with him by the name of Hassan, and learned the pastry trade. Whilst these things passed at Damascus, Schemseddin Mohammed's daughter awaked, and, finding Bedreddin out of bed, supposed he had risen softly from a fear of disturbing her, but that he would soon return. As she was in expectation of him, her father the vizier, who was mightily vexed at the affront put upon him by the sultan, came and knocked at her chamber-door, with a resolution to bewail her sad destiny. He called her by her name, and she, knowing him by his voice, immediately got up and opened the door; she kissed his hand, and received him with so much satisfaction in her countenance as surprised the vizier, who expected to find her drowned in tears, and as much grieved, as himself. Unhappy wretch! said he in a passion, do you appear before me thus? after the hideous sacrifice you have just consummated, can you see me with so much satisfaction? The new bride, seeing her father angry at her pleasant countenance, said to him, For God's sake, sir, do not reproach me wrongfully: It is not the hump-back fellow, whom I abhor more than death, it is not that monster I have married; every body laughed him so to scorn, and put him so out of countenance, that he was forced to run away and hide himself, to make room for a charming young gentleman who is my real husband. What fable do you tell me? said Schemseddin roughly? What! did not Crook-back lie with you last night? No, sir, said she, it was that young gentleman who has large eyes and black eye-brows. At these words the vizier lost all patience, and fell into a terrible passion. Ah, wicked woman, says he, you will make me distracted! It is you, father, said she, that puts me out of my senses by your incredulity. So it is not true, replies the vizier, that Hump-back--Let us talk no more of Hump-back, said she; a curse upon Hump-back, must I always have him cast in my dish? Father, said she, I tell you once more that I did not bed with him, but with my dear spouse, who, I believe, is not very far off. Schemseddin immediately went out to seek him; but, instead of seeing him, was mightily surprised to find Hump-back with his head on the ground, and his heels uppermost, as the genius had placed him. What is the meaning of this? said he; who placed you thus? Crook-back, knowing it to be the vizier, answered, Alas! alas! it is you then that would marry me to the mistress of a buffalo, the sweetheart of an ugly genius; I will not be your fool, you shall not put a trick upon me. Schemseddin, on hearing Hump-back speak thus, thought he was raving, and bade him move, and stand upon his legs. I will take care how I do that, said Hump-back, unless the sun be risen. Know, sir, that when I came thither last night, on a sudden a black cat appeared to me, and in an instant grew as big as a buffalo: I have not forgotten what he said to me; therefore you may go about your business, and leave me here. The vizier, instead of going away,

took Hump-back by the heels, and made him get up, after which he ran as fast as he could, without looking behind him, and, coming to the palace, presented himself to the sultan, who laughed heartily when he told him how the genius had served him.

Schemseddin returned to his daughter's chamber more astonished than before. Well then, my abused daughter, said he, can you give me no further light into this matter? Sir, said she, I can give you no other account than what I have done already. Here are my husband's clothes, which he left upon the chair; perhaps you may find somewhat that may solve your doubt. She then showed him Bedreddin's turban, which he took and examined carefully on all sides. I should take this to be a vizier's turban, if it were not made after the Moussol^[Footnote: The town of Moussol is in Mesopotamia, and built opposite to old Nineveh.] fashion; but, perceiving somewhat to be sewed between the stuff and the lining, he called for scissars, and, having unripped it, found the paper which Nouredin Ali gave Bedreddin his son as he was dying, and he had put it in his turban for more security. Schemseddin, having opened the paper, knew his brother Nouredin's hand, and found this superscription, 'For my son Bedreddin Hassan.' Before he could make any reflections, his daughter delivered him the bag that lay under his clothes, which he likewise opened, and found full of sequins; for, as before mentioned, notwithstanding all the liberality of Bedreddin, it was still kept full by the genius and fairy. He read these words upon a note in the bag, 'A thousand sequins belonging to Isaac the Jew;' and these lines underneath, which the Jew wrote before he departed from Bedreddin: 'Delivered to Bedreddin Hassan, for the cargo of the first of those ships that formerly belonged to Nouredin Ali, his father, of worthy memory, sold unto me upon its arrival in this place.' He had scarcely read these words, when he gave a shout, and fainted. Being recovered, however, by the help of his daughter, and the woman whom she called to her assistance, Daughter, said he, do not frighten yourself at this accident, the reason of which is such as you can scarcely believe: Your bridegroom is your cousin, the son of Nouredin Ali; the thousand sequins put me in mind of a quarrel I had with my dear brother; it is without doubt the dowry he gives you. God be praised for all things, and particularly for this, miraculous adventure, which demonstrates his almighty power. Then looking again upon his brother's writing, he kissed it several times, shedding abundance of tears. Having looked over the book from one end to the other, he found the date of his brother's arrival at Balsora, his marriage, and the birth of Bedreddin Hasaan; and when he compared the same with the day of his own marriage, and the birth of his daughter at Cairo, he wondered how every thing so exactly agreed. This happy discovery put him into such a transport of joy, that he took up the book, with the ticket of the bag, and showed it to the sultan, who pardoned what was past, and was so much pleased with the relation of the adventure, that he caused it, with all its circumstances, to be put in writing for the use of posterity.

Meanwhile Schemseddin could not comprehend why his nephew did not appear; he expected him every moment, and was impatient to have him in his arms. After he had expected him seven days in vain, he searched for him through all Cairo, but could hear no news of him, which perplexed him very much. This is the strangest

adventure, said he, that ever man met with. Not knowing what alteration might happen, he thought fit to draw up in writing, with his own hand, after what manner the wedding had been solemnized; how the hall and his daughter's bed-chamber were furnished, and other circumstances. He likewise made the turban, the bag, and the rest of Bedreddin's things, into a bundle, and locked them up. After some weeks, the vizier's daughter perceived herself with child, and was delivered of a son at the end of nine months. A nurse was provided, besides women and slaves; and his grandfather called him Agib[Footnote: This word, in Arabic, signifies wonderful.]. When young Agib had attained the age of seven, the vizier, instead of teaching him to read at home, sent him to a master who was in great esteem; and two slaves were ordered to wait upon him. Agib used to play with his school-fellows, and as they were all inferior to him in quality, they showed him great respect, according to the example of their master, who often would excuse faults in him that he would not pass by in the rest. This complaisance spoiled Agib so, that he became proud and insolent, would have his play-fellows bear all from him, and would bear nothing from them, but be master every where; and if any one took the liberty to thwart him, he would call them a thousand names, and many times beat them. In short, all the scholars were weary of his company, and complained of him to the master, who answered, that they must have patience. But when he saw that Agib still grew more and more insolent, and occasioned him a great deal of trouble, Children, said he to his scholars, I find that Agib is a little insolent gentleman; I will show you a way how to mortify him, so that he will never torment you more; nay, I believe it will make him leave the school: When he comes again to-morrow, and if you have a mind to play together, set yourselves round him, and do one of you call out, Come let us play, but upon condition, that he who desires to play shall tell his own name, and the names of his father and mother; and they who refuse it shall be esteemed bastards, and not suffered to play in our company. Next day, accordingly, when they were gathered together, they failed not to follow their master's instructions: they placed themselves round Agib, and one of them called out, Let us begin a play, but on condition, that he who cannot tell his own name, with that of his father and mother, shall not play at all. They all cried out, and so did Agib, We consent to it. Then he that spoke first asked every one the question, and all fulfilled the condition except Agib, who answered, My name is Agib, my mother is called the lady of beauty, and my father Schemseddih Mohammed, vizier to the sultan.

At these words the children cried out, Agib, What do you say? That is not the name of your father, but of your grandfather. A curse on you, said he in a passion: What! dare you say that the vizier Schemseddin is not my father? No, no, cried they, with great laughter, he is but your grandfather, and you shall not play with us; nay, we will take care how we come into your company. Having spoken thus, they left him, scoffing and laughing among themselves, which mortified Agib so much that he wept. The schoolmaster, who was near, and heard all that passed, came just at the nick of time, and speaking to Agib, says, Agib, do not you know that the vizier Schemseddin is not your father, but your grandfather, and the father of your mother, the lady of beauty? We know not the name of your father any more than you do; but only know that the sultan was going to marry your mother to one

of his grooms, a hump-back fellow, but a genius lay with her. This is hard upon you, and ought to teach you to treat your school-fellows with less haughtiness than you have done hitherto. Little Agib, being nettled at this, ran hastily out of the school, and went home crying. He came straight to his mother's chamber, who, being alarmed to see him thus grieved, asked him the reason. He could not answer for tears, and it was but now and then he could speak plain enough to repeat what had been the occasion of his sorrow. Having come to himself, Mother, said he, for the love of God, be pleased to tell me who is my father. My son, said she, Schemseddin Mohammed, that every day makes so much of you, is your father. You do not tell me truth, said he; he is your father, not mine; but whose son am I? At this question, the lady of beauty, calling to mind her wedding-night, which had been succeeded by a long widowhood, began to shed tears, repining bitterly at the loss of so lovely a husband as Bedreddin. Whilst she and Agib were weeping, the vizier entered, and demanded the reason of their sorrow. The lady told him the shame Agib had undergone at school, which did so much afflict the vizier, that he joined his tears with theirs; and judging that the misfortune that had happened to his daughter was the common discourse of the town, he was quite out of patience. In this state he went to the sultan's palace, and, falling at his feet, humbly prayed him to give him leave to make a journey into the provinces of the Levant, and particularly to Balsora, in search of his nephew Bedreddin, as he could not bear that the people of the city should believe a genius had got his daughter with child. The sultan was much concerned at the vizier's affliction, commended his resolution, gave him leave to go, and caused a passport also to be written for him, praying, in the most obliging terms, all kings and princes, in whose dominions the said Bedreddin might sojourn, to grant that the vizier might bring him along with him.

Schemseddin, not knowing how to express his thankfulness to the sultan for this favour, thought it his duty to fall down before him a second time, and the floods of tears he shed gave sufficient testimony of his gratitude. At last, having wished the sultan all manner of prosperity, he took leave, and went home to his house, where he disposed every thing for his journey, the preparations for which were carried on with so much diligence, that in four days he left the city, accompanied by his daughter and his grandson Agib.

They travelled nineteen days without stopping; but on the twentieth, arriving in a very pleasant meadow at a small distance from Damascus, they stopped, and pitched their tents on the banks of a river that runs through the town, and affords a very agreeable prospect to its neighbourhood. Schemseddin Mohammed declared that he would stay in that pleasant place two days, and pursue his journey on the third. In the mean time he granted permission to his retinue to go to Damascus; and almost all of them made use of it--some influenced by curiosity to see a city of which they had heard much, and others by the opportunity of vending in it such Egyptian goods as they had brought with them, or of buying the stuffs and rarities of the country. The beautiful lady, desirous that her son Agib might share in the satisfaction of viewing that celebrated city, ordered the black eunuch, who acted in the quality of his governor, to conduct him hither, and to take care that he came to no harm. Accordingly

Agib, arrayed in magnificent apparel, went along with the eunuch, who held a large cane in his hand. They had no sooner entered the city than Agib, fair and glorious as the day, attracted the eyes of the people. Some left their houses in order to gain a nearer view of him, others looked out at their windows, and those who passed along the streets were not satisfied with stopping to view him, but kept pace with him to prolong the pleasure of such an agreeable sight: in fine, every one admired him, and implored a thousand benedictions on the father and mother who had given being to so fine a child. By chance the eunuch and he passed by the shop where Bedreddin Hassan was, and there the crowd was so great, that they were forced to halt.

The pastry-cook who had adopted Bedreddin, had died some years before, leaving him his shop and all his estate; and he now managed the pastry trade so dexterously, that he gained great reputation in Damascus. Bedreddin, seeing so great a crowd gazing attentively upon Agib and the black eunuch, stepped out to view them himself. Having cast his eyes particularly on Agib, he presently found himself involuntarily moved. He was not struck like the crowd, with the shining beauty of the boy; a very different cause, unknown to him, gave rise to his commotion. It was the force of the blood that worked in this tender father, who, laying aside all business, made up to Agib, and, with an engaging air, said to him, My little lord, who hast won my soul, be so kind as to come into my shop, and eat a bit of such fare as I have, that I may have the pleasure of admiring you at my ease. These words he pronounced with such tenderness, that tears trickled from his eyes. Little Agib himself was greatly moved; and, turning to the eunuch, said, This honest man's face pleases me much; he speaks in such an affectionate manner, that I cannot avoid complying with his desire; let us step into his house, and taste his pastry. Ah, by my troth! replied the slave, it would be a fine thing to see the son of a vizier go into a pastry shop to eat; do not you imagine that I will suffer any such thing. Alas, my little lord, cried Bedreddin, it is an injustice to trust your conduct in the hands of a person who treats you so harshly. Then applying himself to the eunuch, My good friend, continued he, pray do not hinder this young lord to grant me the favour I ask; do not put that piece of mortification on me; rather do me the honour to walk in along with him; and, by so doing, you will give the world to know, that, though your outside is brown like a chesnut, your inside is as white as his. Do you know, continued he, that I am master of the secret to make you white, instead of being black as you are? This set the eunuch a laughing, and then he asked Bedreddin what that secret was. I will tell you, replied Bedreddin, repeating some verses in praise of black eunuchs, implying, that by their ministry the honour of princes, and of all great men, was insured. The eunuch was so charmed with the verses, that, without further hesitation, he suffered Agib to go into the shop, and also went in himself. Bedreddin was overjoyed at having obtained what he had so passionately desired; and falling about the work he had discontinued, I was making, said he, cream-tarts, and you must, with submission, eat of them, I am persuaded you will find them very good; for my own mother, who makes them incomparably well, taught me; and people send to buy them of me from all quarters of the town. This said, he took a cream-tart out of the oven, and, after strewing on it some pomegranate kernels and sugar, set it before Agib, who pronounced

it very delicious. Another was served up to the eunuch, who gave the same judgment. While they were both eating, Bedreddin regarded Agib very attentively; and, after looking on him again and again, it occurred to him that, for any thing he knew, he might have such a son by his charming wife, from whom he had been so soon and so cruelly separated; and the very thoughts drew tears from his eyes. He also intended to put some questions to little Agib about his journey to Damascus; but the child had no time to gratify his curiosity; for the eunuch, pressing him to return to his grandfather's tent, took him away as soon as he had done eating. Bedreddin, however, not contented with looking after him, shut up his shop immediately, and followed him. The eunuch, perceiving that he followed them, was extremely surprised: You impertinent fellow, said he, with an angry tone, what do you want? My dear friend, replied Bedreddin, do not trouble yourself; I have a little business out of town that is just come into my head, and I must needs go and look after it. This answer, however, did not at all appease the eunuch, who, turning to Agib, said, This is all owing to you; I foresaw that I should repent of my complaisance; you would needs go into the man's shop; it was not wise in me to give you leave. Perhaps, replied Agib, he has real business out of town, and the road is free to every body.

While this conversation passed, they kept walking together, without looking behind them, till they came near the vizier's tents, when they turned about to see if Bedreddin followed them. Agib, perceiving he was within two paces of him, grew red and white alternately, according to his different emotions; he was afraid that the grand vizier his grandfather should come to know that he had been in the pastry-shop, and had eaten there. In this dread he took up a pretty large stone that lay at his foot, and throwing it at Bedreddin, hit him on the forehead, which gave him such a wound, that his face was covered with blood; he then took to his heels, and ran under the eunuch's tent. The eunuch gave Bedreddin to understand that he had no reason to complain of a mischance which he had merited and brought upon himself. Bedreddin turned towards the city, staunching the blood with his apron, which he had not put off. I was a fool, said he within himself, for leaving my house, to take so much pains about this brat; for doubtless he would never have used me after this manner, if he had not thought I had some fatal design against him; When he got home, he had his wound dressed, and softened the sense of his mischance by the reflection that there was an infinite number of people yet more unfortunate than himself.

Bedreddin kept on the pastry trade at Damascus, whence his uncle Sehemseddin departed three days after his arrival; he went by the way of Emaus, Hanah, and Halep; then crossed the Euphrates; and, after passing through Mardin, Moussoul, Singier, Diarbeker, and several other towns, arrived at last at Balsora; and, immediately after his arrival, desired audience of the sultan, who was no sooner informed of Schemseddin's quality, than he received him very favourably, and asked him the occasion of his journey to Balsora. Sir, replied the vizier Schemseddin, I come to know what is become of the son of Nouredin Ali, my brother, who has had the honour to serve your majesty. Nouredin, said the sultan, has been dead a long while: as to his son, all I can tell you of him is, that he disappeared very suddenly about two months after his father's death, and nobody has seen him since, notwithstanding

all the inquiry I ordered to be made; but his mother, who is the daughter of one of my viziers, is still alive. Schemseddin desired leave of the sultan to see her, and carry her to Egypt; and having obtained his request, without tarrying till next day for the satisfaction of seeing her, inquired her place of abode, and that very hour went to her house, accompanied by his daughter and grandson.

The widow of Nouredin resided still in the same house where her husband had lived: it was a very magnificent structure, adorned with marble pillars; but Schemseddin did not stop to view it. At his entry, he kissed the gate, and the piece of marble upon which his brother's name was written in letters of gold. He desired to speak with his sister-in-law, and was told by the servants that she was then in a small edifice, in the form of a dome, which they showed him, in the middle of a very spacious court. This tender mother used to spend the greater part of the day, as well as the night, in that room, which she had built in order to represent the tomb of Bedreddin, whom she supposed to be dead after so long an absence. At this very instant she was shedding tears at the thoughts of her dear child; and Schemseddin entering, found her labouring under that affliction. He paid his compliments, and, after beseeching her to suspend her tears and groans, gave her to know that he had the honour to be her brother-in-law, and acquainted her with the occasion of his journey from Cairo to Balsora. Schemseddin, after relating all that had passed at Cairo on his daughter's wedding-night, and the surprise occasioned by the discovery of the paper sewed up in Bedreddin's turban, presented to her Agib and the beautiful lady.

The widow of Nouredin Ali, who had still continued sitting like a woman moped and weaned from the affairs of this world, no sooner understood by his discourse that her dear son, whom she lamented so bitterly, might still be alive, than she rose, and repeatedly embraced the beautiful lady and her grandchild Agib; and perceiving in the youth the features of Bedreddin, she shed tears very different from those to which she had been so long accustomed. She could not forbear kissing the youth, who, on his part, received her embraces with all the demonstrations of joy he was capable of. Madam, said Schemseddin, it is time to wipe away your tears, and cease your groans; you must now think of accompanying us to Egypt. The sultan of Balsora has given me leave to carry you thither, and I doubt not that you will agree to it. I am hopeful that we shall at last find out your son, my nephew; and if that should come to pass, the history of him, of you, of my own daughter, and of my own adventures, will deserve to be committed to writing, and to be transmitted to posterity.

The widow of Nouredin Ali heard this proposal with pleasure, and from that very minute ordered preparations to be made for her departure. In the mean time Schemseddin desired a second audience; and, after taking leave of the sultan, who received him with ample marks of respect, giving him a considerable present for himself, and another of great value for the sultan of Egypt, he set out from Balsora for the city of Damascus. When he arrived in its neighbourhood, he ordered his tents to be pitched without the gate at which he designed to enter the city, and gave out that he would tarry there three days in order to give his equipage rest, and buy up the best curiosities he could meet

with, in order to present them to the sultan of Egypt. While he was thus employed in choosing the finest of the stuffs which the principal merchants had brought to his tents, Agib begged the black eunuch, his governor, to carry him through the city, in order to see what he had not leisure to view as he passed before, and to know what was become of the pastry-cook whom he had wounded with a stone. The eunuch, complying with his request, went with him towards the city, after leave obtained from his mother. They entered Damascus by the paradise-gate, which lay next to the tents of the vizier Schemseddin. They walked through the great squares and public places where the richest goods were sold, and viewed the ancient mosque of the Ommidae[Footnote: That is, of caliphs who reigned after the four first successors of Mahomet, and were so called from one of their ancestors whose name was Ommiam.], at the hour of prayer, between noon and sunset[Footnote: This prayer is always repeated two hours and a half before sunset.]. After that they passed the shop of Bedreddin, whom they found still employed in making cream-tarts: I salute you, sir, said Agib. Do you know me? Do you remember ever seeing me before? Bedreddin, hearing these words, cast his eyes on him, and knowing him, (oh, the surprising effect of paternal love!) found the same emotions which he had experienced when he first saw him; he seemed much confused; and, instead of making an answer, continued a long time without uttering one word. But at last, recollecting himself, My little lord, said he, be so kind as to come once more with your governor into my house, and taste a cream-tart. I beg your lordship's pardon for my imprudence in following you out of town; I was at that time not myself, and scarcely knew what I did. You dragged me after you, and the violence of the pull was so soft, that I could not withstand it. Agib, astonished at what Bedreddin said, replied thus: There is an excess in the kindness you express; and unless you engage, on oath, not to follow me when I go from hence, I will not enter your house. If you give me your promise, and prove a man of your word, I will visit you again to-morrow, as the vizier my grand-father is still employed in buying up things for a present to the sultan of Egypt. My little lord, replied Bedreddin, I will do whatever you desire me. Accordingly Agib and the eunuch went into the shop. Bedreddin set before them a cream-tart, fully as good as what they had eaten of when they saw him before. Come, said Agib, addressing himself to Bedreddin, sit down by me, and eat with us. Bedreddin sat down, and offered to embrace Agib, as a testimony of the joy he conceived on his sitting by him; but Agib, shoving him away, desired him to be easy, not to run his friendship too close, and to content himself with seeing and entertaining him. Bedreddin obeyed, and began to sing a song, the words of which he had composed extempore in praise of Agib: he did not eat himself, but busied himself in serving his guests. When they had done eating, he brought them water to wash with[Footnote: The Mahometans having a custom of washing their hands five times a day when they go to prayers, they reckon that they have no occasion to wash before eating, but always after it, because they eat without forks.], and a white napkin to wipe their hands: he then filled a large china cup with sherbet, and put snow into it[Footnote: This is done all over the Levant, for the purpose of cooling liquor.]; and offering it to Agib, This, said he, is sherbet of roses, and the pleasantest you will meet with in all Damascus; I am sure you never tasted better. Agib, having drunk of it with pleasure, Bedreddin Hassan

took the cup from him, and presented it to the eunuch, who drank the contents at one pull. In short, Agib and his governor having fared sumptuously, returned thanks to the pastry-cook for their good entertainment, and proceeded homewards, it being then pretty late. Whew they arrived at the tents of Schemseddin, Agib's grandmother received him with transports of joy: her son Bedreddin ran always in her mind; and, in embracing Agib, the remembrance of him drew tears from her eyes. Ah, my child! said she, my joy would be complete, had I the pleasure of embracing your father Bedreddin Hassan as I now embrace you! Then sitting down to supper, she made Agib sit by her, and put several questions to him relating to the walk he had been taking along with the eunuch; and, complaining of his want of appetite, gave him a piece of a cream-tart that she had made herself, and was indeed very good; for I told you before that she could make them better than the best pastry-cooks. She likewise gave part of it to the eunuch; but they had eaten so heartily at Bedreddin's house, that they could not taste it.

Agib no sooner touched the piece of cream-tart that had been set before him, than he pretended that he did not like it, and left it uncut. Schaban[Footnote: The Mahometans give this name generally to their black eunuchs.] (for such was the eunuch's name) did the same. The widow of Nouredin Ali observed, with regret, that her grandson did not like the tart. What! said she, does my child thus despise the work of my hands? Be it known to you, that not one in the world can make such cream-tarts, except myself and your father Bedreddin, whom I myself taught. My good mother, replied Agib, give me leave to tell you, that if you do not know how to make them better, there is a pastry-cook in this town who exceeds you. We were but just now at his shop, and ate of one that was much better than yours. The grandmother, frowning on the eunuch, said, How now, Schaban? was the care of my grandchild committed to you to carry him to eat at pastry-shops like a beggar? Madam, replied the eunuch, it is true we did stop a little while, and talked with the pastry-cook, but we did not eat with him. Pardon me, said Agib; we went into his shop, and there ate a cream-tart. Upon this, the lady, more incensed against the eunuch than before, rose in a passion from the table, and running to the tent of Schemseddin, informed him of the eunuch's crime, and that in such terms as tended more to inflame the vizier than to dispose him to excuse it. Schemseddin, who was naturally passionate, did not fail on this occasion to display his anger. He went forthwith to his sister-in-law's tent; and, making up to the eunuch, What! said he, you pitiful wretch, have you the impudence to abuse the trust I repose in you? Schaban, though sufficiently convicted by Agib's testimony, still denied the fact. But the child persisted in what he had already affirmed: Grandfather, said he, I can assure you that we did not only eat, but that both of us so much satisfied our appetites, that we have no occasion for supper; besides, the pastry-cook treated us with a large bowl of sherbet. Well, cried Schemseddin, turning to Schaban, after all this, will you continue to deny that you entered the pastry-cook's house, and ate there? Schaban had still the impudence to swear that it was not true. Then you are a liar! said the vizier; I will believe my grandchild rather than you; but, after all, if you can eat up this cream-tart on the table, I shall be persuaded that you have truth on your side.

Though Schaban had crammed himself immoderately before, yet he agreed to stand the test, and accordingly took a piece of the tart; but his stomach rising against it, he was obliged to spit it out of his mouth: he still, however, pursued the lie, pretending he had over-eaten himself the day before, so that his stomach was cloyed. The vizier, irritated by the eunuch's frivolous pretences, and convinced of his guilt, ordered him to lie flat upon the ground, and to be soundly bastinadoed. In undergoing this punishment, the poor wretch shrieked out prodigiously, and at last confessed the truth: I own, cried he, that we did eat a cream-tart at the pastry-cook's, and that it was much better than that upon the table. The widow of Nouredin thought it was out of spite to her, and with a design to mortify her, that Schaban commended the pastry-cook's tart; and accordingly said, I cannot believe the cook's tarts are better than mine, and am resolved to satisfy myself upon that head. Where does he live? Go immediately, and buy me one of his tarts. The eunuch having received of her the money necessary for the purchase, repaired to Bedreddin's shop, and, addressing him, Good Mr. Pastry-cook, said he, take this money, and let me have one of your cream-tarts; one of our ladies wants to taste them. Bedreddin chose one of the best, and gave it to the eunuch. Take this, said he, I will engage it is an excellent one, and can assure you that nobody is able to make the like unless it be my mother, who perhaps still lives. Schaban returned speedily to the tents, and gave the tart to Nouredin's widow, who snatched it eagerly, and broke off a piece; but had no sooner put it to her mouth, than she screamed and swooned away, Schemseddin, being present, was extremely surprised at the accident, threw water upon her face himself, and was very active in succouring her. As soon as she recovered, My God! cried she, it must certainly be my son, my dear Bedreddin, who made this tart!

When the vizier Schemseddin heard his sister-in-law say that the maker of the tart brought by the eunuch must without doubt be Bedreddin, he was overjoyed; but reflecting that his joy might prove groundless, and in all likelihood the conjecture of Nouredin's widow be false, Madam, said he, why are you of that mind? Do you think there may not be a pastry-cook in the world who knows how to make cream-tarts as well as your son? I own, replied she, there may be pastry-cooks who can make as good tarts; but as I make them after a peculiar manner, and nobody but my son is let into the secret, it must absolutely be he who made this. Come, my brother, added she in transport, let us call up mirth and joy; we have at last found what we have been so long looking for! Madam, said the vizier, I entreat you to moderate your impatience, for we shall quickly know the truth. All we have to do, is to bring the pastry-cook hither, and then you and my daughter will readily distinguish whether it is Bedreddin or not; but you must both be hidden, so as to have a view of him without his seeing you; for my design is to delay the discovery till we return to Cairo, where I propose to regale you with very agreeable diversion. He then left the ladies in their tent, and retired to his own, where he called for fifty of his men, and said to them, Take each of you a stick in your hands, and follow Schaban, who will conduct you to a pastry-cook's in the city. When you arrive there, break and dash in pieces all you find in the shop; if he asks you why you commit such disorder, only ask him again if it was not he who made the cream-tart that was

brought from his house. If he owns himself the man, seine his person, fetter him, and bring him along with you; but take care you do not beat him, nor do him the least harm. Go, and lose no time.

The vizier's orders were immediately executed. The detachment, conducted by the black eunuch, went with expedition to Bedreddin's house, and broke in pieces the plates, kettles, copper-pans, tables, and all the other moveables and utensils they met with, and drowned the sherbet-shop with creams and comfits. Bedreddin, astonished at the sight, said, with a pitiful tone, Pray, good people, why do you serve me so? What is the matter? What have I done? Was it not you, said they, who sold this eunuch the cream-tart? Yes, replied he, I am the man, and who says any thing against it? I defy any one to make a better. Instead of giving him an answer, they continued to break all round them; even the oven was not spared. The neighbours in the mean time took the alarm; and, surprised to see fifty armed men commit such a disorder, asked the reason of such violence. Bedreddin said once more to the actors of it. Pray, tell me what crime I am guilty of, to have deserved this usage? Was it not you, replied they, who made the cream-tart you sold to the eunuch? Yes, it was I, replied he; I maintain it is a good one, and I do not deserve the usage you give me. However, without listening to him, they seized his person, and snatching the cloth off his turban, tied his hands with it behind his back; then dragging him by force out of his shop, they marched off with him. The mob gathering, and taking compassion on Bedreddin, took his part, and offered opposition to Schemseddin's men; but that very minute up came some officers from the governor of the city, who dispersed the people, and favoured the carrying off of Bedreddin; for Schemseddin had in the mean time gone to the governor's house to acquaint him with the order he had given, and to demand the interposition of force to favour the execution. The governor, who commanded all Syria in the name of the sultan of Egypt, was loath to refuse any thing to his master's vizier; so that Bedreddin was carried off, notwithstanding his cries and tears. It was needless for him to ask, by the way, those who forced him off, what fault had been found with his cream-tart, as they gave him no answer. In short, they carried him to the tents, and detained him till Schemseddin returned from the governor of Damascus's house.

Upon the vizier's return, Bedreddin Hassan was brought before him: My lord, said Bedreddin, with tears in his eyes, pray do me the favour to let me know wherein I have displeased you. Why, you wretch! said the vizier, was it not you who made the cream-tart you sent me? I own I am the man, replied Bedreddin; but pray what crime is that? I will punish you according to your deserts, said Schemseddin: it shall cost you your life for sending me such a sorry tart. Good God, cried Bedreddin, what news is this? Is it a capital crime to make a bad creamtart? Yes, said the vizier, and you are to expect no mercy from me. While this interview lasted, the ladies, who were hid, observed Bedreddin narrowly, and readily knew him, though he had been so long absent. They were so transported with joy, that they swooned away, and, when they recovered, would fain have run and fallen upon Bedreddin's neck; but the promise they had made to the vizier, not to discover themselves, restrained the tender emotions of love and nature.

Schemseddin, having resolved to set out that very night, ordered the tents to be struck, and the necessary preparations to be made for his journey. As for Bedreddin, he ordered him to be put into a chest or box well locked, and laid on a camel. When every thing was got ready, the vizier and his retinue began their march, and travelled all that night and the next day without stopping. In the evening they halted, when Bedreddin was taken out of his cage in order to be served with necessary refreshments, but still carefully kept at a distance from his mother and wife; and, during the whole expedition, which lasted twenty days, he was served in the same manner. When they arrived at Cairo, and had encamped in the neighbourhood of that place, Schemaeddin called for Bedreddin, gave orders in his presence to a carpenter to get some wood with all expedition, and make a stake. Heyday! said Bedreddin, what do you mean to do with a stake? Why, to nail you to it, replies Schemseddin; then to have you carried through all the quarters of the town, that the people may have the spectacle of a worthless pastry-cook who makes cream-tarts without pepper! Bedreddin cried out so comically, that Schemseddin could hardly keep his countenance: Good God, cried he, must I suffer a death, as cruel as ignominious, for not putting pepper in a cream-tart? Must I be rifled, and have all the gods in my house broken in pieces, imprisoned in a chest, and at last nailed to a stake? and all for not putting pepper in a cream-tart! Good God! who ever heard of such a thing? Are these the actions of Mussulmen, of persons who make professions of probity and justice, and practise all manner of good works? With these words he shed tears; and then renewing his complaint, No, continued he, never was man used so unjustly, nor so severely. Is it possible they should be capable of taking a man's life for not putting pepper in a cream-tart? Cursed be all cream-tarts, as well as the hour in which I was born! Would to God I had died that minute!

The disconsolate Bedreddin did not cease to pour forth his lamentations; and when the stake was brought, and the nails to nail him to it, he cried out bitterly at the horrid sight. Heaven! said he, canst thou suffer me to die an ignominious and painful death? And for what crime? Not for robbery or murder, or renouncing my religion, but for not putting pepper in a cream-tart!

Night being pretty far advanced, the vizier ordered Bedreddin to be put up again in his cage, saying to him, Stay here till to-morrow; the day shall not be spent before I give orders for your death. The chest or cage was then carried away, and laid upon the camel that had brought it from Damascus; at the same time all the other camels were loaded again, and the vizier, mounting his horse, ordered the camel that carried his nephew to march before him, thus entering the city, with all his equipage following. After passing through several streets, where nobody appeared, every one being in bed, he arrived at his house, where he ordered the chest to be taken down, but not to be opened till further orders. While his retinue were unloading the other camels, the vizier took Bedreddin's mother and his daughter aside; and, addressing himself to the latter, said, God be praised, my child, for this happy occasion of meeting your cousin and your husband. You surely remember in what order your chamber was on your wedding night; put every thing in the very same situation; and, in the mean time, if your memory do not serve

you, I can supply you by a written account which I caused to be taken upon that occasion; and leave the rest to me.

The beautiful lady went joyfully about the orders of her father, who at the same time began to put things in the hall in the same order they were in when Bedreddin was there with the sultan of Egypt's hunch-backed groom. As he went over his manuscript, his domestics placed every moveable accordingly. The throne was not forgotten, nor the lighted wax-candles. When every thing was put to rights in the hall, the vizier went into his daughter's chamber, and put Bedreddin's clothes, with the purse of sequins, in their proper place. This done, he said to the beautiful lady, Undress yourself, my child, and go to bed. As soon as Bedreddin enters the room, complain of his being from you so long, and tell him, that when you awaked, you were astonished you did not find him by you. Press him to come to bed again; and to-morrow morning you will divert your mother-in-law and me by telling us what has passed between you and him. The vizier went from his daughter's apartment, and left her to undress and go to bed.

Schemseddin ordered all his domestics to leave the hall, except two or three, whom he ordered to remain. These he commanded to go and take Bedreddin out of the chest, to strip him to his shirt and drawers, conduct him in that condition to the hall, leave him there all alone, and shut the door upon him. Bedreddin, though overwhelmed with grief, had been asleep all the while; insomuch that the vizier's domestics had taken him out of the chest, and stripped him, before he awaked, and carried him so suddenly into the hall, that they did not give him time to bethink himself where he was. When he found himself alone in the hall, he looked round, and the objects of his sight recalling to his memory the circumstances of his marriage, he perceived with astonishment that it was the same hall where he had seen the sultan's groom of the stables. His surprise was still greater, when, approaching softly to the door of a chamber which he found open, he espied his clothes in the very place where he remembered to have left them on his wedding-night. My God! said he, rubbing his eyes, am I asleep or awake?

His wife, who in the mean time was diverting herself with his astonishment, suddenly opened the curtains of her bed; and, bending her head forward, My dear lord, said she, with a tender air, what do you there? Pr'ythee come to bed again; you have been out of it a long time. I was strangely surprised, when I awaked, at not finding you by me. Bedreddin's countenance changed when he perceived that the lady who spoke to him was the charming person he had lain with before; he therefore entered the room; but, calling to mind all that had passed for an interval of ten years, and not being able to persuade himself that it could have happened in one night, he went to the place where his clothes and the purse of sequins lay, and, after examining them very carefully, By Heaven, cried he, these are things that I can by no means comprehend! The lady, who enjoyed his confusion, said, Once more, I pray you, my lord, come to bed again; why do you stand? He then stepped towards the bed, and said to her, Pray, madam, tell me, is it long since I left you? The question, answered she, surprises me. Did you not rise from me but now? Your thoughts are surely very busy. Madam, replied Bedreddin, I do assure you that my thoughts are not very easy. I remember, indeed, to have been

with you; but I remember, at the same time, that I have since lived ten years at Damascus. Now, if I was actually in bed with you this night, I cannot have been from you so long; these two things are inconsistent. Pray tell me what to think; whether my marriage with you be an illusion, or whether my absence from you be only a dream, Yes, my lord, cried she; doubtless you were light-headed when you thought you were at Damascus. Upon this Bedreddin laughed heartily, and said, What a comical fancy is this! I assure you, madam, this dream of mine will be very pleasant to you. Do but imagine, if you please, that I was at the gate of Damascus in my shirt and drawers, as I am here now; that I entered the town with the halloo of a mob who followed and insulted me; that I fled into a pastry-cook's, who adopted me, taught me his trade, and left me all he had when he died; and that after his death I kept a shop. In fine, madam, I had a great number of other adventures too tedious to recount; and all I can say is, that it was not amiss that I awaked, for they were going to nail me to a stake. Oh, Lord, and for what (cried the lady, feigning astonishment) would they have used you so cruelly? You must certainly have committed some enormous crime. Not in the least, replied Bedreddin; it was nothing in the world but a mere trifle, the most ridiculous thing you can think of. All the crime I was charged with, was selling a cream-tart that had no pepper in it. As for that matter, said the beautiful lady, laughing heartily, I must say they did you great injustice. Ah, madam, replied he, that was not all; for this cursed cream-tart was every thing in my shop broken to pieces, and myself bound, fettered, and flung into a chest, where I lay so close, that methinks I am there still. In fine, a carpenter was sent for, and he was ordered to get ready a stake for me; but, thanks be to God, all these things are no more than a dream.

Bedreddin was not easy all night; he awaked from time to time, and put the question to himself, whether he dreamed or was awake. He distrusted his felicity; and to ascertain whether it was real or not, opened the curtains, and looked round the room. I am not mistaken, said he; this is the same chamber which I entered, instead of the hunch-backed groom of the stables, and am now in bed with the fair lady who was designed for him. Day-light, which then appeared, had not yet dispelled his uneasiness, when the vizier Schemseddin, his uncle, knocked at the door, and went to bid him good-morrow.

Bedreddin was extremely surprised to see, on a sudden, a man whom he knew so well, and who now appeared with a quite different air from that with which he pronounced the terrible sentence of death against him. Ah! cried Bedreddin, it was you who condemned me so unjustly to a manner of death the thoughts of which make me shrink still; and all for a cream-tart without pepper. The vizier laughed heartily; but, to put him out of suspense, told him how, by the ministry of a genius, (for Bossu's relation had made him suspect the adventure) he had been at his house, and had married his daughter instead of the sultan's groom of the stables; he then acquainted him that he had discovered him to be his nephew by a book written by the hand of Nouredin Ali, and, pursuant to that discovery, had gone from Cairo to Balsora in quest of him. My dear nephew, added he, with embraces and all the marks of tenderness, I ask your pardon for all I have made you undergo since I discovered you: I had a mind to bring you to my house

before I told you your happiness, which ought now to be so much the dearer to you as it has cost you so much perplexity. To atone for all your afflictions, comfort yourself with the joy of being in the company of those who ought to be dearest to you. While you are dressing yourself, I shall acquaint your mother, who is beyond measure impatient to see you; and will likewise bring to you your son, whom you saw at Damascus, and for whom you showed so much affection without knowing him. No words are sufficient to express the joy of Bedreddin when he saw his mother and his son. These three embraced, and showed all the transports which love and tenderness can inspire. The mother spoke to Bedreddin in the most moving terms; she mentioned the grief she had felt for his long absence, and the tears she had shed. Little Agib, instead of flying his father's embraces as at Damascus, received them with all the marks of pleasure; while his father, divided between two objects so worthy of his love, thought he could not give sufficient proofs of his affection.

In the mean time Schemseddin went to the palace to give an account of the happy success of his travels to the sultan, who was so charmed with the recital, that he ordered it to be taken down in writing, and to be preserved among the archives of his kingdom. After Schemseddin's return to his house, having prepared a noble feast, he sat down at the table with his family, and all his household passed the day in social conviviality.

The vizier Giafar having made an end of the story of Bedreddin Hassan, told the Caliph Haroun Alraschid, that this was what he had to relate to his majesty. The caliph found the story so surprising, that, without further hesitation, he granted his slave Rihan's pardon, and to condole the young man for the grief of having unhappily deprived himself of a woman whom he loved so tenderly, he married him to one of his slaves, bestowed liberal gifts upon him, and entertained him until he died.

But, sir, said Scheherazade, observing that day began to appear, though the story I have now told you be agreeable, I have one that is even much more so. If your majesty will please to hear it the next night, I am certain you will be of the same mind. Schahriar rose without giving any answer, and was in a quandary what to do. The good sultanness, said he within himself, tells very long stories; and when once she begins one, there is no refusing to hear it out. I cannot tell whether I shall put her to death to-day or not. No, surely not, I will do nothing rashly: the story she promises is perhaps more diverting than those she has yet told, and I will not deprive myself of the pleasure of hearing it. Dinarzade did not fail to awake the sultanness of the Indies, who thus commenced her story.

THE STORY OF THE LITTLE HUNCH-BACK.

There was in former times at Casgar, upon the utmost borders of Tartary, a tailor who had a pretty wife, whom he ardently loved,

and by whom he was loved in return. One day, as he sat at work, a little hunch-back my lord came and sat down at the shop-door, began singing, at same time playing upon a tabor. The tailor was pleased to hear him, and had a strong mind to take him to his house to make his wife merry: This little fellow, said he to his wife, will divert us both very agreeably. In fine, he invited my lord, who readily accepted of the invitation; the tailor then shut up his shop, and conducted him in. The little gentleman being arrived at the tailor's house, his wife covered the table, and they sat down to sup on a good large dish of fish; but as they ate heartily, the little crooked gentleman unluckily swallowed a large bone, of which he died in a few minutes, notwithstanding all the tailor and his wife could do to prevent it. Both were mightily frightened at the accident, especially as it happened in their house; and there was reason to fear, that if the justiciary magistrates should hear of it, they would be punished as assassins. The husband, however, found an expedient to get rid of the corpse: recollecting that there was a Jewish doctor who lived just by, he formed a project, to execute which, his wife and he took the corpse, the one by the feet and the other by the head, and carried it to the physician's house. They knocked at the door, from which ascended a steep pair of stairs to his chamber. As soon as they had knocked, the servant-maid came down without any light; and, opening the door, asked what they wanted. Pr'ythee, go up again, said the tailor, and tell your master we have brought him a man that is very sick, and wants his advice. Here, putting a piece of money into her hand, give him that beforehand, to convince him that we have no mind to make him lose his labour. While the servant was gone up to acquaint her master with the welcome news, the tailor and his wife nimbly conveyed the hunch-backed corpse to the head of the stairs; and, leaving it there, ran off.

In the mean time, the maid, having told the doctor that a man and a woman staid for him at the door, desiring he would come down and look upon a sick man they had brought with them, and the maid clapping the money she had received into his hand, the doctor was transported with joy; being paid beforehand, he thought it was a good job, and should not be neglected. Light, light! cried he to the maid; follow me nimbly. However, without staying for the light, he got to the stair-head in such haste, that stumbling against the corps, he gave it such a kick, as made it tumble down quite to the stair-foot, and with difficulty saved himself. A light, a light! cried he to the maid, quick, quick! at last the maid came with a light, and he went down stairs with her; but when he saw that the stumbling-block he had kicked down was a dead man, he was so frightened, that he invoked Moses, Aaron, Joshua, and Esdras, and all the other prophets of his law. Unhappy man that I am! said he, what induced me to come down without a light? I have e'en made an end of the fellow who was brought to me to be cured? I am undoubtedly the cause of his death, and unless, Esdras's ass[Footnote: Here the Arabian author ridicules the Jews: this ass is that which, as the Mahometans believe, Esdras rode upon when he came from the Babylonian captivity to Jerusalem.] comes to assist me, I am ruined: mercy on me, they will be here instantly, and drag me from my house as a murderer! But, notwithstanding the perplexity and jeopardy he was in, he had the precaution to shut his door, lest any one passing by in the street should observe the mischance, of which

he reckoned himself the author. He then took the corpse into his wife's chamber, upon which she swooned away. Alas! cried she, we are utterly ruined! undone! undone! unless we fall upon some expedient or other to turn the corpse out of our house this night! Beyond all question, if we harbour it till morning, our lives must pay for it. What a sad mischance is this! Why, how did you kill this man? That is not the question, replied the Jew; our business now is to find out a remedy for such a shocking accident. They then consulted together how to get rid of the corpse that night. The doctor racked his brain in vain; he could not think of any stratagem to get clear: but his wife, who was more fertile in invention, said, there is a thought come into my head; let us carry the corpse to the leads of our house, and tumble it down the chimney into the house of the Mussulman, our next neighbour. This Mussulman, or Turk, was one of the sultan's purveyors for furnishing oil, butter, and all sorts of fat, tallow, &c. and had a magazine in his house, in which the rats and mice made prodigious havoe.

The Jewish doctor approving the proposed expedient, his wife and he took the little hunch-back up to the roof of the house; and, clapping ropes under his arm-pits, let him down the chimney into the purveyor's chamber so softly and dexterously, that he stood upright against the wall as if he had been alive. When they found he stood firm, they pulled up the ropes, and left the gentleman in that posture. They were scarcely got into their chamber, when the purveyor went into his, being just come from a wedding feast, with a lantern in his hand. He was mightily surprised, when, by the light of his lantern, he descried a man standing upright in his chimney; but being a stout man, and apprehending it was a thief or a robber, he took up a large cane; and, making straight up to the hunch-back, Ah, said he, I thought it was the rats and the mice that ate my butter and tallow! and it is you that come down the chimney to rob me, is it? I question if ever you come back again on the same errand? This said, he fell foul of the man, and gave him a good many swinging thwacks with his cane: upon which the corpse fell down, running its nose against the ground, and the purveyor redoubled his blows: but, observing that the body did not move, he stood to consider a little; when, perceiving it was a corpse, fear succeeded his anger. Wretched man that I am! said he; what have I done? I have killed a man! alas, I have carried my revenge too far! good God, unless thou pityest me, my life is gone! Cursed, ten thousand times accursed, be the fat and the oil that gave occasion to the commission of so criminal an action. In fine, he stood pale and thunder-struck; he thought he saw the officers already come to drag him to condign punishment, and could not think what resolution to take.

The sultan of Casgar's purveyor did not observe the little gentleman's hunch when he was beating him, but as soon as he did, he threw out a thousand imprecations against him. Ah, you crooked hunch-back! cried he; would to God you had robbed me of all my fat, and I had not found you here! had it been so, I would not have been now so much perplexed for the sake of you and your nasty hunch. Oh! the stars that twinkle in the heavens give light to none but me in this dangerous Juncture! As soon as he had uttered these words, he took the little crooked corpse upon his shoulders, and carried it out of doors to the end of the street, where he set it upright against a shop, and then trudged home

again without looking behind him.

A few minutes before the break of day, a Christian merchant, who was very rich, and furnished the sultan's palace with most things it wanted; this merchant, having sat up all night debauching, stepped out of his house to go to bathe. Though he was drunk, he was sensible that the night was far spent, and that the people would quickly be called to the morning prayers, which begin at break of day; he therefore quickened his pace to get in time to the bath, lest a Turk, meeting him in his way to the mosque, should carry him to prison for a drunkard. When he came to the end of the street, he stopped on some necessary occasion, and leaned against the shop where the sultan's purveyor had put the hunch-backed corpse; but the corpse being jostled, tumbled upon the merchant's back. The merchant thinking it was a robber that came to attack him, knocked him down with a hearty box on the ear, and, after redoubling his blows, cried out, Thieves! The outcry alarmed the watch, who came up immediately; and finding a Christian beating a Turk, (for crump-back was of our religion), What reason have you, said he, to abuse a Mussulman after this rate? He would have robbed me, replied the merchant, and jumped upon my back with intent to take me by the throat. If he did, said the watch, you have revenged yourself sufficiently; come, get off him. At the same time he stretched out his hand to help little crump-back up: but observing that he was dead, Ah! hey-day! said he, is it thus that a Christian dares to assassinate a Mussulman? So he laid hold of the Christian, and carried him to the sheriff's house, where he was kept till the judge was up, and ready to examine him. In the mean time, the Christian merchant grew sober, and the more he reflected upon his adventure, the less could he conceive how such single fisty-cuffs could kill the man. The judge having heard the report of the watch, and viewed the corpse, which they had taken care to bring to his house, interrogated the Christian merchant, who could not deny the crime, though he had not committed it. But the judge considering that little crump-back belonged to the sultan, (for he was one of his buffoons) would not put the Christian to death till he knew the sultan's pleasure. For this end he went to the palace, and acquainted the sultan with what had happened, and received from him this answer, I have no mercy to show to a Christian, who kills a Mussulman; go do your office. Upon this the judge ordered a gibbet to be erected, and sent criers all over the city to proclaim that they were about to hang a Christian for killing a Mussulman.

In fine, the merchant was brought out of gaol to the foot of the gallows; and the hangman, having put the rope about his neck, was going to throw him off, when the sultan's purveyor pushed through the crowd, made up to the gibbet, calling to the hangman to stop, for that the Christian had not committed the murder, but himself. The sheriff who attended the execution immediately put interrogatories to the purveyor, who told him every circumstance of his killing the little crump-back, and conveying his corpse to the place where the merchant found him. You were about, added he, to put to death an innocent person; for how can he be guilty of the death of a man who was dead before he saw him? My burden is sufficient in having killed a Turk, without loading my conscience with the additional charge of the death of a Christian who is not guilty.

The sultan of Casgar's purveyor having publicly charged himself with the death of the little hunch-backed man, the sheriff could not avoid doing justice to the merchant. Let the Christian go, said he, and hang this man in his room, since it appears by his own confession that he is guilty. Whereupon the hangman released the merchant, and clapped the rope round the purveyor's neck; but just as he was going to pull him up, he heard the voice of the Jewish doctor, earnestly entreating him to suspend the execution, and make room for him to throw himself at the foot of the gallows. When he appeared before the judge, My lord, said he, this Mussulman you are going to hang is not guilty: the crime rests with me. Last night a man and a woman, unknown to me, came to my house with a sick man they had brought along with them; and knocking at my door, my maid went and opened it without a light, and received from them a piece of money, with a commission to come and desire me, in their names, to step down and look upon the sick person. While she was delivering her message to me, they conveyed the sick person to the stair-head, and then disappeared. I went down, without staying for my servant to light a candle, and in the dark happened to stumble upon the sick person, and kicked him down stairs. In fine, I saw he was dead, and that it was the crooked Mussulman, whose death you are now about to avenge. So my wife and I took the corpse, and, after conveying it up to the leads of our house, moved it to the roof of the purveyor's house, our next neighbour, and let it down the chimney into the chamber. The purveyor, finding it in his house, took the little man for a thief, and, after beating him, concluded he had killed him; but that it was not so, you will be convinced by this my deposition; so that I am the only author of the murder: and though it was committed undesignedly, I have resolved to expiate my crime by keeping clear of the charge of the death of two Mussulmen, and hinder you from executing the sultan's purveyor, whose innocence I have now revealed. So pray dismiss him, and put me in his place, for I alone am the cause of the death of the little man.

The chief justice being persuaded that the Jewish doctor was the murderer, gave orders to the executioner to seize him, and release the purveyor. Accordingly the doctor was just going to be hung up, when the tailor appeared, crying to the executioner to hold his hand, and make room for him, that he might come and make his confession to the lord justice; which being done, My lord, said he to the judge, you have narrowly escaped taking away the lives of three innocent persons, but if you will have patience to hear me, I will discover to you the real murderer of the crook-backed man. If his death is to be expiated by another, that must be mine. Yesterday evening, as I was at work in my shop, and pretty merry, the little hunch-back came to my door half drunk, and sat down before it. He began to sing, so I invited him to pass the evening at my house. Accordingly, he accepted of the invitation, and went with me. We sat down to supper, and I gave him a plate of fish; but, in eating, a bone stuck in his throat; and though my wife and I did our utmost to relieve him, he died in a few minutes. His death affected us extremely; and from fear of being charged with it, we carried the corpse to the Jewish doctor's house, and knocked at the door. The maid coming down and opening it, I desired her to go up forthwith, and ask her master to come down and give his advice to a sick person that we had

brought along with us; and withal, to encourage him, I charged her to give him a piece of money, which I put into her hand. When she was gone up, I carried hunch-back up stairs, laid him upon the uppermost step, and then my wife and I made the best of our way home. The doctor, in coming down, kicked the corpse down stairs, and thereupon he supposed himself to be the author of his death. Now, this being the case, continued he, release the doctor, and let me die in his room.

The chief justice, and all the spectators, could not sufficiently admire the strange emergencies that ensued upon the death of the little crooked gentleman. Let the Jewish doctor go, said the judge, and hang up the tailor, since he confesses the crime. It is certain this history is very uncommon, and deserves to be recorded in letters of gold. The executioner having dismissed the doctor, made every thing ready to tie up the tailor. While the executioner was making ready to hang up the tailor, the sultan of Casgar, wanting the company of his crooked jester, asked where he was. One of his officers answered, The hunch-back, sir, whom you inquire after, got drunk last night, and, contrary to his custom, slipped out of the palace, went a sauntering into the city, and was this morning found dead. A man was brought before the chief justice, and charged with the murder of him; but as he was going to be hanged, up came a man, and after him another, who took the charge upon themselves, and cleared each other. The examination has continued a long while, and the judge is now interrogating a third man who avows himself the real author of the murder.

Upon this intelligence, the sultan of Casgar sent a hussar to the place of execution. Go, said he to the messenger, make all the haste you can, bring the arraigned persons before me immediately, with the corpse of poor crump-back, that I may see him once more. Accordingly the hussar went, and happened to arrive at the place of execution at the time when the executioner was going to tie up the tailor. He cried aloud to the executioner to suspend the execution. The hangman, knowing the hussar, did not dare to proceed, but untied the tailor; and then the hussar acquainted the judge with the sultan's pleasure. The judge obeyed, and went straight to the palace, accompanied by the tailor, the Jewish doctor, and the Christian merchant; causing four of his men to carry the hunch corpse along with him. The judge, on appearing before the sultan, threw himself at the prince's feet, and, after recovering himself, gave him a faithful relation of what he knew of the story of the crump-backed man. The sultan found the story so uncommon, that he ordered his private historians to write it with all its circumstances. Then addressing himself to the audience, Did you ever hear, said he, such a surprising story as has happened on account of my little crooked buffoon? The Christian merchant then, after falling down, and saluting the earth with his forehead, spoke in the following manner: Most puissant monarch, said he, I know a story even more astonishing than that you have now spoken off; and if your majesty will give me leave, I will tell it you. The circumstances are such, that nobody can hear them without being moved. Well, said the sultan, I give you leave; and the merchant went on as follows.

THE STORY TOLD BY THE CHRISTIAN MERCHANT.

Sir, before I commence the recital of the story you have allowed me to tell, I beg leave to acquaint you, that I have not the honour to be born in a place that pertains to your majesty's empire. I am a stranger, born at Cairo in Egypt, one of the Coptic nations, and a professor of the Christian religion: my father was a broker, and got a good estate, which he left me at his death: I followed his example, and took up the same employment. One day at Cairo, as I was standing in the public resort for the corn-merchants, there came up to me a handsome young man, well clad, and mounted upon an ass. He saluted me, and pulling out his handkerchief, where he had a sample of sesame and Turkey corn, asked me what a bushel of such sesame would fetch? I examined the corn which the young man showed me, and told him it was worth a hundred drams of silver per bushel. 'Pray, said he, look out for some merchant to take it at that price, and come to me at the Victory-gate, where you will see a hut at a distance from the houses.' He then left me, and I showed the sample to several merchants, who told me they would take as much as I could spare at an hundred and ten drams per bushel; so that I made an account to get ten drams per bushel for my brokerage. Full of the expectation of this profit, I went forthwith to the Victory-gate, where I found the young merchant waiting for me, and he carried me into his granary, which was full of sesame. He had an hundred and fifty bushels of it, which I measured out, and, having carried them off upon asses, sold them for five thousand drams of silver. Now, out of this sum, said the young man, five hundred drams fall to you, at the rate of ten drams per bushel. I order you to take it, and apply it to your own use; and as for the rest, which is mine, do you take it out of the merchant's hand, and keep it till I call for it, as I have no occasion for it at present. I made answer, that it should be ready for him whenever he pleased; and so took leave of him, with a grateful sense of his generosity.

In a month after, he came and asked for his four thousand five hundred drams of silver. I told him they were ready, and should be told down to him in a minute: he was mounted on his ass; so I desired him to alight, and do me the honour to eat a mouthful with me before he received his money. No, said he, I cannot alight at present; I have urgent business that obliges me to be at a place hard by here; but I will return this way, and take the money, which I desire you would have in readiness. This said, he disappeared; and I still expected his return, but it was a full month before he came again. I thought with myself, the young man reposes a great trust in me, leaving so great a sum in my hands without knowing me; another would have been afraid lest I should have run away with it. To be short, he came again at the end of the third month, and was still mounted on his ass, but finer in his clothes than before. As soon as I saw him, I entreated him to alight, and asked him if he would not take his money? It is no matter for that, said he, with a pleasant easy air, I know it is in good hands; I will come and take it when all my other money is gone: adieu, continued he, I will come again towards the latter end of the week. He then clapped spurs to his ass, and away he

went. Well, thought I to myself, he says he will see me towards the latter end of the week, but it is likely I may not see him for a great while; will go and make the most of his money, and get a good penny by it.

As it happened, I was not out of my conjecture, for it was a full year before I saw my young merchant again. Then he appeared indeed with richer apparel than before, but very thoughtful. I asked him to do me the honour to walk into my house: for this time, replied he, I will go in; but upon this condition, that you shall put yourself to no extraordinary charge upon my account. That shall be as you please, said I; only do me the favour to alight and walk in. He accordingly complied, and I gave orders for some sort of entertainment; and, while that was getting ready we fell into discourse together. When the victuals were got ready, we sat down at table. When he ate the first mouthful, I observed he fed himself with the left hand, and not with the right; I could not tell what to think of it; I thought within myself, ever since I knew this young man, he always appeared very polite: is it possible he can do this out of contempt? What can the matter be that he does not make use of his right hand? After we had done eating, and every thing was taken away, we sat down upon a sofa, when I presented him with a lozenge that was excellent for giving a sweet breath, but he still took it with his left hand. Then I accosted him in this manner: Sir, pray pardon the liberty I take in asking you what reason you have for not making use of your right hand; it is likely you have some disorder in that hand. Instead of answering, he fetched a deep sigh, and pulling out his right arm, which he had hitherto kept under his garment, showed me, to my great astonishment, that his hand had been cut off. Doubtless you were alarmed, said he, to see me feed myself with the left hand; but I leave you to judge whether it was in my power to do otherwise. May one ask you; said I, by what mischance it was that you lost your right hand? Upon that he fell into tears, and, after wiping his eyes, gave me the following relation.

You must know, said he, that I am a native of Bagdad, the son of a rich father, the most noted man in that city both for quality and riches. I had scarcely launched into the world, when falling into the company of travellers, and hearing wonders told of Egypt, especially of Grand Cairo, I was moved by their discourse, and took a longing desire to travel thither; but my father was then alive, and had not given me leave. In fine, he died, and thereupon, being my own master, I resolved to take a journey to Cairo. I laid out a large sum of money upon several sorts of fine stuffs of Bagdad and Moussol, and then undertook my journey.

Arriving at Cairo, I went to the khan called the khan of Mesrou, and there took lodgings, with a warehouse for my bales, which I brought along upon camels: this done, I retired to my chamber to rest myself after the fatigue of my journey, after ordering my servants to buy some provisions, and dress them; After I had eaten, I went and saw the castle, some mosques, public places, and other things that were curious. Next day I dressed myself handsomely, and ordered some of the finest and richest of my bales to be selected, and carried by my slaves to the Circassian bezestein [Footnote: A bezestein is a public place, where silk; stuffs and other precious things are exposed to sale.], whither I

went myself. I no sooner got thither than I was surrounded by brokers and criers who had heard of my arrival. I gave patterns of my stuffs to several of the criers, who carried and showed them all over the bezestein; but none of the merchants offered nearly so much as prime cost and carriage. This vexed me, and the criers observing I was dissatisfied, If you will take our advice, said they, we will put you in a way of selling your stuffs without losing by them. The brokers and criers having thus promised to put me in a way of losing nothing by my goods, I asked them what course they would have me take? Divide your goods, said they, among several merchants, and they will sell them by retail; and twice a week, that is, on Mondays and Tuesdays, you may receive what money they take: by this means you will gain instead of losing, and the merchants will gain by you: in the mean time, you will have time to take your pleasure, and walk up and down the town, or to go upon the Nile. I took their advice, and carried them to my warehouse, from whence I brought all my goods to the bezestein, and divided them among the merchants, whom they represented as most reputable and able to pay: the merchants gave me a formal receipt before witnesses, stipulating withal that I should not make any demands upon them for the first month.

Having thus regulated my affairs, my mind was taken up with other sort of things than ordinary pleasures. I contracted friendship with divers persons of almost the same age with myself, who took care I did not want company. The first month expired, I began to visit my merchants twice a week, taking along with me a public officer to inspect their books of sale, and a banker to see they paid me in good money, as well as to regulate the value of the several species; so that every pay-day I had a good sum of money to carry home to my lodging. I went nevertheless on the other days to pass the morning, sometimes at a merchant's house, and sometimes at some other person's. In fine, I diverted myself in conversing with one or other, and seeing what passed in the bezestein.

One Monday, as I sat in the shop of a merchant whose name was Bedreddin, a lady of quality, as one might easily perceive by her air, her habit, and her being attended by a female slave in neat clothes, came into the shop, and sat down by me: her external appearance, joined to a natural grace that shone through all she did, inspired me with a longing desire to know her better. I was at a loss to know whether she observed that I took pleasure in gazing upon her, but she tucked up the crape that hung down over the muslin which covered her face, and gave me an opportunity of seeing her large black eyes, which perfectly charmed me. In fine, she screwed my love to its height by the agreeable sound of her voice, her genteel graceful carriage in saluting the merchant, and asking him how he did since she saw him last. After entertaining him some time upon indifferent things, she informed him that she wanted a sort of stuff with a ground of gold; that he came to his shop as affording the best choice of any in all the bezestein, and if he had what she asked for, he would oblige her by showing them. Bedreddin showed her several pieces, one of which she pitched upon, and he asked for it eleven hundred drams of silver. I agree, said she, to give you so much, but I have not money enough about me, so I hope you will give me credit till to-morrow, and in the mean time allow me to carry off the stuff.

I shall not fail, added she, to send you to-morrow the eleven hundred drams I agreed for. Madam, said Bedreddin, I would give you credit with all my heart, and allow you to carry off the stuff, if it were mine, but it belongs to that young man you see here, and this is the day on which we state our accounts. Why, said the lady in a surprise, why do you offer to use me so? Am not I a customer to your shop? and as often as I have bought of you, and carried home the things without paying ready money for them, did I ever fail to send you your money next morning? Madam, said the merchant, it is true, but this very day I have occasion for money. There, said she, throwing the piece at him, take your stuff; may God confound you and all other merchants: you are all of you of one kidney; you respect nobody. She then rose up in a passion, and walked out.

When I saw that the lady walked off, I found in my breast a great concern for her; so I called her back, saying, Madam, do me the favour to return; perhaps I can find a way to content you both. In fine, back she came, saying, it was for the love of me that she complied. Mr Bedreddin, said I to the merchant, what do you say, you must have for this stuff that belongs to me? I must have eleven hundred drams; I cannot take less. Give it to the lady then, said I, let her take it home with her; I allow a hundred drams profit to yourself, and shall now write you a note, empowering you to discount that sum upon the other goods you have of mine. In fine, I wrote, signed, and delivered the note, and then handed the stuff to the lady: Madam said I, you may take the stuff with you, and as for the money, you may either send it to-morrow or next day; or, if you will, accept the stuff as a present from me. I beg your pardon, sir, said she, I mean nothing of that; you use me so very civilly and obligingly, that I ought never to show my face in the world again, if I did not show my gratitude to you. May God reward you in enlarging your fortune; may you live many years when I am dead; may the gate of heaven be opened to you when you remove to the other world, and may all the city proclaim your generosity.

These words inspired me with some assurance: Madam, said I, I desire no other reward for any service I have done to you than the happiness of seeing your face; that will repay me with interest. I had no sooner spoken than she turned towards me, took off the muslin that covered her face, and discovered to my eyes a killing beauty. I was so struck with the surprising sight, that I could not express my thoughts to her. I could have looked upon her for ever without being cloyed; but fearing any one should take notice, she quickly covered her face, and pulling down the crape, took up the piece of stuff, and went away, leaving me in a quite different sort of temper from what I was in when I came to the shop. I continued for some time in great disorder and perplexity. Before I took leave of the merchant, I asked him if he knew the lady? Yes, said he, she is the daughter of an emir, who left her an immense fortune at his death.

I went home, and sat down to supper, but could not eat, neither could I shut my eyes during the night; I thought it the longest night in my lifetime. As soon as it was day, I got up in hopes to see once more the object that disturbed my repose; and, to engage her affection, I dressed myself yet more nicely than I had done the day before. I had but just got to Bedreddin's shop, when I

saw the lady coming in more magnificent apparel than before, and attended by her slave. When she came in, she did not regard the merchant; but, addressing herself to me, Sir, said she, you see I am punctual to my word. I am come on purpose to pay the sum you were so kind as to pass your word for yesterday, though you had no knowledge of me: such an uncommon piece of generosity I shall never forget. Madam, said I, you had no occasion to be so hasty; I was well satisfied as to my money, and am sorry you should put yourself to so much trouble about it. I had been very unjust, answered she, if I had abused your generosity. With these words, she put the money into my hand, and sat down by me.

Having this opportunity of conversing with her, I made the best use of it, and mentioned to her the love I had for her; but she rose and left me very abruptly, as if she had been angry with the declaration I had made. I followed her with my eyes as long as she was in sight; and as soon as she was out of sight, I took leave of the merchant, and walked out of the bezestein, without knowing where I went. I was musing upon this adventure, when I felt somebody pulling me behind, and turning about to see who it was, I had the agreeable surprise to perceive it was the lady's slave. My mistress, said the slave, I mean the young lady you just spoke with in the merchant's shop, wants to speak one word with you; so if you please to give yourself the trouble to follow me, I will conduct you. Accordingly I followed her, and found my mistress staying for me in a banker's shop. She made me sit down by her, and spoke to this purpose; Dear sir, said she, do not be surprised that I left you so abruptly: I thought it not proper, before that merchant, to give a favourable answer to the discovery you made of your affection for me. But to speak the truth, I was so far from being offended at it, that I was pleased when I heard it; and I account myself infinitely happy in having a man of true merit for my lover. I do not know what impression the first sight of me could make upon you; but I assure you that I no sooner saw you than I had tender thoughts of you. Since yesterday I have thought only of what you said to me; and the haste I made to come and find you out this morning may convince you that I have no small regard for you. Madam, said I, transported with love and joy, nothing can be more agreeable to me than what I now hear; no passion can be greater than that with which I love you; since the happy moment I cast my eyes upon you, my eyes were dazzled with so many charms, that my heart yielded without resistance. Do not let us trifle away the time in needless discourse, said she, interrupting me: I make no doubt of your sincerity, and you shall quickly be convinced of mine. Will you do me the honour to come to my home? or, if you will, I will come to yours. Madam, said I, I am a stranger, lodging in a khan, which is not a proper place for the reception of a lady of your quality and merit. It is more proper, madam, for me to come to you at your home, if you will please to tell me where it is. The lady complying with this desire, I live, said she, in Devotion-street; come next Friday after noon prayers, and ask for the house of Abbon Schamam, surnamed Bercount, late master of the emirs; there you will find me. This said, we parted, and I passed the next day in great impatience.

On Friday I got up betimes, and put on my best clothes, with fifty pieces of gold in my pocket: thus prepared, I mounted an ass, which I had bespoken the day before, and set out,

accompanied by the man that lent me the ass. When we came to Devotion-street, I directed the owner of the ass to inquire for the house I wanted: he accordingly inquired, and conducted me to it. I paid him liberally, and sent him back directing him to observe narrowly where he left me, and not to fail to come back with the ass to-morrow morning to carry me back again.

I knocked at the door, and presently two little girl slaves, white as snow, and neatly dressed, came and opened it. Be pleased to come in, sir, said they, our mistress expects you impatiently; for two days she has spoken of nothing but you. I entered the court, and saw a great pavilion raised upon seven steps, and surrounded with iron rails that parted it from a very pleasant garden. Besides the trees which embellished the prospect, and formed an agreeable shade, there was an infinite number of other trees loaded with all manner of fruit. I was charmed with the warbling of a great number of birds, which joined their notes to the murmurings of a very high water-work in the middle of a ground-plot enamelled with flowers. This water-work was a very agreeable sight; four large gilded dragons adorned the angles of the bason, which was of a square form; and these dragons spouted out water clearer than rock crystal. This delicious place gave me a charming idea of the conquest I had made. The two little slaves conducted me into a parlour magnificently furnished, and while one of them went to acquaint her mistress with my arrival, the other tarried behind, and pointed out to me the ornaments of the hall.

I did not tarry long in the hall, said the young man of Bagdad, ere the lady I loved appeared, adorned with pearls and diamonds; but the splendour of her eyes did far outshine that of her jewels. Her shape, which was not now disguised by the habit usual in the streets, was extremely fine and charming. I need not mention with what joy we received one another; it leaves all expression far behind it: I shall only tell you, that when the first compliments were over, we sat both down upon a sofa, and there entertained one another with all imaginable satisfaction. After that, we had the most delicious messes served up to us, and, after eating, continued our discourse till night. At night we had excellent wine brought up, and such fruit as is apt to promote drinking, and timed our cups to the sound of musical instruments joined to the voices of the slaves. The lady of the house sung herself, and by her songs screwed up my passion to the height. In fine, I passed the night in the full enjoyment of all manner of pleasure.

Next morning I slipped under the bolster of the bed the purse with the fifty pieces of gold I had brought with me, and took leave of the lady, who asked me when I would see her again? Madam, said I, I give you my promise to return this night. She seemed transported with my answer, and, conducting me to the door, conjured me, at parting, to be mindful of my promise. The same man that had carried me thither waited for me with his ass to carry me home again; so I mounted the ass, and went straight home, ordering the man to come to me again in the afternoon at a certain hour; to secure which, I would not pay him till the time came. As soon as I arrived at my lodging, my first care was to order my folks to buy a good lamb and several sorts of cakes, which I sent by a porter as a present to the lady. When that was

done, I minded my serious affairs till the owner of the ass came; then I went along with him to the lady's house, and was received by her with as much joy as before, and entertained with equal magnificence.

Next morning I took leave, and left her another purse with fifty pieces of gold. I continued to visit the lady every day, and to leave her every time a purse of fifty pieces of gold, till the merchants whom I employed to sell my cloth, and whom I visited regularly twice a week, owed me nothing: In this way I became moneyless, and even hopeless of having any more.

In this desperate condition I walked out of my lodging, not knowing what course to take, and by chance steered towards the castle, where there was a great crowd of people, to see the sultan of Egypt. As soon as I came up to them, I wedged in among the crowd, and by chance happened to stand by a cavalier well mounted and handsomely clothed, who had upon the bow of his saddle a bag half open, with a string of green silk hanging out of it, I clapped my hand into the bag, concluding the silk- twist might be the string of a purse within the bag: in the mean time, a porter, with a load of wood upon his back, passed by the other side of the horse, so near, that the gentleman on horse-^{*} back was forced to turn his head towards him to avoid being rubbed by the wood. In that very moment did the devil tempt me; I took the string in one hand, and with the other laid open the mouth of the bag, and pulled out the purse so dexterously that nobody perceived it. The purse was heavy, therefore I did not doubt that there was gold or silver in it. As soon as the porter had passed, the cavalier, who probably had some suspicion of what I had done while his head was turned, presently put his hand to his bag, and, finding his purse gone, gave me such a blow as knocked me down. This violence shocked all who saw it; some took hold of the horse's bridle to stop the gentleman, and inquire what reason he had to beat me, or how he came to treat a Mussulman after that rate. Do not you trouble yourselves, said he, with a brisk tone; I had reason enough for what I did; this fellow is a thief. In fine, every one took my part, cried he was a liar, and that it was incredible a young man like me should be guilty of so foul an action: but while they were holding his horse by the bridle to favour my escape, unfortunately came by the justiciary judge, who, seeing such a crowd about the gentleman on horseback and me, came up and asked what the matter was? Everybody reflected on the gentleman for treating me so unjustly upon pretence of robbery. The judge did not give ear to all that was said in my behalf, but asked the cavalier if he suspected anybody else besides me? The cavalier told him he did not, and gave his reasons why he believed his suspicion not to be groundless. Upon this, the judge ordered his followers to seize and search me, which they presently did; and finding the purse upon me, exposed it to the view of all the people. The shame was so great, that I could not bear it, but swooned away; and in the meantime the judge called for the purse. When he had got the purse in his hand, he asked the horseman if it was his, and how much money was in it? The cavalier knew it to be his own, and assured the judge he had put twenty sequins into it. Upon that the judge called me before him; Come, young man, said he, confess the truth. Was it you that took the gentleman's purse from him? Do not put yourself to the trouble of torture to extort confession. Then I looked down with

my eyes, thinking within myself, that if I denied the fact, they, finding the purse about me, would convict me of a lie; so, to avoid a double punishment, I looked up, and confessed the fact. I had no sooner made this confession than the judge called people to witness it, and ordered my hand to be cut off. This hard sentence was put in execution immediately upon the spot, to the great regret of all the spectators; nay, I observed by the cavalier's countenance, that he was moved with pity as much as the rest. The judge likewise would have ordered my foot to be cut off, but I begged the cavalier to intercede for my pardon, which he did, and obtained it. The judge being gone, the cavalier came up to me, and holding out the purse, I see plainly, said he, that necessity put you upon an action so disgraceful, and so unworthy of such a handsome young man as you are. Here, take that fatal purse, I freely give it you, and am heartily sorry for the misfortune you have undergone. He then went away; and I being very weak, by reason of the loss of blood, some of the good people that lived that way had the kindness to carry me into one of their houses, and gave me a glass of wine; they likewise dressed my arm, and wrapped up the dismembered hand in a cloth.

If I had returned to the khan where I lodged, I should not have found such relief as I wanted; and to offer to go to the young lady's was running a great hazard, it being likely she would not look upon me after such an infamous thing had befallen me. I resolved, however, to put it to the trial; and, to tire out the crowd that followed me, I turned down several by-streets, and at last arrived at my lady's, very weak, and so much fatigued, that I presently threw myself down upon a sofa, keeping my right arm under my coat, for I took great care to conceal my misfortune.

The lady hearing of my arrival, and that I was not well, came to me in all haste: My dear soul, said she, what is the matter with you? Madam, said I, I have got a violent pain in my head. The lady seemed to be mightily afflicted with my pretended illness, and asked me to sit down, for I had got up to receive her. Tell me, said she, how your illness came; the last time I had the pleasure of seeing you, you was very well; there must be something else that you conceal from me; pray, let me know what it is. I stood silent, and, instead of an answer, tears trickled down my cheeks. I cannot conceive, said she, what it is that afflicts you. Have I given you any occasion to be uneasy? or do you come on purpose to tell me you do not love me? It is not that, madam, said I, fetching a deep sigh; your unjust suspicion is an addition to my evil. Still I could not think of discovering to her the true cause. When night came, supper was brought, and she pressed me to eat; but considering I could only feed myself with my left hand, I begged to be excused upon the plea of having no stomach. Your stomach will come to you, said she, if you would but discover what you so obstinately hide from me. Your inappetency, without doubt, is only owing to the aversion you have to a discovery. Alas! madam, said I, I find I must discover at last. I had no sooner spoken these words than she filled me a cup of wine: Drink that, said she, it will give you assurance. So I reached out my left hand, and took the cup. As soon as I took it, I redoubled my tears and sighs. Why do you sigh and cry so bitterly? said the lady; and why do you take the cup with your left hand instead of your right? Ah, madam, said I, excuse me, I beseech you, I have got a swelling in my right hand. Let me see

that swelling, said she; I will open it. I desired to be excused upon that head, alleging the tumour was not ripe enough for opening; and drank the cupful, which was very large. In fine, the steams of the wine, joined to my weakness and weariness, set me asleep, and I slept very sound till next morning. In the mean time, the lady, curious to know what ailment I had in my right hand, lifted up my coat that covered it, and saw, to her great astonishment, that it was cut off, and that I had brought it along with me wrapt in a cloth. She presently apprehended my reason for declining a discovery, notwithstanding all the pressing instances she made, and passed the whole night in the greatest uneasiness upon my disgrace, which she concluded had been occasioned by the love I bore to her.

When I awaked, I observed by her countenance that she was extremely grieved. That she might not, however, increase my uneasiness, she said not one word. She called for jelly broth of fowl, which she had ordered to be got ready, and made me eat and drink to recruit my strength. After that, I offered to take leave of her, but she declared I should not go out of her doors; though you tell me nothing of the matter, said she, I am persuaded I am the cause of the misfortune that has befallen you: the grief that I feel upon that score will quickly make an end of me; but, before I die, I must do one thing that is designed for your advantage. She had no sooner said these words, than she called for a public notary and witnesses, and ordered a writing to be drawn up, conveying to me her whole estate. After this was done, and the men despatched, she opened a large trunk, where lay all the purses I had given her from the commencement of our amours. There are they all entire, said she; I have not touched one of them: here, take the key, the trunk is yours. After I had returned her thanks for her generosity and bounty, What I do for you, said she, is nothing at all; I shall not be satisfied unless I die, to show how much I love you. I conjured her, by all the powers of love, to drop such a fatal resolution; but all my remonstrances were ineffectual: she was so afflicted to see me have but one hand, that she sickened and died, after five or six weeks' illness. After mourning for her death as long as was decent, I took possession of her estate, a particular account of which she gave me before she died; and the corn you sold for me was part of it.

What I have now told you will induce you to excuse me for eating with my left hand. I am greatly obliged to you for the trouble you have given yourself on my account. I can never make sufficient acknowledgment of your fidelity. Since God has still given me a competent estate, notwithstanding I have spent a great deal, I beg you to accept of the sum now in your hand as a present from me. Over and above this, I have a proposal to make to you, which is this: for as much as, by reason of this fatal accident, I am obliged to depart from Cairo, I am resolved never to see it more. So, if you please to accompany me, we shall trade together as equal partners, and divide the profits.

I thanked the young man, said, the Christian merchant, for the present he made me; and as to the proposal of travelling with him, I willingly embraced it, assuring him that his interest should always be as dear to me as my own. We accordingly get a day for our departure, and set out upon our travels. We passed

through Syria and Mesopotamia, travelled all over Persia, and, after stopping at several cities, came at last, sir, to your metropolis. Some time after our arrival in this place, the young man having formed a design of returning to Persia, and settling there, we settled our accounts, and parted very good friends; so he went from hence, and I continue here at your majesty's service. This, sir, is the story I had to tell you: does not your majesty find it yet more surprising than that of the crooked buffoon?

The sultan of Casgar fell into a passion against the Christian merchant: you are very bold, said he, to tell me a story so little worth my hearing, and then to compare it with that of my jester. Can you flatter yourself so far as to believe that the trifling adventures of a young rake can make such an impression upon me as those of my jester? Well, I am resolved to hang you all four to revenge his death.

This said, the purveyor fell down at the sultan's feet. Sir, said he, I humbly beseech your majesty to suspend your just wrath, and hear my story; and if my story appears to your majesty to be prettier than that of your jester, to pardon us all four. The sultan having granted his request, the purveyor began his story.

THE STORY TOLD BY THE SULTAN OF CASGAR'S PURVEYOR.

Sir, a person of quality invited me yesterday to his daughter's wedding; I went accordingly to his house at the hour appointed, and found there a large company of doctors, ministers of justice, and others of the best quality in the city. After the ceremony was over, we had a splendid treat; and, among other things set upon the table, there was a course with garlic sauce, which was very delicious and palatable to everybody; but we observed that one of the guests did not touch it, though it stood just before him, and thereupon we invited him to do as we did: he conjured us, however, not to press him upon that head. I will take care, said he, not to touch any thing that has garlic in it; I remember well what the tasting of such a thing cost me once before. We entreated him to tell us what was the occasion of his aversion to garlic; but before he had time to make answer, Is it thus, said the master of the house, that you honour my table? This ragoo is excellent, therefore do not you pretend to be excused from eating of it; you must do me that favour as well as the rest. Sir, said the gentleman, who was a Bagdad merchant, I hope you do not think that I refuse to eat of it out of mistaken nicety; if you will have me eat of it, I will do so; but upon this condition, that, after eating of it, I may wash my hands, by your leave, forty times with alcali[Footnote: This in English is called salt wort.*], forty times more with the ashes of the same plant, and forty times again with soap, I hope you will not take it ill that I stipulate so, as it is in pursuance of an oath I have made never to taste garlic without observing this rule. The master of

the house would not dispense with the merchant from eating of the ragoo with garlic, and therefore ordered his servant to get ready a bason of water together with alcali, the ashes of the same plant, and soap, that the merchant might wash as often as he pleased. When every thing was got ready, Now, said he to the merchant, I hope you will do as we. The merchant, displeased with the violence that was offered him, reached out his hand to take a bit, which he put to his mouth trembling, and ate with a reluctance that surprised us all. But the greatest surprise was, that he had only four fingers and no thumb, which none of us observed before, though he had eaten of other dishes. You have lost your thumb, said the master of the house; how came that about? It must have been occasioned by some extraordinary accident, a relation of which will be an agreeable entertainment to the company. Sir, replied the merchant, I have not a thumb on either the right or left hand. He then showed us his left hand, as well as his right. But this is not all, continued he, I have not a great toe on either of my feet! I hope you will take my word for it. I was maimed in this manner by an unheard-of accident, which I am willing to relate to you, if you have the patience to hear me. The relation will equally astonish, and affect you with pity; but suffer me to wash my hands first. Upon this he rose from the table, and, after washing his hands an hundred and twenty times, took his place again, and thus proceeded:

You must know, gentlemen, that, in the reign of the caliph Haroun Alrasehid, my father lived at Bagdad, the place of my nativity, and was reputed one of the richest merchants in the city; but, being a man too much addicted to pleasure, one that loved an irregular life, and neglected his private affairs, instead of leaving me a plentiful fortune at his death, he left me in such a condition, that all my economy was scarcely sufficient to clear his debts. With much ado, however, I paid them all, and, through industry and care, my little fortune began to assume a smiling countenance.

One morning as I opened my shop, a lady mounted upon a mule, attended by an eunuch and two women slaves, stopped near my shop-door, and, with the assistance of the eunuch, alighted. Madam, said the eunuch, I said you would be too soon, you see there is nobody yet in the bezestein; if you had taken my advice, you might have saved yourself the trouble of waiting here. The lady looked around her, and finding there was no shop open but mine, addressed herself to me, asking leave to sit in my shop till the rest of the merchants came; of course I could do no less than return a civil answer, and invite the lady into my shop. She sat down in my shop, and, observing there was nobody in the whole bezestein save the eunuch and me, uncovered her face to take the air; and I must say I never saw any thing so pretty in my lifetime. I had no sooner a sight of her face than I loved her; of course I fixed my eyes upon her, and perceived that she was not displeased; for she gave me a full opportunity to look upon her, and did not cover her face till she was afraid of being taken notice of. Having let down her veil, she told me that she wanted several sorts of the richest and finest stuffs, and asked me if I had them? Alas! madam, said I, I am but a young man, just beginning the world, and have not stock enough for such great concerns; and it is a mortification to me that I have nothing to

show you such as you want: but to save you the trouble of going from shop to shop, as soon as the merchants come, I will go, if you please, and fetch from them what you want, with the lowest prices; and so you may do your business without going any further. She complied with my proposal, and entered into discourse, which continued so much the longer, that I still made her believe that the merchants who could furnish what she wanted were not yet come.

I was charmed no less with her wit than I had been before with the beauty of her face; but there was a necessity for denying myself the pleasure of her conversation: I ran out to seek for the stuffs she wanted, and after she had pitched upon what she liked, we struck the price at five thousand drams of coined silver; so I wrapped up the stuffs in a small bundle, and gave it to the eunuch, who put it under his arm; after which, she rose and took leave. I still continued to look after her, till she had got to the bezestein gate; and mounted her mule again.

The lady had no sooner disappeared than I perceived that love was the cause of great oversights; it had so engrossed all my thoughts; that I did not recollect she had gone off without paying the money; nor had I the consideration to ask who she was, or where she dwelt. However, I considered that I was accountable for a large sum to the merchants, who, perhaps, would not have the patience to stay for their money; so I went to them, and made the best excuse I could, pretending that I knew the lady; but came home equally affected with love, and with the burden of such a heavy debt.

I had desired my creditors to stay eight days for their money, and, when the eight days were past, they did not fail to dun me; then I intreated them to give me eight days more, which they agreed to; and the very next day I saw the lady come to the bezestein, mounted on her mule, with the same attendants as before, and exactly at the same hour of the day. She came straight to my shop. I have made you stay some time, said she, but here is your money at last; carry it to a banker, and see that it is all good. The eunuch, who brought me the money, went along with me to the banker's, and we found it very right. I came back again, and had the happiness of conversing with the lady till all the shops in the bezestein were open: though we talked of ordinary things, she gave them such a turn, that they appeared new and uncommon, and convinced me that I was not mistaken in admiring her wit.

As soon as the merchants were come, and had opened their shops, I carried to the respective people the money due for their stuffs, and was readily intrusted with more which the lady had desired to see. In short, the lady took stuffs to the value of an hundred pieces of gold, and again carried them away without paying for them: nay, without saying one word, or informing me where she was. I was astonished when I considered that at this rate she left me without any security of not being troubled, if she never came back again. She has paid me, thinks I to myself, a good round sum, but she leaves me in the lurch for another that runs much deeper. Surely she cannot be a cheat; it is not possible she can have any design to inveigle me: the merchants do not know her, and will all come upon me. In short, my love was not so

powerful as to remove the uneasiness I felt when I reflected upon all circumstances. A whole month passed before I heard any thing of the lady again; and during that time the alarm grew higher and higher every day. The merchants were impatient for their money; and, to satisfy them, I was even going to sell off all I had, when the lady returned one morning with the same equipage as before. Take your weights, said she, and weigh the gold I have brought you. These words dispelled my fear, and inflamed my love. Before we told down the money, she asked me several questions, and particularly if I was married? I made answer, I never was. Then reaching out the gold to the eunuch, let us have your interposition, said she, to accommodate our matters: upon which the eunuch fell a laughing, and, calling me aside, made me weigh the gold. While I was weighing, the eunuch whispered in my ear, I know by your eyes that you love this lady, and am surprised to find you have not the assurance to disclose your love to her: she loves you more passionately than you do her. Do you imagine that she has any real occasion for your stuffs? She only makes an errand to come hither, because you have inspired her with a violent passion. Do but ask her the question; it will be your fault if you do not marry her. It is true, said I, I have had a love for her from the first moment I cast my eyes upon her; but I did not aspire to the happiness of thinking my love acceptable to her. I am entirely hers, and shall not fail to retain a grateful sense of your good offices in that matter. In fine, I made an end of weighing the gold, and while I was putting it into the bag, the eunuch turned to the lady, and told her I was satisfied, that being the word they had both agreed upon between themselves. Presently after that, the lady rose and took leave; telling me she would send the eunuch to me, and that I should do what he directed me to do in her name.

I carried every one of the merchants their money, and waited some days with impatience for the eunuch. At last he came. I entertained him very kindly, and asked him how his mistress did? You are, said he, the happiest lover in the world; she is quite sick of love for you; she covets extremely to see you; and were she mistress of her own conduct, would not fail to come to you, and willingly pass every moment of her life in your company. Her noble mien and graceful carriage, said I, evinced that she was a lady beyond the common level. The judgement you have formed upon that head, said the eunuch, is very just; she is the favourite of Zobeide, the caliph's lady, who has brought her up from her infancy, and intrusts her with all her affairs. Having a mind to marry, she has declared to Zobeide that she has cast her eyes upon you, and desired her consent. Zobeide told her she agreed to it, only she had a mind to see you first, in order to judge whether she had made a good choice: if she had, Zobeide meant to defray the charges of the wedding. Thus you see your felicity is certain; since you have pleased the favourite, you will be equally agreeable to the mistress, who seeks only to oblige her favourite, and would by no means thwart her inclination. In fine, all you have to do is to come to the palace. I am sent hither to call you, so you will please to come to a resolution. My resolution is formed already, said I; and I am ready to follow you whithersoever you please to conduct me. Very well, said the eunuch; but you know that men are not allowed to enter the ladies' apartments in the palace, and so you must be introduced with great secrecy: the favourite lady has contrived the matter

very well. Upon your side you are to act your part very discreetly; for if you do not, your life is at stake.

I gave him repeated assurances of a punctual performance of whatever should be enjoined me. Then, said he, in the evening you must be at the mosque built by the caliph's lady on the banks of the Tigris, and stay there till one comes to call you, I agreed to what he proposed; and, after passing the day in great impatience, went in the evening to the prayer that is said in an hour and an half after sunset in the mosque, and there I staid after the people were gone. Immediately I saw a boat making up to the mosque, the rowers of which were all eunuchs, who came on shore, and put several large trunks into the mosque, and then retired; only one of them remained, whom I perceived to be the same eunuch that had all along accompanied the lady, and had been with me that morning. About the same time, I saw the lady enter the mosque; and, making up to her, told her I was ready to obey her orders. Come, said she, we have no time to lose. With that she opened one of the trunks, and bid me get into it, that being necessary both for her safety and mine. Fear nothing, added she; leave the management of the rest to me. I considered that I had gone too far to look back, and so obeyed her orders; upon which she locked the trunk. This done, the eunuch who was her confidant, called the other eunuchs who had brought in the trunks, and ordered them to carry them on board again; after which the lady and eunuch re-embarked, and the boatmen rowed to Zobeide's apartment. In the mean time, I reflected very seriously upon the danger to which I had exposed myself, and made vows and prayers, though it was then too late. The boat put into the palace-gate, and the trunks were carried into the apartment of the officer of the eunuchs, who keeps the key of the ladies' apartments, and suffers nothing to enter without a narrow inspection. The officer was then in bed, consequently there was a necessity for calling him. He was angry that they should break his rest, and chid the favourite lady severely for coming home so late: You shall not come off so easily as you think; for, said he, not one of these trunks shall pass till I have opened every one of them. He then commanded the eunuchs to bring them before him, and open them one by one. The first they began with was that in which I lay; so that I was in the last degree of consternation.

The favourite lady, who had the key of the trunk, protested it should not be opened. You know very well, said she, I bring nothing hither but what is to serve Zobeide, your mistress and mine. This trunk, continued she, is filled with rich goods I had from some merchants lately arrived, besides a number of bottles of Zemzem water [Footnote: There is a fountain at Mecca, which, according to the Mahometans, is a spring that God showed to Hagar after Abraham was obliged to put her away. The water of this spring is drank by way of devotion, and is sent in presents to the princes and princesses.] sent from Mecca; if any of these should happen to break, the goods will be spoiled, and you must answer for them. Zobeide will take care, I warrant you, to resent your insolence. In fine, she stood up so tight to the matter, that the officer did not dare to take upon him to open any of the trunks. Let me go then, said he, carry them off. Immediately the lady's apartment was opened, and the trunks were carried in. They were scarcely got in, when all of a sudden I heard a cry, Here is

the caliph, here comes the caliph. This put me in such a fright, that I wonder I did not die upon the spot, for it was actually the caliph. What hast thou got in these trunks? said he to the favourite. Some stuffs, said she, lately arrived, which your majesty's lady had a mind to see. Open them, cried he, and let me see them too. She pretended to excuse herself, alleging that the stuffs were only proper for ladies, and that by opening them his lady would be deprived of the pleasure of seeing them first. I say, open them, cried the caliph; I have a mind to see them, and shall see them. She still represented that her mistress would be angry with her if she opened them. No, no, said he, I will engage she shall not say a word to you for so doing; come, open them, I cannot stop. There was a necessity of obeying, which gave me such shocking alarms, that I trembled every time I thought on it. Down sat the caliph; and the favourite ordered all the trunks to be brought before him, one after another. Then she opened them; and, to spin out the time, showed all the beauties of each particular stuff, thinking thereby to tire out his patience; but her stratagem did not take. Being as loath as I to have the trunk where I lay open, she left that till the last. So when all the rest were viewed, Come, says the caliph, make an end; let us see what is in that one. I am at a loss to tell you whether I was dead or alive at that moment, for I little thought of escaping so great a danger.

When Zobeide's favourite saw that the caliph would needs have the trunk opened where I lay, As for this trunk, says she, your majesty will please to dispense with the opening of it; there are some things in it which I cannot show you unless your lady be by. Well, well, says the caliph, since it is so, I am satisfied; order the trunks to be carried away. The word was no sooner spoken, than the trunks were removed into her chamber, where I began to come to life again.

As soon as the eunuchs who had brought them were gone, she presently opened the trunk where I was prisoner. Come out, said she, go up these stairs that lead to an upper room, and stay there till I come. The door which led to the stairs she locked after I was in; and that was no sooner done than the caliph came and clapped him down upon the very trunk wherein I had been. The occasion of this visit was a motion of curiosity that did not respect me. He had a mind to discourse the lady about what she had seen or heard in the city. So they discoursed together a pretty while, after which he left her, and retired to his apartment. When she found the coast clear, she came to the chamber where I was, and made many apologies for the alarms she had given me. My uneasiness, said she, was no less than yours; you cannot well doubt of that, since I have run the same risk from love to you; perhaps another would not have had the presence of mind to manage matters so dexterously upon so tender an occasion; nothing less than the love I had for you could have inspired me with courage to do it. But come, take heart, now the danger is over. After some tender discourse between us, she told me it was time to go to bed, and that she would not fail to introduce me to Zobeide, her mistress, to-morrow, some hour of the day; for the caliph never sees her, added she, but at nights. Heartened by these words, I slept very well; or at least, whatever interruptions happened were agreeable disquietings, caused by the hopes of enjoying a lady blessed with such

sparkling wit and beauty.

The next day, before I was introduced to Zobeide, her favourite instructed me how to behave, naming nearly the same questions as she put to me, and dictating the answers I was to give. This done, she carried me into a very magnificent and richly furnished hall: I had no sooner entered, than twenty female slaves, in rich and uniform habits, came out of Zobeide's apartment, and placed themselves very modestly before the throne in two equal rows: they were followed by twenty other ladies who looked younger, and were clothed after the same manner, though their habits appeared somewhat gayer. In the middle of these appeared Zobeide, with a majestic air, and so loaded with jewels, that she could scarcely walk. Zobeide then went and sat down on the throne, and the favourite lady, who had accompanied her, just by her, on her right hand; the other ladies being placed at some distance on each side of the throne.

The caliph's lady having sat down, the slaves who came in first made a sign for me to approach: I advanced between the rows they had formed, and prostrated myself upon the tapestry under the princess's feet. She ordered me to rise, and did me the honour to ask my name, my family, and the condition of my fortune; to all which I gave her satisfactory answers, as I perceived not only by her countenance, but by her words. I am very glad, said she, that my daughter (so she used to call the favourite lady, looking upon her as such, after the care she had taken of her education) has made a choice that pleases me; I approve of it, and give consent to your marriage: I shall give orders myself for what is to be done in solemnizing it, but I wish her to stay ten days with me before the solemnity; and in that time I will speak to the caliph, and obtain his consent; mean while do you stay here, you shall be taken care of. Accordingly I staid ten days in the ladies' apartments, and during that time was deprived of the pleasure of seeing the favourite lady; but was so well used, by her orders, that I had no reason to be dissatisfied.

Zobeide told the caliph her resolution of marrying the favourite lady; and he, leaving to her the liberty of doing upon that head as she pleased, granted the favourite a considerable sum to help her fortune. When the ten days were expired, Zobeide ordered the contract of marriage to be drawn up; and the necessary preparations being made for the solemnity, the dancers, (both men and women) were called in, and rejoicings continued in the palace nine days. The tenth day being appointed for the last ceremony of the marriage, the favourite lady was conducted to a bath, and I to another. At night I sat down at table, and had all manner of rarities served up to me, and, among other things ragoo with garlic, such as you have now forced me to eat of. This ragoo I liked so well, that I scarcely touched any other of the dishes. But such was my unhappiness, that when I rose from the table, I only wiped my hands instead of washing them well; a piece of negligence of which I had never before been guilty. Though it was night, the whole apartment of the ladies was as light as day, by means of illuminations. Nothing was to be heard in the palace but music and acclamations of joy. My bride and I were introduced into a great hall, where we were placed upon two thrones. The women who attended her made her shift herself several times, and painted her face with different sorts of colours, according to

the usual custom on wedding- days; and every time she changed her habit, they exposed her to my view.

After these ceremonies, we were conducted to the wedding- room, and, as soon as the company retired, I approached to embrace my mistress, but, instead of answering me with transports, she shoved me off, and cried out most fearfully; upon which all the ladies of the apartment came running into the chamber to know what she cried for; and, for my own part, I was so thunderstruck, that I stood, without the power of so much as asking what she meant by it. Dear sister, said they to her, what is the matter? Let us know it, that we may try to relieve you. Take, said she, out of my sight that vile fellow. Why, madam, said I, wherein have I deserved your displeasure? You are a villain, said she, furiously: what, to eat garlic, and not wash your hands! Do you think that I would suffer such a filthy fellow to touch me? Down with him, down with him upon the ground, continued she, addressing herself to the ladies; and pray let me have a good bull's pizzle. In short, I was thrown down upon the ground, and while some held my hands, and others my feet, my wife, who was presently furnished with a weapon, laid on me most unmercifully, till I could scarcely breathe: then she said to the ladies, Take him, send him to the justiciary judge, and let the hand be cut off with which he fed upon the garlic ragoo. God bless my soul, cried I, must I be beat, bruised, unmercifully mauled, and, to complete my affliction, have my hand cut off, for eating of a ragoo with garlic, and forgetting to wash my hands? What proportion is there between the punishment and the crime? Plague on the ragoo, plague on the cook that dressed it, and may he be equally unhappy that served it up!

All the ladies that were by took pity on me, when they heard the cutting off of my hand spoken of. Dear madam, dear sister, said they to the favourite lady, you carry your resentment too far. We own he is a man quite ignorant of the world, that he does not observe your quality, and the regards that are due to you; but we beseech you to overlook and pardon the fault he has committed. I have not received suitable satisfaction, said she; I will teach him to know the world, make him bear the sensible marks of his impertinence, and be cautious hereafter how he tastes a garlic ragoo without washing his hands. However, they still continued their solicitations, and fell down at her feet, and kissing her fair hand, Good madam, said they, in the name of God, moderate your wrath, and grant the favour we request. She answered never a word, but got up, and, after throwing out a thousand hard words against me, walked out of the chamber, with the ladies, leaving me in inconceivable affliction.

I continued here ten days, without seeing any body but an old woman-slave who brought me victuals. I asked the old woman what was become of the favourite lady? She is sick, said the old woman, of the poisoned smell you infected her with. Why did you not take care to wash your hands after eating of that cursed ragoo? Is it possible, thought I to myself, that these ladies can be so nice and vindictive for so small a fault? In the mean time I loved my wife, notwithstanding all her cruelty. One day the old woman told me that my spouse was recovered and gone to bathe, and would come to see me the next day; so, said she, I would have you to call up your patience, and endeavour to accommodate yourself

to her humour. Besides, she is a woman of good sense and discretion, and entirely beloved by all the ladies about Zobeide's court. Accordingly my wife came next night, and accosted me thus: You see I am too good in seeing you again, after the affront you have offered me; but still I cannot stoop to be reconciled to you, till I have punished you according to your demerit, in not washing your hands after eating the garlic ragoo. This said, she called the ladies, who, by her order, threw me upon the ground, and, after binding me fast, had the barbarity to cut off my thumbs and great toes with a razor. One of the ladies applied a certain root to staunch the blood; but by the bleeding and pain I swooned away. When I came to myself, they gave me wine to drink to recruit my strength. Ah! madam, said I to my wife, if ever I eat of garlic ragoo again, I solemnly swear to wash my hands an hundred and twenty times with the herb alcali, with the ashes of the same plant, and with soap. Well, replied my wife, upon that condition I am willing to forget what is past, and live with you as my husband. This, continued the Bagdad merchant, addressing himself to the company, is the reason why I refused to eat of the garlic ragoo now upon the table.

To make an end of the Bagdad merchant's story, the ladies, said he, applied to my wounds, not only the root I mentioned to you but likewise some balsam of Mecca, which they were morally assured was not adulterated, because they had it from the caliph's own dispensatory; by virtue of that admirable balsam I was perfectly cured in a few days, and my wife and I lived together as agreeably as if I had never eaten of the garlic ragoo. But having been all my lifetime used to the liberty of ranging abroad, I was very uneasy at being confined to the caliph's palace, and yet said nothing of it to my wife, from a fear of displeasing her. She smelt it, however; and wanted nothing more herself than to get out, for it was gratitude alone that made her continue with Zobeide. In fine, being a very witty woman, she represented, in lively terms, to her mistress, the constraint I was under in not living in the city with my fellow-companions, as I had always done: this she did so effectually, that the good princess chose rather to deprive herself of the pleasure of having her favourite about her, than not to grant what she desired. Accordingly, about a month after our marriage, my wife came into my room with several eunuchs, each carrying a bag of silver. When the eunuchs were gone, You never told me, said she, that you were uneasy in being confined to court, but I perceived it very well, and have happily found means to make you contented. My mistress Zobeide gives us leave to go out of the palace, and here are fifty thousand sequins, of which she has made us a present, in order to enable us to live comfortable in the city. Take ten thousand of them, and go and buy us a house, I soon purchased a house; and, after furnishing it richly, we went and lived in it, and kept a great many slaves of both sexes, with a very pretty equipage. In short, we began to live in a very agreeable manner, which did not last long, for at a year's end my wife fell sick and died. I might have married again, and lived honourably at Bagdad; but ambition to see the world put me upon other thoughts. I sold my house, and, after buying up several sorts of goods, went with a caravan to Persia; from Persia I travelled to Samarcande, and from thence hither.

This, said the purveyor to the sultan of Casgar, is the story

that the Bagdad merchant told in a company where I was yesterday. This story, said the sultan, has something extraordinary in it, but it does not come near that of my little Hunchback. Then the Jewish physician prostrated himself before the sultan's throne, and rising again, addressed himself to that prince in the following manner: Sir, if you will be so good as to hear me, I flatter myself you will be pleased with a story I have to tell you. Well spoken, said the sultan; but if it is not more surprising than that of little Hunch-back, do not you expect to live. The physician, finding the sultan of Casgar disposed to hear him, gave the following relation:

THE STORY TOLD BY THE JEWISH PHYSICIAN.

Sir, when I was a student of physic, and just beginning the practice of that noble profession with some reputation, a man-slave called me to see a patient in the city governor's family. I went accordingly, and was carried into a room, where I found a very handsome young man mightily cast down with his condition: I saluted him, and sat down by him, but he made no return to my compliments, except by a sign with his eyes that he heard me and thanked me. Pray, sir, said I, give me your hand, that I may feel your pulse. But, instead of stretching out his right, he gave me his left hand, at which I was extremely surprised. This, said I to myself, is a gross piece of ignorance, not to know that people present their right hand, and not their left, to a physician. However, I felt his pulse, wrote him a receipt, and took leave.

I continued my visits for nine days, and every time I felt his pulse he still gave me the left hand: on the tenth day he seemed to be pretty well, and so I prescribed nothing for him but bathing. The governor of Damascus, who was by, did, in testimony of his being well satisfied with my service, invest me with a very rich robe, saying, he made me a physician of the city hospital, and physician in ordinary to his house, where I might freely eat at his table when I pleased. The young man likewise showed me many civilities, and asked me to accompany him to the bath: accordingly we went together; and when his attendants had undressed him, I perceived he wanted the right hand, and that it had not been long cut off, which had been the occasion of his distemper, though concealed from me; for while the people about him were applying proper medicines externally, they had called me to prevent the ill consequences of the fever he was then in. I was very much surprised and concerned on seeing his misfortune, which he observed by my countenance. Doctor, cried he, do not be astonished to see that my hand is cut off; some day or other I will tell you the occasion of it; and in that relation you will be entertained with very surprising adventures.

After bathing, we sat down and ate; and after we had some other discourse together, he asked me if it would be any prejudice to his health, if he went to take a walk out of town in the

governor's garden? I made answer, it would be so far from that, that it would benefit his health. Since it is so, said he, if you would let me have your company, I will tell you the history of my adventures, I replied, I was at his command for all that day. Upon which he presently called his servants, to bring something for a collation; and so we went to the governor's garden. There we took two or three turns, and then sat down upon a carpet that his servants had spread under a tree, which gave a very pleasant shade. After we were set, the young man gave his history in the following terms: I was born, said he, at Moussol, and come of one of the most considerable families in the city. My father was the eldest of ten brothers that were all alive, and all married, when my grandfather died. All the brothers were childless but my father, and he had never a child but me. He took particular care of my education, and made me learn every thing that was proper for a child of my quality.

When I was grown pretty tall, and beginning to keep company with the world, I happened one Friday to be at noon prayers with my father and my uncles, in the great mosque at Moussol; and after prayers were over, the rest of the company going away, my father and my uncles continued sitting upon the best tapestry in the mosque, and I sat down by them. They discoursed of several things, but they fell insensibly, I do not know how, upon the subject of voyages. They extolled the beauties and peculiar rarities of some kingdoms, and of their principal cities. But one of my uncles said, that, according to the uniform report of an infinite number of voyagers, there was not in the world a pleasanter country than Egypt, nor river than the Nile; and the account he gave of them infused into me such a charming idea of them, that, from that very moment, I had a desire to travel. Whatever my other uncles said, by way of preference to Bagdad and the Tigris, in calling Bagdad the true residence of the Mussulman religion, and the metropolis of all the cities in the earth, all this made no impression upon me. My father joined in his opinion with those who had spoken on the behalf of Egypt, which gave me a great deal of joy. Say what you will, said he, he that has not seen Egypt, has not seen the greatest rarity in the world. All the land there is golden, I mean, it is so fertile that it enriches its inhabitants: all the women of that country are charming, either in their beauty or in their agreeable carriage. If you speak of the Nile, pray where is there a more admirable river? What water was ever lighter or more delicious? The very slime it carries along in its overflowing fattens a thousand times more than other countries that are cultivated with great labour. Do but mind what a poet said of the Egyptians when he was obliged to depart Egypt: 'Your Nile loads you with good offices every day; it is for you only that it travels so far. Alas! in removing from you, my tears are going to run as abundantly as its water; you are to continue in the enjoyment of its sweetness, while I am condemned to rob myself of it against my will.' If you look, added he, towards the island that is formed by the two great branches of the Nile, what variety of verdure have you there? What enamel of all sorts of flowers? What a prodigious number of cities, villages, canals, and a thousand other agreeable objects? If you cast your eyes on the other side, steering up towards Ethiopia, how many other objects of admiration? I cannot compare the verdure of so many plains, watered with the different canals of the island, better than to

sparkling emeralds set in silver. Is not Grand Cairo the largest, the most populous, and the richest city in the universe? What a prodigious number of magnificent edifices, both public and private! If you view the pyramids, you will be seized with astonishment: you will turn stiff and immovable at the sight of these masses of stone of an extravagant thickness, which rise to the skies: and you will be obliged to confess, that the Pharaohs, who employed such riches, and so many men in building them, must have surpassed all the monarchs that have appeared since, not only in Egypt, but all the world over, in magnificence and invention; so transcendent are the monuments they have left worthy of their memory; monuments so ancient, that the learned cannot agree as to the time of their erection; and yet such as last to this day, and will last while ages are. I silently pass over the maritime cities in the kingdom of Egypt, such as Damietta, Rosetta, Alexandria, &c. where the Lord knows how many nations come for a thousand sorts of grain, seeds, cloth, and an infinite number of other things, calculated for the conveniency and the delight of men. What I speak of I have some occasion to know. I spent some years of my youth there, which, as long as I live, I shall always reckon the most agreeable part of my life.

My uncles had no answer to give my father, and agreed to all he had said of the Nile, of Cairo, and of the whole kingdom of Egypt; as for my own part, I was so taken with it, that I had never a wink of sleep that night. Soon after, my uncles declared themselves how much they were touched with my father's discourse. They made a proposal to him that they should travel all together into Egypt. He accepted of the proposal; and, being rich merchants, they resolved to carry with them such goods as would go off there. I came to know that they were making preparations for their departure; and thereupon went to my father, and begged of him, with tears in my eyes, that he would suffer me to go along with him, and allow me some stock of goods to trade with by myself; You are too young yet, said my father, to travel into Egypt; the fatigue is too great for you; and, besides, I am sure you will come off a loser in your traffic. However, these words did not cure me of the eager desire I had to travel. I made use of my uncle's interest with my father, who at last granted me leave to go as far as Damascus, where they would drop me, till they went through their travels into Egypt. The city of Damascus, said my father, may likewise glory in its beauties, and it is very well if my son get leave to go so far. Though my curiosity to see Egypt was very pressing, I considered he was my father, submitted to his will, and set out from Moussol with him and my uncles. We travelled through Mesopotamia, passed the Euphrates, and arrived at Halep, where we staid some days. From thence we went to Damascus, the first sight of which was a very agreeable surprise to me. We lodged in one khan; and I had the view of a city that was large, populous, full of fine people, and very well fortified. We employed some days in walking up and down the delicious gardens that surrounded it; and we all agreed that Damascus was justly said to be seated in a paradise. At last my uncles thought of pursuing their journey; but took care, before they went, to seil my goods, which they did so advantageously for me, that I got five hundred per cent. This sale fetched me so considerable a sum, that I was transported to see myself possessor of it.

My father and my uncles left me in Damascus, and pursued their journey. After their departure, I used mighty caution not to lay out my money idly; but, at the same time, I took a stately house, all of marble, adorned with pictures of gold, and a pure branched work, and excellent water-works. I furnished it, not so richly indeed as the magnificence of the place deserved, but at least handsomely enough for a young man of my condition. It had formerly belonged to one of the principal lords of the city, whose name was Modoun Adalraham; but then was the property of a rich jewel merchant, to whom I paid for it only two sherriffs[Footnote: A sherriff is the same with a sequin. This word is in the ancient authors.] a month. I had a good large number of domestics, and lived honourably; sometimes I gave entertainments to such people as I was acquainted with, and sometimes I went and was treated by them. Thus did I spend my time at Damascus, waiting for my father's return; no passion disturbed my repose, and my only employment was conversing with people of credit.

One day as I sat taking the cool air at my gate, a very fine lady came to me, and asked if I did not sell stuffs? but had no sooner spoken the words than she went into my house. When I saw that the lady had gone into the house, I rose, and having shut the gate, carried her into a hall, and prayed her to sit down. Madam, said I, I have had stuffs that were fit to be shown to you, but I have them not now, for which I am very sorry. She took off the veil that covered her face, and made a beauty sparkle in my eyes, which affected me with such emotions as I never felt before. I have no occasion for stuffs, said she; I only come to see you, and pass the evening with you: If you are pleased with it, all I ask of you is a light collation.

Transported with such happy luck, I ordered the folks to bring us several sorts of fruits, and some bottles of wine, They served us nimbly; and we ate and drank, and made merry, till midnight. In short, I had not passed a night so agreeably all the while I had been there. Next morning I would have put ten sherriffs in the lady's hands, but she refused them: I am not come to see you, said she, from a design of interest; you affront me: I am so far from receiving money, that I desire you to take money of me, or else I will see you no more. In speaking this, she put her hand into her purse, took out ten sherriffs, and forced me to take them, saying, You may expect me three days hence after sunset. Then she took leave of me, and I felt that when she went, she carried my heart along with her.

She did not fail to return at the appointed hour three days after; and I did not fail to receive her with all the joy of a person that waited impatiently for her arrival. The evening and night we spent as before; and next day at parting, she promised to return the third day after. She did not go, however, without forcing me to take ten sherriffs more.

She returned a third time; and, at that interview, when we were both warm with wine, she spoke thus: My dear heart, what do you think of me? Am I not handsome and agreeable? Madam, said I, all the marks of love with which I entertain you ought to persuade you that I love you: I am charmed with seeing you, and more so in enjoying you. You are my queen, my sultaness; in you lies all the

felicity of my life. Ah, sir, replied she, I am sure you would speak otherwise, if you saw a certain lady of my acquaintance that is younger and handsomer: she is a lady of such a pleasant jocund temper as would make the most melancholy person merry. I must bring her hither: I spoke of you to her, and, from the account I have given of you, she dies of desire to see you. She entreated me to gain her that pleasure, but I did not dare to humour her without speaking to you beforehand. Madam, said I, you shall do what you please; but whatever you may say of your friend, I defy all her charms to tear my heart from you, to whom it is so inviolably tied, that nothing can disengage it. Do not be too positive, said she; I now tell you I am about to put your heart to a strange trial.

We staid together all night, and next morning at parting, instead of ten sherriffs, she gave me fifteen, which I was forced to accept. Remember, said she, that in two days you are to have a new guest; pray take care to give her a good reception: we come at the usual hour after sunset. I took care to have my hall in great order, and a nice collation prepared against they came. I waited for the two ladies with impatience, and at last they arrived. They both unveiled themselves, and as I had been surprised with the beauty of the first, I had reason to be much more so when I saw her friend: she had regular features, a lively complexion, and such sparkling eyes that I could hardly bear their splendour, I thanked her for the honour she did me, and entreated her to excuse me if I did not give her the reception she deserved. No compliments said she; it should be my part to make them to you for allowing my friend to bring me hither. But since you are pleased to suffer it, let us lay aside all ceremony, and think of nothing but making merry.

As soon as the ladies arrived, the collation was served up, and we sat down to supper. I sat opposite to the stranger lady, and she never left off looking upon me with a smile: I could not resist her conquering eyes, and she made herself mistress of my heart with such force, that I had not power to offer opposition. But, by inspiring me, she took fire herself, and was equally touched, and was so far from showing any thing of constraint in her carriage, that she told me many sensible moving things. The other lady did nothing at first but laugh at us. I told you, said she, addressing herself to me, you would find my friend full of charms; and I perceive you have already violated the oath you made of being faithful to me. Madam, said I, laughing as well as she, you would have reason to complain of me, if I were wanting in civility to a lady whom you brought hither, and one whom you are fond of; you might then upbraid me, both of you, for not knowing the measures of hospitality and entertainment.

We continued to drink on; but as the wine grew warm in our stomachs, the stranger lady and I ogled one another with so little reserve, that her friend grew jealous, and quickly gave us a dismal proof of her jealousy. She rose from the table, and went out, saying she would be with us presently again; but a few moments after, the lady that staid with me changed her countenance, fell into violent convulsions, and, in fine, expired in my arms, while I was calling to the people to come and assist me in relieving her. Immediately I went out, and asked for the other lady; and my people told me she had opened the street-door,

and gone out of doors. Then I suspected she had been the cause of her friend's death. In fine, she had the dexterity and the malice to put some strong poison into the last glass, which she gave her out of her own hand. I was afflicted to the last degree with the accident. What shall I do? thinks I within myself: What will become of me? I thought there was no time to lose, and so, it being then moon-light, made my servants quietly take up a great piece of marble, with which the yard of my house was paved; under that I made them dig a hole presently, and there inter the corpse of the young lady. After replacing the stone, I put on a travelling suit, and took what silver I had; and, having locked up every thing, affixed my own seal to the door of my house. This done, I went to seek for the jewel merchant, my landlord, paid him what rent I owed, with a year's rent more; and giving him the key, prayed him to keep it for me: a very urgent affair, said I, obliges me to be absent for some time; I am under the necessity of going to find out my uncles at Cairo. I took my leave of him, and that very moment mounted my horse, and set out with my equipage.

I had a good journey, and arrived at Cairo without any ill accident. There I met with my uncles, who were much surprised to see me. To excuse myself, I pretended that I was tired staying for them; and, hearing nothing of them, was so uneasy that I could not be satisfied without coming to Cairo. They received me very kindly, and promised my father should not be angry with me for leaving Damascus without his permission. I lodged in the same khan with them, and saw all the curiosities of Cairo. Having finished their traffic, they began to speak of returning to Moussol, and to make preparations for their departure. But I, having yet a mind to see something in Egypt, left my uncles, and went to lodge at a great distance from the khan, and did not appear till they were gone. They had sought for me all over the city; but, not finding me, they judged the remorse of having come to Egypt without my father's consent, had induced me to return to Damascus, without saying any thing to them. So they began their journey, expecting to find me at Damascus, and there to take me up.

I remained at Cairo, after their departure, three years, to give full satisfaction to the curiosity I had of seeing all the wonders of Egypt, During that time, I took care to send money to the jewel-merchant, ordering him to keep my house for me, for I had a design to return to Damascus, and stay there for some years. I had no adventure at Cairo worthy of your hearing; but doubtless you will be surprised at that I met with after my return to Damascus. On my arrival in this place, I went to the jewel-merchant's house, who received me joyfully, and went along with me to my house, to show me that nobody had entered it whilst I was absent. The seal was still entire upon the lock; and, when I went in, I found every thing in the same order in which I left it.

In sweeping and cleaning out my hall, where I had used to eat, one of my servants found a gold chain necklace, with ten very large and very perfect pearls placed upon it at certain distances. He brought it to me, and I knew it to be the same I had seen upon the lady's neck that was poisoned; and concluded it had broken off, and fallen without my perceiving it. I could not

look upon it without shedding tears, when I called to mind the lovely creature I had seen die in so fatal a manner; so I wrapped it up, and put it in my bosom.

I passed some days to work off the fatigues of my voyage; after which I began to visit my former acquaintances. I abandoned myself to all manner of pleasure, insensibly squandered away all my money, and in this condition, instead of selling my moveables, resolved to part with my necklace, but had so little skill in pearls, that I took my measures very ill.

I went to the bezestein, where I called a crier aside, and, showing him the necklace, told him I had a mind to sell it, and desired him to show it to the principal jewellers. The crier was surprised to see such an ornament: What a pretty thing it is! tried he, staring upon it with admiration, never did our merchants see any thing so rich; I am sure I shall oblige them by showing it; and you need not doubt they will set a high price upon it from emulation. He carried me to a shop, which proved to be my landlord's: Tarry here, says the crier; I will return presently, and bring you an answer.

While he was running about to show the necklace, I sat with the jeweller, who was glad to see me; and we discoursed on common subjects. The crier returned, and calling me aside, instead of telling me that the necklace was valued at two thousand sherriffs, he assured me nobody would give me more than fifty. The reason is, added he, the pearls are false; so see if you can part with it at that price. I took the crier to be an honest fellow; and wanting money, Go, said I, I trust to what you say, and to those who know better than I; deliver it to them, and bring me the money immediately.

The crier had been ordered to offer me fifty sherriffs by one of the richest jewellers in town, who had made that offer only to sound me, and try if I was acquainted with the value of the goods which I exposed to sale. He had no sooner received my answer, than he carried the crier to the justiciary judge; and showing him the necklace, Sir, said he, here is a necklace that was stolen from me, and the thief, under the character of a merchant, has had the impudence to offer it to sale, and is this minute in the bezestein. He is willing to take fifty sherriffs for a necklace that is worth two thousand, which is a plain argument that it is stolen.

The judge seat immediately to seize me, and, on coming before him, he asked me if the necklace in his hand was not the one I had exposed to sale in the bezestein? I told him it was. Is it true, said he, that you are willing to deliver it for fifty sherriffs? I answered in the affirmative. Well, said he, in a scoffing way, give him the bastinado; he will quickly tell us, with all his fine merchant's clothes, that he is only a downright thief; let him be beaten till he confesses. The violence of the blows made me tell a lie: I confessed, though it was not true, that I had stolen the necklace, and presently the judge ordered my hand to be cut off.

This made a great noise in the bezestein, and I was scarcely returned to my house, when my landlord came. My son, said, he,

you seem to be a young man well educated, and of good sense; how is it possible that you could be guilty of such an unworthy action? You gave me an account of your estate yourself, and I do not doubt the correctness of it. Why did you not ask money of me, and I would have lent it you? Since, however, the thing has happened, I cannot allow you to lodge longer in my house; you must look out for other lodgings. I was extremely troubled, and entreated the jeweller, with tears in my eyes, to let me stay three days longer in, his house, which he granted.

Alas! said I to myself, this affront is insufferable; how shall I dare to return to Moussol? Nothing will persuade his father that I am innocent.

Three hours after this fatal accident, my house was assaulted by the judge's officers, accompanied by my landlord and the merchant who had falsely accused me of having stolen the necklace. I asked them what brought them there? But, instead of giving me an answer, they bound me, calling me a thousand rogues, and told me that the necklace belonged to the governor of Damascus, who had lost it about three years ago, and whose daughter had not been heard of since. Conceive my thoughts when I heard this news. However, I called all my resolution about me: I will tell, thinks I, the governor the truth; and so it will lie at his door either to put me to death, or to pardon me.

When I was brought before him, I observed he looked upon me with an eye of compassion, from whence I prophesied good things. He ordered me to be untied, and addressing himself to the jeweller who accused me, and to my landlord, Is this the man, said he, who sold the pearl necklace? They had no sooner answered yes, than he said, I am sure he did not steal the necklace, and I am much astonished at the injustice that has been done him. These words giving me courage, Sir, said I, I do assure you that I am really innocent, and am likewise persuaded that the necklace never did belong to my accuser, whose horrible perfidiousness is the cause of my unjust treatment. It is true, I made a confession as if I had stolen it; but this was contrary to my conscience, through the force of torture, and for another reason that I am ready to tell you, if you will be so good as hear me. I know enough of it already, replied the governor, to do you one part of the justice that is due to you: take from hence, continued he, the false accuser, and let him undergo the same punishment which he caused to be inflicted on this young man, whose innocence is known to me.

The governor's orders were immediately put in execution, and the jeweller was punished according to his demerit. Then the governor, having ordered all the company to withdraw, said to me, My child, tell me without fear how this necklace fell into your hands; conceal nothing of the matter from me. Then I told him plainly all that had passed, and declared I had chosen rather to pass for a thief, than to reveal that tragical adventure. Good God! said the governor, thy judgments are incomprehensible, and we ought to submit to them without murmuring. I receive, with an entire submission, the stroke thou hast been pleased to inflict upon me. Then directing his discourse to me, My child, said he, having now heard the cause of your disgrace, for which I am much concerned, I will give you an account of the disgrace that befel

me. Know, then, that I am the father of those two young ladies of whom you were just speaking. I know that the first lady, who had the impudence to come to your house, was my eldest daughter. I had given her in marriage to one of her cousins, my own brother's son, at Cairo. Her husband died, and she returned home corrupted with all manner of wickedness, which she had learned in Egypt. Before I took her home, her younger sister, who died in that deplorable manner in your arms, was a very prudent young woman, and had never given me any occasion to complain of her conduct; but, after that, the eldest sister grew very intimate with her, and insensibly made her as wicked as herself.

The day after the death of the youngest, not finding her at table, I asked her eldest sister what was become of her? But she, instead of answering, fell a-crying bitterly, from which I formed a fatal presage. I pressed her to inform me of what I asked her. My father, said she, with sobs, I can tell you no more than that my sister put on her best clothes yesterday, and her fine necklace, and went abroad, and has not been heard of since. I made search of my daughter all over the town, but could learn nothing of her unhappy fate. In the mean time, the eldest, who doubtless repented of her jealous fury, very much bewailed the death of her sister, and denied herself all manner of food, and so put an end to her deplorable days.

Such, continued the governor, is the state of mankind; such are the unlucky accidents to which they are exposed; however, my child, added he, since we are both of us equally unfortunate, let us unite our sorrow, and not abandon one another. I give you in marriage a third daughter I have still left; she is younger than her sisters, and imitates their conduct in no manner of way; besides, she is handsomer than they were, and I assure you is of a humour fitted to make you happy: you shall have no other house but mine; and, after my death, you and she shall be my heirs. Sir, said I, I am ashamed of all your favours, and shall never be able to make a sufficient acknowledgment. That is enough, said he, interrupting me; let us not waste time in idle words. He then called for witnesses, ordered the contract of marriage to be drawn, and I married his daughter without further ceremony.

He was not satisfied with punishing the jeweller who had falsely accused me, but confiscated for my use all his goods, which were very considerable. As for the rest, since you have been called to the governor's house, you have seen what respect they pay me there. I must tell you further, that a man, who was sent by my uncles to Egypt on purpose to inquire for me there, passing through this city, found me out, and came last night, and delivered me a letter from them. They gave me notice of my father's death, and invited me to come and take possession of his estate at Moussol; but as the alliance and friendship of the governor has fixed me with him, and will not suffer me to remove from him, I have sent back the express, with an order which will secure to me what is my due. Now, after what you have heard, I hope you will pardon my incivility, during the course of my illness, in giving you my left hand.

This, said the Jewish physician, is the story I heard from the young man of Moussol. I continued at Damascus as long as the governor lived; after his death, being in the flower of my age, I

had the curiosity to travel. Accordingly, I went over Persia to the Indies, and came at last to settle in your capital, where I practise physic with reputation and honour.

The sultan of Casgar was pretty well pleased with this last story. I must say, said he to the Jew, your story is very odd; but I declare freely, that little Humph's is yet more extraordinary, and much more comical; therefore you are not to expect that I will give you your life any more than the rest; I will hang you all four. Pray, sir, stay a minute, said the tailor; and then prostrating himself at the sultan's feet. Since your majesty loves pleasant stories, I have one to tell you that is very comical. Well, I will hear thee too, said the sultan: but do not flatter thyself that I will suffer thee to live, unless thou tellest me some adventure that is yet more diverting than that of the hump-bucked man. Upon this the tailor, as if he had been sure of his project, spoke very briskly to the following purpose:

THE STORY TOLD BY THE TAILOR.

A citizen of this city did me the honour, two days ago, to invite me to a treat, which he was to give to his friends yesterday morning. Accordingly, I went pretty early, and found twenty persons waiting.

The master of the house was gone out upon some business, but in a very little time came home, and brought with him a young man, a stranger, well dressed, and very handsome, but lame. When he came in, we all rose, and, out of respect to the master of the house, invited the young gentleman to sit down with us upon the sofa. He was going to sit down; but all on a sudden, spying a barber in our company, he flew backwards, and made towards the door. The master of the house being surprised, stopped him: Where are you going? said he; I brought you along with me to do me the honour of being my guest, and you are no sooner got into my house than you run away again. Sir, said the young man, for God's sake do not stop me, let me go; I cannot, without horror, look upon that abominable barber; though he was born in a country where all the natives are whites, he resembles an Ethiopian; and when all is come to all, his soul is yet blacker, and yet more horrible than his face.

We were, continued the tailor, surprised to hear the young man speak so, and began to have a very bad opinion of the barber, without knowing what ground the young man had for what he said. Nay, we protested we would not suffer any one to remain in our company who bore so horrid a character. The master of the house entreated the stranger to tell us what reason he had for hating the barber. Gentlemen, said the young man, you must know that this cursed barber is the cause of my being lame, and of the most cruel accident that any one can imagine: for this reason, I have made an oath to avoid every place where he dwells. It was for

this reason that I left Bagdad, where he then was, and travelled so far to settle in this city, in the heart of Great Tartary, a place where I flattered myself I should never see him; and now, after all, contrary to my expectations, I find him here. This obliges me, gentlemen, against my will, to deprive myself of the honour of being merry with you. This very day I take leave of your town, and will go, if possible, to hide me from him. This said, he would have left us, but the master entreated him to stop, and tell the cause of his aversion to the barber, who all this while looked down, and said nothing. We joined with the master of the house in requesting him to stay; and at last the young man, yielding to our instances, sat down upon the sofa; and, after turning his back to the barber, that he might not see him, gave us the following account.

My father's quality might have entitled him to the highest posts in the city of Bagdad, but he always preferred a quiet life to any honours he might deserve. I was his only child; and, when he died, I was already educated, and of age to dispose of the plentiful fortune he had left me, which I did not squander away foolishly, but applied to such uses, that every body respected me. I had never been in love, and was so far from being sensible of that passion, that I acknowledge, perhaps to my shame, that I cautiously avoided the conversation of women. One day, walking in the streets, I saw a great company of ladies before me, and, that I might not meet them, turned down a narrow lane just by, and sat down upon a bench by a door. I sat over against a window, where stood a pot with pretty flowers; and I had my eyes fixed upon this, when, all on a sudden, the window opened, and a young lady appeared, whose beauty was dazzling. Immediately she cast her eyes upon me; and, in watering the flower-pot with a hand whiter than alabaster, looked upon me with a smile that inspired me with as much love for her as I had formerly an aversion for all women. After having watered all her flowers, and darting upon me a glance full of charms that quite pierced my heart, she shut up the window again, and so left me in inconceivable trouble and disorder.

I had dwelt upon these thoughts long enough, had not a noise in the streets brought me to myself: alarmed thus, I turned my head in a rising posture, and saw it was the upper cadî of the city, mounted on a mule, and attended by five or six servants. He alighted at the door of the house where the young lady had opened the window, and went in there; so I concluded he was the young lady's father.

I went home in a different sort of humour from that in which I came, with a passion which was the mere violent as I had never felt before its assaults. In fine, I went to bed in a violent fever, at which all the family was greatly concerned. My relations, who had a great love for me, were so alarmed and moved at my sudden disorder, that they came about me, and importuned me to know the cause, which I took care not to reveal to them. My silence created an uneasiness which the physicians could not dispel, because they knew nothing of my distemper, and rather inflamed than repaired it, by the medicines they exhibited. My relations began to despair of my life, when a certain old lady of our acquaintance, learning my illness, came to see me. She considered and examined every thing with great attention, and

dived, I do not know how, into the real cause of my illness. Then she took my relations aside, and desired they would retire from the room. When the room was clear, she sat down on the side of my bed: My child, said she, you are very obstinate in concealing hitherto the cause of your illness; but you have no occasion to reveal it to me, I have experience enough to penetrate into a secret; you will not surely disown that it is love that makes you sick. I can find a way to cure you, if you but let me know who the happy lady is that could move a heart so insensible as yours; for you have the name of a woman-hater, and I was not the last that perceived you to be of that temper; but, in short, what I foresaw has just come to pass, and am now glad of the opportunity to employ my talents in bringing you out of pain.

The old lady, having talked to me in this fashion, paused, expecting my answer; but, though what she had said made a strong impression upon me, I durst not lay open to her the bottom of my heart; I only turned to her, and fetched a deep sigh without saying any thing. Is it bashfulness, said she, that keeps you from speaking? or is it want of confidence in me? Do not doubt the effect of my promise. I could mention to you an infinite number of young men of your acquaintance, that have been in the same condition with you, and have received relief from me. In fine, the good lady told me so many things more, that I broke silence, declared to her my evil, pointed out to her the place where I had seen the object which caused it, and unravelled all the circumstances of my adventure. If you succeed, said I, and procure me the felicity of seeing that charming beauty, and revealing to her the passion with which I burn for her, you may depend upon it I will be grateful. My son, said the old woman, I know the lady you speak of; she is, as you judged right, the daughter of the first *cadi* of the city: I think it no wonder that you are in love with her; she is the handsomest, comeliest lady in Bagdad; but what I most boggle at is, that she is very proud and of difficult access. You see how strict our judges are in enjoining the punctual observance of the severe laws that lay women under such a burdensome constraint; and they are yet more strict in the observation of their own families: nay, the *cadi* you saw is more rigid than all the other magistrates put together. They are always preaching to their daughters what a heinous crime it is to show themselves to men; and by this means the girls themselves are so prepossessed with the notion, that they make no other use of their own eyes than to conduct them along the streets when necessity obliges them to go abroad. I do not say absolutely that the *cadi*'s daughter is of that humour; but I still fear to meet with as great obstacles on her side as on her father's. Would to God you had loved some other lady, then I had not had so many difficulties to surmount. However, I shall employ all my wits to compass the thing; but time is required. In the mean time, take heart, and trust to me.

The old woman took leave; and as I weighed within myself all the obstacles she had been talking of, the fear of her not succeeding inflamed my illness. Next day she came again, and I read in her countenance that she had no favourable news to impart. She spoke thus: My child, I was not mistaken in the matter; I have somewhat else to conquer besides the vigilance of a father; you love an indifferent, insensible girl, who takes pleasure in making those to burn with love that suffer themselves to be charmed by her;

when she has once gained that point, she will not deign them the least comfort. She heard me with pleasure, when I spoke of nothing but the torment she had made you undergo; but I had no sooner requested her to allow you to see, and converse with her, than, with a terrible look, You are very bold, said she, to make such a proposal to me; I discharge you ever to see me again with such discourse in your mouth.

Do not let this cast you down, continued she, I am not easily disheartened; and if your patience does but hold out, I am hopeful I shall compass my end. To shorten my story, said the young man, this good procuress made several attempts on my behalf with the proud enemy of my rest. The fret I thereby underwent inflamed my distemper to that degree that my physicians gave me quite over; so that I was looked on as a dead man, when the old woman came to give me life.

That nobody might hear what was said, she whispered in my ear, Remember now you owe me a present for the good news I bring you. These words produced a marvellous effect; I raised myself to sit up in the bed, and with transports made answer, You shall not be without a present: but what are the news you bring me? Dear sir, said she, you shall not die yet: I shall speedily have the pleasure to see you in perfect health, and very well satisfied with me. Yesterday being Monday, I went to see the lady you love, and found her in very good humour. I put on a sad countenance, and fetched many deep sighs, and began to squeeze out some tears: My good mother, said she, what is the matter with you? Why are you so cast down? Alas, my dear and honourable lady, said I, I have been just now with the young gentleman I spoke to you of the other day; his business is done; he is giving up his life for the love of you; it is a great injury, I assure you, and there is a great deal of cruelty on your side. I am at a loss to know, replied she, how you suppose me to be the cause of his death. How can I have contributed to it? How, replied I, did not you tell me the other day that he sat down before your window when you opened it to water your flower-pot? He then saw that prodigy of beauty, those charms that your looking-glass represents to you every day. From that moment he languished, and his disease is risen to that height, that he is reduced to the deplorable condition I have mentioned.

You remember well, added I, how rigorously you treated me the last time I was here, when I was offering to speak to you of his illness, and to propose means to rescue him from the danger he was in; when I took leave of you, I went straight to his house, and he no sooner knew by my countenance that I had brought him no favourable answer than his distemper increased. From that time, madam, he is ready to die, and I do not know whether you can save his life now, though you should take pity on him. This is just what I said to her, continued the old woman. The fear of your death shaked her, and I saw her face change colour. Is it true what you say? said she. Has he actually no other disease than what is occasioned by the love of me? Ah, madam, said I, that is too true; would to God it were false! Do you believe, said she, that the hope of seeing me would contribute any thing to rescue him from the danger he is in? Perhaps it may, said I, and if you will give me orders, I will try the remedy. Well, said she, sighing, make him hope to see me; but he can pretend to no other

favours from me, unless he aspires to marry me, and my father gives his consent to it. Madam, replied I, your goodness overcomes me: I will go and see for the young gentleman, and tell him he is to have the pleasure of an interview with you: the most proper time I can think of, said she, for granting him that favour, is next Friday, at the time of noon-prayers. Let him take care to observe when my father goes out, and then come and plant himself over against the house, if so be his health permits him to come abroad. When he comes, I shall see him through my window, and shall come down and open the door to him; we shall then converse together during prayer-time, but he must be gone before my father returns.

It is now Tuesday, continued the old gentlewoman, you have till Friday to recruit your strength, and make the necessary dispositions for the interview. While the good old gentlewoman was telling her story, I felt my illness decrease, or rather, by the time she had done, I found myself perfectly well. Here, take this, said I, reaching out to her my purse, which was full, it is to you alone that I owe my cure. I reckon this money better employed than what I gave to the physicians, who have done nothing but tormented me during the whole course of my illness. When the lady was gone, I found I had strength enough to get up; and my relations, finding me so well, complimented me and went home.

On Friday morning the old woman came just when I was dressing myself, and laying out the finest clothes I had; I do not ask you, says she, how you do; what you are about is intimation enough of your health; but will you not bathe before you go to the first cadi's house? That will take up too much time, said I; I will content myself with calling a barber to get my head and beard shaved. Presently I ordered one of my slaves to call a barber that could do his business cleverly and expeditiously. The slave brought me this wretch you see here, who came in, and after saluting me, Sir, said he, you look as if you were not very well. I told him I was just recovered from a fit of sickness: I wish, said he, God may deliver you from all mischance; may his grace always go along with you. I hope, said I, he will grant your wish, for which I am very much obliged to you. Since you are recovering, said he, I pray God preserve your health; but now pray let us know what service I am to do; I have brought my razors and my lancets; do you desire to be shaved or to be bled? I replied, I am just recovered of a fit of sickness, and so you may readily judge I only want to be shaved: come, make haste, do not lose time in prattling, for I am in haste, and precisely at noon must be at a certain place.

The barber spent much time in opening his case, and preparing his razors: instead of putting water into the bason, he took a very handsome astrolabe out of his budget, and went very gravely out of my room to the middle of the yard to take the height of the sun; then he returned with the same grave pace, and, entering my room, Sir, said he, you will be pleased to know this day is Friday the 18th of the month Saffar, in the year 653, [Footnote: This year 653 is one of the Hegira, the common epocha of the Mahometans, and answers to the year 1255, from the nativity of Christ; from whence we may conjecture that these computations were made in Arabia about that time.] from the retreat of our

great prophet from Mecca to Medina, and in the year 7320
[Footnote: As for the year 7320, the author is mistaken in that computation. The year 653 of the Hegira, and the 1255 of Christ, coincide only with the 1557 of the aera or the epocha of the Selucides, which is the same with that of Alexander the Great, who is called Iskender with two horns, according to the expression of the Arabians.] of the epocha of the great Iskender with two horns; and that the conjunction of Mars and Mercury signifies you cannot choose a better time than this very day for being shaved. But, on the other hand, the same conjunction is a bad presage to you. I learn from thence, that this day you run a great risk, not indeed of losing your life, but of an inconvenience which will attend you while you live. You are obliged to me for the advice I now give you to take care to avoid it; I should be sorry if it befel you.

You may guess, gentlemen, how sorry I was for having fallen into the hands of such a prattling impertinent barber; what an unseasonable adventure it was for a lover preparing for an interview! I was quite angry. I do not trouble my head, said I, in anger, with your advice and predictions, nor did I call you to consult your astrology; you came here to shave me, so pray do it, or be gone, and I will call another barber. Sir, said he, with a dulness that put me out of all patience, what reason have you to be angry with me? You do not know that all barbers are not like me, and that you could scarcely find such another, if you made it your business to search. You only sent for a barber: but here, in my person, you have the best barber in Bagdad; an experienced physician, a very profound chemist, an infallible astrologer, a finished grammarian, a complete orator, a subtle logician, a mathematician perfectly conversant in geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, and all the divisions of algebra; an historian fully master of the histories of all the kingdoms of the universe; besides, I know all parts of philosophy, and have all the traditions upon my finger ends. I am a poet, an architect, nay, what is it I am not? there is nothing in nature hidden from me. Your deceased father, to whose memory I pay a tribute of tears every time I think of him, was fully convinced of my merit; he was fond of me, and spoke of me in all companies as the greatest man in the world. Out of gratitude and friendship for him, I am willing to take you into my protection, and guard you from all the evils that your stars may threaten.

At hearing this stuff, I could not forbear laughing, notwithstanding my anger. You impertinent prattler, said I, will you have done, and begin to shave me?

Sir, replied the barber to me, you affront me in calling me a prattler; on the contrary, all the world gives me the honourable title of Silent. I had six brothers that you might justly have called prattlers; and that you may know them the better, the name of the first was Bacbouc, of the second Backbarah of the third Backback, of the fourth Barbarak, of the fifth Alnaschar, of the sixth Schacabac. These indeed were impertinent noisy fellows; but as for me, who am a younger brother, I am grave and concise in my discourses.

For God's sake, gentlemen, do but suppose you had been in my place. What could I say when I felt myself so cruelly tortured?

Give him three pieces of gold, said I to the slave that was my housekeeper, and send him away, that he may disturb me no more; I will not be shaved this day. Sir, said the barber, what do you mean by that? I did not come to seek for you, it was you that sent for me; and since it is so, I swear by the faith of a Mussulman, I will not stir out of these doors till I have shaved you: if you do not know my value, that is not my fault. Your deceased father did me more justice. Every time he sent for me to let blood, he made me sit down by him, and was charmed to hear the fine things I talked of. I kept him in a continual strain of admiration, and ravished him; when I had finished my discourses, My God, would he cry, you are an inexhaustible source of sciences; no man can reach the depth of your knowledge. My dear sir, said I again, you do me more honour than I deserve: If I say any thing that is fine, it is owing to the favourable audience you vouchsafe me; it is your liberality that inspires me with the sublime thoughts that have the happiness to please you. One day, when he was charmed with an admirable discourse I had made, Give him, says he, an hundred pieces of gold, and invest him with one of my richest robes. I received the present upon the spot, and presently I drew his horoscope, and found it the happiest in the world. Nay, I was grateful still, and bled him with cupping glasses.

This was not all: The barber spun out, besides, another harangue that was a half hour long. Fatigued with hearing him, and fretted at the time which was spent before I was half ready, I did not know what to say. No, said I, it is impossible there should be such another man in the world, that takes pleasure, as you do, in making people mad.

I thought that I should succeed better if I dealt mildly with my barber. In the name of God, said I, leave off all your fine discourses, and despatch me presently; I am called to attend an affair of the last importance, as I have told you already. Then he fell a laughing: It would be a laudable thing, said he, if our minds were always in the same strain; if we were wise and prudent: however, I am willing to believe, that if you are angry with me, it is your distemper which has caused that change in your humour; and, for that reason, you stand in need of some instructions, and you cannot do better than follow the example of your father and grandfather. They came and consulted me upon all occasions; and I can say, without vanity, that they always extolled my council. Pray, recollect, sir, men never succeed in their enterprises without having recourse to the advice of quick-sightedmen. The proverb tells you, a man cannot be wise without receiving advice from the wise. I am entirely at your service, and you have nothing to do but command me.

What! cannot I prevail with you then? said I, interrupting him. Leave off these long discourses which tend to nothing but to split my head to pieces, and to detain me from the place where my business lies. Shave me, I say, or be gone; with that I started up in a huff, stamping my foot against the ground.

When he saw I was angry in earnest; Sir, said he, do not be angry, we are going to begin soon. He washed my head, and fell a shaving me; but he had not given me four sweeps of his razor, when he stopped, saying, Sir, you are hasty, you should avoid

these transports that come only from the devil. Besides, my merit speaks that you ought to have some more consideration for me, with respect to my age, my knowledge, and my shining virtues.

Go on and shave me, said I, interrupting him again, and do not speak. That is to say, replies he, you have some urgent business to go about; I will lay you a wager I guess right. Why, I told you so these two hours, said I, you ought to have done before now. Moderate your passion, replied he, perhaps you have not maturely weighed what you are going about: when things are done precipitately, they are generally repented of. I wish you would tell me what mighty business this is you are so earnest upon: I would tell you my opinion of it: besides, you have time enough, since your appointment is not till noon, and it wants three hours of that yet. I do not mind that, said I; persons of honour, and of their word, are rather before their time than after. But I forget that, in amusing myself by reasoning with you, I give into the faults of you prattling barbers: have done, have done, shave me.

The more haste I was in, the less haste he made: he laid down the razor, and took up his astrolabe; this done, he even laid down the astrolabe, and took up his razor again. The barber quitted his razor again, and took up his astrolabe, a second time; and so left me, half shaved, to go and see precisely what o'clock it was. Back he came, and then, Sir, said he, I knew I was not mistaken, it wants three hours of noon, I am sure of it, or else all the rules of astronomy are false. Just Heaven! cried I, my patience is at an end, I can forbear no longer. You cursed barber, you barber of mischief, I do not know what holds me from falling upon you, and strangling you. Softly, sir, said he, very calmly, without being moved by my passion: you are not afraid of a relapse: do not be in a passion, I am going to serve you this minute. On speaking these words, he clapped his astrolabe in his case, took up his razor, which he had fixed to his belt, and fell a shaving again: but, all the while he shaved me, the dog could not forbear prattling. If you please, sir, said he, to tell me what business it is you are going about, I could give you some advice that may be of use to you. To satisfy the fellow, I told him I was going to meet some friends who were to regale me at noon, and make merry with me upon the recovery of my health.

When the barber heard me talk of regaling, God bless you this day as well as all other days, cried he: you put me in mind that yesterday I invited four or five friends to come and eat with me this day: indeed I had forgot it, and I have as yet made no preparation for them. Do not let that trouble you. said I; though I dine abroad, my house is always well provided. I make you a present of what is in it; nay, besides, I will order you as much wine as you may have occasion for, for I have excellent wine in my cellar; only despatch the shaving of me presently, and pray do not mind it; whereas my father made you presents to encourage you to speak, I give you mine to make you hold your peace.

He was not satisfied with the promise I made him: God reward you, sir, said he, for your kindness; but pray show me these provisions now, that I may see if there will be enough to entertain my friends: I would have them satisfied with the good fare I make them. I have, said I, a lamb, six capons, a dozen of

pullets, and enough to make four services of. I ordered a slave to bring them all before him, with four great pitchers of wine. It is very well, said the barber, but we shall want fruit, and sauce for the meat: that I ordered likewise; but then he gave over shaving to look over every thing one after another; and this survey lasted almost half an hour. I raged, and stormed, and went mad, but it signified nothing, the coxcomb never troubled himself. He, however, took up his razor again, and shaved me for some moments; then stopping all on a sudden, I could not have believed, sir, that you would have been so liberal; I begin to perceive that your deceased father lives again in you: most certainly I do not deserve the favours with which you have loaded me; and I assure you I shall have them in perpetual remembrance: for, sir, to let you know it, I have nothing but what comes from the generosity of honest gentlemen, such as you; in which point I am like to Zantout that rubs the people in bathing; to Sali that cries boiled pease in the streets: to Salout that sells beans; to Akerscha that sells greens; to Amboumecarez that sprinkles the streets to lay the dust, and to Cassem the caliph's life-guard man. Of all these persons, not one is apt to be made melancholy; they are neither peevish nor quarrelsome; they are more contented with their lot than the caliph in the midst of his court; they are always gay, ready to dance and to sing, and have each of them their peculiar song and dance, with which they divert the city of Bagdad: but what I esteem most in them is, that they are no great talkers, no more than your slave that has now the honour to speak to you. Here, sir, that is the song and dance of Zantout, who rubs the people in baths: mind me, pray, and see if I do not imitate it exactly.

The barber sung the song and danced the dance of Zantout; and though I did what I could to make an end to his buffoonery, he did not give over till he had imitated, in like manner, the songs and dances of the other people he had named. After that, addressing himself to me, I am going, says he, to invite all these honest persons to my house: if you take my advice, you will join with us, and balk your friends yonder, who perhaps are noisy prattlers, that will only teaze you to death with their nauseous discourses, and make you fall into a distemper worse than that you so lately recovered of; whereas, at my house, you shall have nothing but pleasure.

Notwithstanding my anger, I could not forbear laughing at the fellow's impertinence. I wish I had no business upon my hands, said I; if I had not, I would accept of the proposal you make me; I would go with all my heart to be merry with you, but I beg to be excused, I am too much engaged this day; another day I shall be more at leisure, and then we shall make up that company. Come, have done shaving me, and make haste to return home; perhaps your friends are already come to your house. Sir, said he, do not refuse me the favour I ask of you; come and be merry with the good company I am to have; if you were but once in our company, you would be so well pleased with it, you would forsake your friends to come to us: let us talk no more of that, said I, I cannot be your guest.

I found I gained no ground upon him by mild terms. Since you will not come to my house, replied the barber, then pray let me go along with you; I will go and carry these things to my house,

where my friends may eat of them if they like them, and I will return immediately; I would not be so uncivil as to leave you alone; you deserve this complaisance at my hands. Heavens! cried I, then I shall not get clear of this troublesome man this day. In the name of the living God, said I, leave off your unreasonable jargon: go to your friends, drink, eat, and be merry with them, and leave me at liberty to go to mine. I have a mind to go alone, I have no occasion for company: besides, I must needs tell you, the place to which I go is not a place where you can be received; nobody must come there but me. You jest, sir, said he; if your friends have invited you to a feast, why should you hinder me to accompany you? You will please them, I am sure, by carrying thither a man that can speak comically like me, and knows how to divert company agreeably: but, say what you will, the thing is resolved upon; I will go along with you in spite of your teeth.

These words, gentlemen, made me very uneasy. How shall I get rid of this cursed barber? thought I to myself. If I do not snub him roundly, we shall never have done contesting. Besides, I heard then the first call to noon-prayers, and it was time for me to go. In fine, I resolved to say nothing at all, and to make as if I consented to his proposal. By that time he had done shaving me; then said I to him, Take some of my servants to carry these provisions along with you, and return hither; I will stay for you, and shall not go without you. At last he went, and I dressed myself nimbly. I heard the last call to prayers; and made haste to set out: but the malicious barber, jealous of my intention, went with my servants only within sight of the house, and stood there till he saw them enter his house; having hid himself upon the turning of a street, with intent to observe and follow me. In fine, when I arrived at the cadí's door, I looked back and saw him at the head of the street, which fretted me to the last degree.

The cadí's door was half open, and as I went in, I saw an old woman waiting for me, who, after she had shut the door, conducted me to the chamber of the young lady I was in love with: but we had scarcely begun our interview, when we heard a noise in the street. The young lady put her head to the window, and saw through the grate that it was the cadí, her father, returning already from prayers. At the same time, I looked through the window, and saw the barber sitting over against the house in the same place where I had before seen the young lady.

I had then two things to fear, the arrival of the cadí, and the presence of the barber. The young lady mitigated my fear of the first, by assuring me the cadí came but very seldom to her chamber; and, as she had foreseen that this misadventure might happen, she had contrived a way to convey me out safe; but the indiscretion of the accursed barber made me very uneasy; and you shall hear that this my uneasiness was not without ground.

As soon as the cadí came in, he caned one of his slaves that deserved it. The slave made horrid shouts, which were heard in the streets; the barber thought it was I that cried out, and that I was maltreated. Prepossessed with this thought, he screamed out most fearfully, rent his clothes, threw dust upon his head, and called the neighbourhood to his assistance. The neighbourhood

came, and asked what ailed him, and what relief he wanted that they could give? Alas! cried he, they are assassinating my master, my dear patron: and, without saying any other thing, he ran all the way to my house with the very same cry in his mouth. From thence he returned, followed by all my domestics, armed with batoons. They knocked with inconceivable fury at the cadi's door, and the cadi sent a slave to see what was the matter; but the slave being frightened, returned to his master, crying, Sir, above ten thousand men are going to break into your house by force.

Immediately the cadi ran himself, opened the door, and asked what they wanted? His venerable presence could not inspire them with respect: they insolently said to him, You cursed cadi, you dog of a cadi, what reason have you to assassinate our master? What has he done to you? Good people, replied the cadi, for what should I assassinate your master, whom I do not know, and who has done no offence? My house is open to you, come see and search. You bastinadoed him, said the barber; I heard his cries not above a minute ago. But pray, replies the cadi, what offence could your master do to me, to oblige me to use him after that rate? Is he in my house? If he is, how came he in, or who could have introduced him? Ah! wretched cadi cried the barber, you and your long beard shall never make me believe what you say. What I say I know to be true; your daughter is in love with our master, and gave him a meeting during the time of noon-prayers; you, without doubt, have had notice of it; you returned home, and surprised him, and made your slave bastinado him: but this your wicked action shall not pass with impunity; the caliph shall be acquainted with it, and he shall give true and brief justice. Let him come out; deliver him to us immediately: or if you do not, we will go in and take him from you, to your shame. There is no occasion for so many words, replied the cadi, nor to make so great a noise: if what you say is true, go in and find him out, I give you free liberty. Thereupon the barber and my domestics rushed into the house like furies, and looked for me all about.

When I heard all that the barber said to the cadi, I sought for a place to hide myself, and could find nothing but a great empty trunk, in which I lay down, and shut it upon me. The barber, after he had searched every where, came into the chamber where I was, and opening the trunk, as soon as he saw me, he took it upon his head, and carried it away. He came down a high stair-case into a court, which he went through very speedily, and got to the street. While he carried me, the trunk unhappily opened, and I, not being able to endure to be exposed to the view and shouts of the mob that followed us, leaped out into the street with so much haste that I hurt my leg, so as I have been lame ever since. I was not sensible how bad it was at first, and therefore got up quickly to get away from the people, who laughed at me; nay, I threw handfuls of gold and silver among them, and, whilst they were gathering it up, I made my escape by cross streets and alleys. But the cursed barber, improving the stratagem that I made use of to get away from the mob, followed me close, crying, Stay, sir, why do you run so fast? If you knew how much I am afflicted at the ill treatment you received from the cadi, you who are so generous a person, and to whom I and my friends are so much obliged! Did not I tell you truly that you would expose your life by your obstinate refusal to let me go with you? See now

what has happened to you by your own fault; and if I had not resolutely followed you to see whither you went, what would have become of you? Whither do you go then, sir? stay for me.

Thus the wretched barber cried aloud in the streets; it was not enough for him to have occasioned so great a scandal in the quarter of the *cadi*, but he would have it be known through the whole town. I was in such a rage that I had a great mind to have staid and cut his throat; but considering that would have perplexed me further, I chose another course; for perceiving that his calling after me exposed me to vast numbers of people, who crowded to the doors or windows, or stopped in the streets, to gaze on me, I entered into a *khan* or inn, the chamberlain of which knew me; and finding him at the gate, whither the noise had brought him, I prayed him, for the sake of Heaven, to hinder that madman from coming in after me. He promised to do so, and was as good as his word, but not without a great deal of trouble, for the obstinate barber would go in, in spite of him, and did not retire without calling him a thousand ill names; and after the chamberlain shut the gate, the barber continued telling the mob what great service he had done me. Thus I rid myself of that troublesome fellow.

After that, the chamberlain prayed me to tell him my adventure, which I did, and then desired him to let me have an apartment until I was cured: But, sir, says he, would it not be more convenient for you to go home? I will not return thither, said I; for the detestable barber will continue plaguing me there, and I shall die of vexation to be continually teased with him. Besides, after what has befallen me to-day, I cannot think of staying any longer in this town; I must go whither my ill fortune leads me. And actually, when I was cured, I took all the money I thought necessary for my travels, and divided the remainder of my estate among my kindred.

Thus, gentlemen, I left Bagdad, and came hither. I had ground to hope that I should not meet this pernicious barber in a country so far from my own, and yet I found him amongst you. Do not be surprised, then, at my haste to be gone; you may easily judge how disgusting to me the sight of a man is who was the occasion of my lameness, and of my being reduced to the melancholy necessity of living at so great a distance from my kindred, friends, and country.

When the lame young man had spoken these words, he rose, and went out: the master of the house conducted him to the gate, and told him he was sorry that he had given him, though innocently, so great a subject of mortification.

When the young man was gone, continued the tailor, we were all astonished at the story; and turning to the barber, told him he was very much in the wrong, if what we had just now heard was true. Gentlemen, answered he, raising up his head, which till then he had held down, my silence during the young man's discourse is enough to testify that he advanced nothing but what was really true; but, notwithstanding all that he has said to you, I maintain that I ought to have done what I did; I leave yourselves to be judges of it. Did not he throw himself into danger, and could he have come off so well without my assistance?

He was too happy to escape with a lame leg. Did not I expose myself to a greater danger in getting him out of a house where I thought he was ill-treated? Has he any reason to complain of me, and to give me so many bad words? This is what one gets by serving unthankful people. He accuses me of being a prattling fellow, which is a mere slander. Of seven brothers, I am he who speaks the least, and have most wit for my share; and, to convince you of it, gentlemen, I need only tell my own story and theirs. Honour me, I beseech you, with your attention.

THE STORY OF THE BARBER.

In the reign of the caliph Moustancer Billah [Footnote: He was raised to this dignity in the year of the Hegira 623, and Anno Dom. 1226; and was the thirty-sixth caliph of the race of the Abassides.], continued he, a prince famous for his vast liberality towards the poor, ten highwaymen infested the roads about Bagdad, who had for a long time committed unheard-of robberies and cruelties. The caliph having notice of this, sent for the judge of the police some days before the feast of Bairam, and ordered him, on pain of death, to bring all the ten to him.

The judge of the police, continued the barber, used so much diligence, and sent so many people in pursuit of the ten robbers, that they were taken on the day of Bairam. I was then walking on the banks of the Tigris, and saw ten men, richly apparelled, go into a boat. I might have known they were robbers, had I observed the guards that were with them; but I looked only to them; and, thinking they were people who had a mind to spend the festival-day in jollity, I entered the boat with them, without saying one word, in hopes they would allow me to be one of the company. We went down the Tigris, and landed before the caliph's palace; and I then had time to consider with myself, and to find out my mistake. When we came out of the boat, we were surrounded by a new troop of the judge of the police's guard, who tied us all, and carried us before the caliph. I suffered myself to be tied as well as the rest, without speaking one word: for to what purpose should I have spoken, or made any resistance? That would have been the way to have been ill treated by the guards, who would not have listened to me, for they are brutish fellows, who will hear no reason: I was with the robbers, which was sufficient to make them believe me to be one.

When we came before the caliph, he ordered the ten highwaymen's heads to be cut off immediately. The executioner drew us up in a file within the reach of his arm, and by good fortune I was the last. He cut off the heads of the ten highwaymen, beginning with the first; and when he came to me he stopped. The caliph, perceiving that he did not meddle with me, grew angry: Did not I command thee, said he, to cut off the heads of ten highwaymen? Why, then, hast thou cut off but nine? Commander of the faithful, said he, Heaven preserve me from disobeying your majesty's orders! Here are ten corpses upon the ground, and as many heads

which I cut off; your majesty may count them.

When the caliph saw himself that what the executioner said was true, he looked upon me with astonishment; and, perceiving that I had not the face of a highwayman, said to me, Good old man, how came you to be among those wretches, who have deserved a thousand deaths? I answered, Commander of the faithful, I shall make a true confession. This morning I saw those ten persons, whose unhappy fate is a proof of your majesty's justice, take boat; and I embarked with them, thinking they were men going to an entertainment to celebrate this day, which is the most remarkable in our religion.

The caliph, who could not forbear laughing at my adventure, instead of treating me as a prattling fellow, as the lame young man did, admired my discretion and constant silence. Commander of the faithful, said I, your majesty need not wonder at my keeping silence on such an occasion, which would have made another apt to speak. I make a particular profession of holding my peace; and on that account I have acquired the title of Silent. Thus I am called, to distinguish me from my six brothers. This is the effect of my philosophy; and, in a word, in this virtue consists my glory and happiness. I am very glad, said the caliph, smiling, that they gave you a title which you so well deserve, and know how to make such good use of. But tell me what sort of men your brothers are: were they like you? By no means, said I; they were all of them given to prating, one more than another; and as to their persons, there was still a greater difference betwixt them and me. The first was hump-backed; the second had rotten teeth; the third had but one eye; the fourth was blind; the fifth had his ears cut; and the sixth had hare-lips. They had such adventures as would inform you of their characters, had I the honour of telling them to your majesty. Accordingly, the caliph expressing a desire to hear a relation of their stories, I began thus:

THE STORY OF THE BARBER'S ELDEST BROTHER.

Sir, said I, my eldest brother, whose name was Bacbouc the Hump-back, was a tailor by trade: when his apprenticeship expired, he hired a shop just opposite a mill; and, having but very little business, could scarcely maintain himself. The miller, on the contrary, was wealthy, and had a very handsome wife. One day, as my brother was at work in his shop, he lifted up his head, and saw the miller's wife looking out of the window, and was charmed with her beauty. The woman took no notice of him, but shut the window, and came no more to it all that day; while the poor tailor did nothing but lift up his eyes towards the mill all day long. He pricked his fingers more than once; and his work that day was not very regular. At night, when he was to shut up his shop, he could scarcely tell how to do it, because he still hoped the miller's wife would come to the window once more; but at last he was forced to shut it up, and go home to his little

house, where he passed the night in great uneasiness. He rose very early the next morning, and ran to his shop, in hopes of seeing his mistress again; but he was no happier than the day before, for the miller's wife did not appear at the window above one moment all the day; but that moment made the tailor the most amorous that ever lived. The third day he had some more ground of satisfaction; for the miller's wife cast her eyes upon him by chance, and surprised him as he was gazing at her, of which she presently knew the reason.

No sooner did the miller's wife perceive my brother's mind, continued the barber, but, instead of being vexed at it, she resolved to make it her diversion. She looked upon him with a smiling countenance, and my brother looked upon her in the same manner; but his looks were so very whimsical and singular, that the miller's wife was obliged to shut her window, lest her loud laughter should have made him sensible that she only ridiculed him. Poor Bacbouc interpreted her behaviour on this occasion to his own advantage, and flattered himself that she had looked upon him with pleasure.

The miller's wife resolved to make sport with my brother. She had a piece of very fine stuff, with which she had for a long time designed to make herself a suit; she therefore wrapped it up in a fine embroidered silk handkerchief, and sent it to him by a young slave; who, having been first taught her lesson, came to the tailor's shop, and said, My mistress gives you her service; and prays you to make her a suit with this stuff according to the pattern: she changes her clothes often, so that her custom will be profitable to you. My brother doubted not but the miller's wife loved him, and therefore concluded that she sent him work so soon after what had passed betwixt them only to signify that she knew his mind, and to convince him that he had obtained her favour. Confirmed in this opinion, my brother charged the slave to tell her mistress that he would lay aside all other work for her's, and that the suit should be ready by next morning. In effect, he laboured at it with so much diligence, that he finished it the same day.

Next morning, the young slave coming to see if the suit was ready, Bacbouc gave it to her neatly folded up; and said, I am too anxious to please your mistress to neglect her suit: I would engage her by my diligence to employ no other but myself for the future. The young slave went some steps, as if she had intended to go away; and then coming back, whispered to my brother, I had forgot part of my commission; my mistress charged me to compliment you in her name, and to ask you how you passed the night: for her part, poor woman, she loves you so mightily, that she could not sleep. Tell her, answered my silly brother, that I have so violent a passion for her, that I have not closed my eyes in sleep these four nights. After such a compliment from the miller's wife, my brother thought she would not let him languish in expectation of her favour.

About a quarter of an hour after, the slave returned to my brother with a piece of satin. My mistress, said she, is very well pleased with her suit; nothing in the world can fit her better: and as it is very fine, she would not wear it without a new petticoat; and she prays you to make her one, as soon as you

can, of this piece of satin. It is enough, said Bacbouc; I will do it before I leave my shop; you shall have it in the evening. The miller's wife showed herself often at her window; was very prodigal of her charms; and, to encourage my brother, she feigned to take pleasure in seeing him work. The petticoat was soon made; and the slave came for it, but brought the tailor no money, neither for the trimming he had bought for the suit, nor for his labour. In the mean time, this unfortunate lover, whom they only amused, though he could not perceive it, had eat nothing all that day, and was under the necessity of borrowing money to purchase himself a supper. Next morning, as soon as it was day, the young slave came to tell him that the miller wanted to speak with him. My mistress, said she, has told him so much good of you, when she showed him your work, that he has a mind you should work also for him; she does it on purpose, that the friendship she designs to form betwixt you and him may make you succeed in what you both equally desire. My brother was easily persuaded, and went to the mill with the slave. The miller received him very kindly, and showed him a piece of cloth, told him he wanted shirts, bid him make twenty of that cloth, and return to him what he should not make use of.

My brother, said the barber, had work enough for five or six days to make twenty shirts for the miller; who afterwards gave him another piece of cloth to make him as many pair of drawers. When, they were finished, Bacbouc carried them to the miller, who asked him what he must have for his pains. My brother answered, that he would be content with twenty drams of silver. The miller immediately called the young slave, and bid her bring him his weights, that he might see if his money was right. The slave who had her lesson, looked upon my brother with an angry countenance, to signify to him that their project would be frustrated if he took any money. He knew her meaning, and refused to take any, though he wanted it so much that he was forced to borrow money to buy the thread with which he sewed the shirts and drawers. When he left the miller, he came to me to borrow money to live on, and told me they did not pay him. I gave him some copper-money that I had in my pocket, on which he subsisted for some days. It is true, indeed, he lived upon nothing but broth; nor had he a sufficiency of that.

One day he went to the miller, who was busy at his work; and, thinking that my brother came for money, he offered him some; but the young slave being present, made him another sign not to take it, with which he complied, and told the miller he did not come for his money, but only to know how he did. The miller thanked him, and gave him an upper garment to make. Bacbouc carried it to him the next day; and when the miller drew out his purse, the young slave gave my brother the usual sign; on which he said to the miller, Neighbour, there is no haste; we will reckon another time. The poor simpleton then returned again to his shop, with the three terrible distempers of love, hunger, and want of money, upon him.

The miller's wife was not only avaricious, but very ill-natured; for, not content with having cheated my brother of what was due to him, she provoked her husband to revenge himself upon him for making love to her; which they accomplished thus. The miller invited Bacbouc one night to supper; and, after having

entertained him in a very indifferent manner, addressed himself to him in this way: Brother, it is too late for you to go home; you had better stay here all night: and then he took him to a place in the mill, in which was a bed, where he left him, and went to bed with his wife. About the middle of the night, the miller came to my brother, and said, Neighbour, are you asleep? My mule is ill, and I have a great deal of corn to grind; you will do me a mighty kindness if you will turn the mill in her stead. Bacbouc, to show his good-nature, told him that he was ready to do him such a piece of service, if he would first instruct him. The miller then tied him by the middle to the mule's place; and whipping him over the back, cried, Go neighbour! Ho! said my brother, why do you beat me? It is to make you brisk, said the miller; for without a whip my mule will not go. Bacbouc was amazed at this sort of treatment, but durst not complain. When he had gone five or six rounds he would fain have rested; but the miller gave him a dozen of sound lashes, saying, Courage, neighbour! do not stop, pray; you must go on without taking your breath, otherwise you will spoil my meal.

The miller obliged my brother, continued the barber, thus to turn the mill all night; about break of day he left him, without untying him, and went to his wife's chamber. Bacbouc continued there for some time; and at last the young slave came and untied him. Ah! said the treacherous wretch, how my mistress and I bemoaned you! We had no hand in this wicked trick which her husband has put upon you. Unhappy Bacbouc answered her not a word, he was so much fatigued with labour and blows: but, creeping to his own house, resolved never more to think on the miller's wife.

The telling of this story, said the barber, made the caliph laugh. Go home, said he to me, I have ordered something to be given you instead of the good dinner you expected. Commander of the faithful, said I, I pray your majesty to stay till I have related the story of my other brothers. The caliph having signified by his silence that he was willing to hear me, I proceeded thus:

THE STORY OF THE BARBER'S SECOND BROTHER.

My second brother, who was called Backbarah the Toothless, going one day through the city, met an old woman in an out-street, who came to him presently, and said, I want one word with you, pray stop one moment. He did so, and asked her what she would have. If you will come along with me, said she, I will bring you into a stately palace, where you shall see a lady as fair as the day. She will receive you with abundance of pleasure, and give you a treat with excellent wine. I need say no more to you. But is what you say true? replied my brother. I am no lying hussy, replied the old woman; I say nothing to you but what is true. But hark, I have something to ask of you. You must be wise, you must speak but little, and you must be mighty complaisant. Backbarah agreed

to all this. The old woman went before, and he followed after. They came to the gate of a great palace, where there was a great number of officers and domestics. Some of them would have stopped my brother, but no sooner did the old woman speak to them, than they let him pass. Then turning to my brother, she said to him, You must remember that the young lady I bring you to loves good-nature and modesty, and cannot endure to be contradicted; if you please her in that, you may be sure to obtain of her what you wish. Backbarah thanked her for this advice, and promised to follow it.

She brought him into a fine apartment, which was a great square building, answerable to the magnificence of the palace. There was a gallery round it, and a very fine garden in the middle. The old woman made him sit down upon a sofa very well trimmed, and bid him stay a moment, till she went to tell the young lady of his being come.

My brother, who had never been before in such a stately palace, gazed upon the fine things that he saw; and, judging of his good fortune by the magnificence of the palace, he was scarcely able to contain himself for joy. By and by he heard a great noise, occasioned by a troop of merry slaves, who came towards him with loud fits of laughter, and in the middle of them he perceived a young lady of extraordinary beauty, who was easily known to be their mistress by the respect they paid her. Backbarah, who expected private conversation with the lady, was extremely surprised when he saw so much company with her. In the mean time, the slaves put on a grave countenance when they drew near; and when the young lady came up to the sofa, my brother rose up and made her a low bow. She took the upper-hand, prayed him to sit down, and with a smiling countenance, said to him, I am mighty glad to see you, and wish you all the happiness you can desire. Madam, replied Backbarah, I cannot desire a greater happiness than to be in your company. You seem to be of a good-humour, said she, and to have a mind that we should pass the time pleasantly together.

She forthwith commanded a collation to be brought; and immediately a table was covered with several baskets of fruit and confections. The lady sat down at the table with the slaves and my brother, and he being placed just over against her, when he opened his mouth to eat, she perceived he had no teeth; and taking notice of it to her slaves, she and they laughed at him heartily. Backbarah, from time to time, lifted up his head to look at her, and perceiving her laugh, thought it was for joy of his company, and flattered himself that she would speedily send away her slaves, and be with him alone. She judged what was his mind; and, pleasing herself to flatter him in his mistake, she gave him abundance of sweet words, and presented him the best of every thing with her own hand. The treat being done, they rose from the table, when ten slaves took musical instruments, and began to play and sing, and others went to dance. My brother, to make them sport, did likewise dance, and the lady danced with them. After they had danced some time, they sat down to take breath; and the young lady, calling for a glass of wine, looked upon my brother with a smiling countenance, to signify that she was going to drink his health. He rose up, and stood while she drank. When she had done, instead of giving back the glass, she

ordered it to be filled, and presented it to my brother, that he might pledge her. My brother took the glass from the young lady's hand, which he at the same time kissed, and stood and drank to her, in acknowledgment of the favour she had done him. Then the young lady made him sit down by her, and began to caress him. She put her hand behind his head, and gave him some tips from time to time with her fingers: ravished with those favours, he thought himself the happiest man in the world, and had a great mind to toy also with the charming lady, but durst not take that liberty before so many slaves, who had their eyes upon him, and laughed at their lady's wanton tricks. The young lady continued to tip him with her fingers, but at last gave him such a sound box on the ear, that he grew angry at it; the colour came in his face, and he rose up to sit at a greater distance from such a rude play-fellow. Then the old woman who brought him thither gave him a look, to let him know he was in the wrong, and that he had forgot the advice she gave him to be very complaisant. He owned his fault; and, in order to make amends, he went near the young lady again, pretending that he did not go away out of any bad humour. She drew him by the arm, made him sit down by her again, and gave him a thousand malicious hugs. Her slaves came in for a part of the diversion: one gave poor Backbarah a fillip on the nose with all her strength; another pulled him by the ears, as if she would have plucked them off; and others boxed him so, as might show they were not in jest. My brother suffered all this with admirable patience, affected a gay air, and, looking to the old woman, said to her, with a forced smile, You told me, indeed, that I should find the lady very good, very pleasant, and very charming; I must own I am mightily obliged to you! All this is nothing, replied the old woman: let her go on; you will see another thing by and by. Then the young lady said to him, Brother, you are a brave man, I am glad to find you are of so good an humour, and so complaisant, as to bear with my little caprices; your humour is exactly like mine. Madam, replied Backbarah, who was charmed with this discourse, I am no more my own man, I am wholly yours; you may dispose of me as you please. Oh, how you oblige me! said the lady, by so much submission! I am very well satisfied with you, and will have you to be so with me. Bring him perfume, said she, and rose-water. Upon this, two slaves went out, and returned speedily; one with a silver perfume-box, with the best wood-aloes, with which she perfumed him; and the other with rose-water, which she threw on his hands and face. My brother was quite beside himself at this honourable treatment. After this ceremony, the young lady commanded the slaves, who had already played on their instruments and sung, to renew their concerts. They obeyed; and, in the mean time, the lady called another slave, and ordered her to carry my brother with her, and do what she knew, and bring him back to her again. Backbarah, who heard this order, got up quickly, and going to the old woman, who also rose up to go along with him and the slave, prayed her to tell him what they were to do with him. My mistress is only curious, replied the old woman softly; she has a mind to see how you look in a woman's dress; and this slave who has orders to carry you with her, is instructed to paint your eye-brows, to cut off your whiskers, and to dress you like a woman. You may paint my brows as much as you please, said my brother; I agree to that, because I can wash it off again: but to shave me, you know I must not allow that. How can I appear abroad again without mustachos? Beware of refusing what is asked of you,

said the old woman: you will spoil your affairs, which go on now as well as heart can wish. The lady loves you, and has a mind to make you happy: and will you, for a nasty whisker, renounce the most delicious favour that man can obtain. Backbarah listened to the old woman, and without saying one word, went to a chamber with the slave, where they painted his eye-brows with red, cut off his whisker, and went to do the like with his beard. My brother's patience began to wear out; O! said he, I will never part with my beard. The slave told him, that it was to no purpose to have parted with his whiskers, if he would not also part with his beard, which could never agree with a woman's dress; and she wondered that a man, who was on the point of enjoying the finest lady in Bagdad, should have any regard to his beard. The old woman threatened him with the loss of the young lady's favour, so that at last he let them do what they would. When he was dressed like a woman, they brought him before the young lady, who laughed so heartily when she saw him, that she fell backward on the sofa where she sat. The slaves laughed and clapped their hands, so that my brother was quite out of countenance. The young lady got up, and still laughing, said to him, After so much complaisance for me, I should be very much in the wrong not to love you with all my heart: but there is one thing more you must do for me; and that is, to dance as we do. He obeyed; and the young lady and her slaves danced with him, laughing as if they had been mad. After they had danced some time with him, they all fell upon the poor wretch, and did so box and kick him, that he fell down like one out of his senses. The old woman helped him up again; and that he might not have time to think of his ill treatment, she bid him take courage, and whispered in his ear that all his sufferings were at an end, and that he was just about to receive his reward.

You have only one thing more to do, and that is but a small one. You must know that my mistress has a custom, when she has drank a little, as you see she has done to-day, to let nobody that she loves come near her, except they are stripped to their shirt; and when they have done so, she takes a little advantage of them, and sets a running before them through the gallery, and from chamber to chamber, till they catch her. This is one more of her humours: what advantage soever she takes of you, considering your nimbleness, and inclination to the work, you will soon overtake her; strip yourself, then, to the shirt, and undress yourself without delay.

My silly brother, said the barber, had done too much to stick at any thing now. He undressed himself; and, in the mean time, the young lady was stripped to her shift and under-petticoat, that she might run the more nimbly. When they were ready to run, the young lady took the advantage of twenty paces, and then fell a running with surprising swiftness: my brother followed her as fast as he could, the slaves in the mean time laughing aloud and clapping their hands. The young lady, instead of losing ground, gained upon my brother: she made him run three or four times round the gallery, and then running into a long dark entry, got away by a passage which she knew. Backbarah, who still followed her, having lost sight of her in the entry, was obliged to slacken his pace, because of the darkness of the place: at last perceiving a light, he ran towards it, and went out at a door, which was immediately shut upon him. You may imagine he was mightily surprised to find himself in a street inhabited by

curriers, and they were no less surprised to see him in his shirt, his eye-brows painted red, and without beard or mustachos; they began to clap their hands and shout at him, some of them even ran after him, and lashed his buttocks with pieces of leather. Then they stopped, and set him upon an ass, which they met by chance, and carried him through the town exposed to the laughter of the people.

To complete his misfortune, as he went by the house of a justice of peace, he would needs know the cause of the tumult. The curriers told him, that they saw him come out in that condition at the gate of the apartment of the grand vizier's lady, which opened into their street; upon which the justice ordered unfortunate Backbarah to have an hundred blows with a cane on the soles of his feet, and sent him out of the town, with orders never to return again.

Thus, commander of the faithful, said I to the caliph Monstancer Billah, I have given an account of the adventure of my second brother, who did not know that our greatest ladies divert themselves sometimes by putting such tricks upon young people that are foolish enough to be caught in their snares.

THE STORY OF THE BARBER'S THIRD BROTHER.

Commander of the faithful, said he to the caliph, my third brother, whose name was Backback, was blind, and his ill destiny reduced him to beg from door to door. He had been so long accustomed to walk through the streets alone, that he had no need of one to lead him: he had a custom to knock at people's doors, and apt to answer till they opened to him. One day he knocked thus at a door, and the master of the house, who was alone, cried, Who is there? My brother gave no answer, and knocked a second time: the master of the house asked again, Who is there? but to no purpose; my brother did not answer: upon which the man of the house came down, opened the door, and asked my brother what he wanted. That you would give me something, for heaven's sake! said Backback. You seem to be blind, replied the master of the house. Yes, to my sorrow, said my brother. Give me your hand, said the master of the house. My brother did so, thinking he was going to give him alms; but he only took him by the hand, to lead him up to his chamber: Backback thought he had been carrying him to dinner with him, as several other people had done. When they came up to the chamber, the man loosed his hand out of my brother's, and sitting down, asked again what he wanted. I have already told you, said Backback, that I want something for God's sake. Good blind man, replied the master of the house, all that I can do for you is to wish that God may restore you your sight. You might have told me that at the door, said my brother, and not have given me the trouble to come up. And why, fool, said the man of the house, do you not answer at first, when people ask you who is there? Why do you give any body the trouble to come and open the door when they speak to you? What will you do with me, then?

said my brother. I tell you again, said the man of the house, I have nothing to give you. Help me down stairs, then, replied Backback, as you helped me up. The stairs are before you, said the man of the house, and you may go down alone if you will. My brother went to go down, but missing a step about the middle of the stairs, he fell down and hurt his head and his back: he got up again with a great deal of difficulty, and complained heavily of the master of the house, who only laughed at his fall.

As my brother went out of the house, two blind men, his companions, going by, knew him by his voice, and asked him what was the matter. He told them what had happened to him, and afterwards said, I have eaten nothing to-day; I conjure you to go along with me to my house, that I may take some of the money that we three have in common, to buy me something for supper. The two blind men agreed to it, and they went home with him.

You must know that the master of the house where my brother was so ill used, was a highwayman, and naturally cunning and malicious. He heard at his window what Backback had said to his companions, and therefore came down and followed them to my brother's house. The blind men being seated, Backback said to them, brethren, we must shut the door, and take care there be no strangers with us. At this the highwayman was much perplexed, but perceiving a rope hanging down from a beam, he caught hold of it, and hung by it, while the blind men shut the door, and felt about the room with their sticks. When they had done this, and sat down again in their places, the highwayman left his rope, and sat down softly by my brother, who thinking himself alone with his blind comrades, said to them, Brothers, since you have trusted me with the money, which we all three have gathered a long time, I will show you that I am not unworthy of the trust that you repose in me. The last time we reckoned, you know we had ten thousand drams, and that we put them into ten bags; I will show you that I have not touched one of them. Having said so, he put his hand among some old lumber, and taking out the bags, one after another, gave them to his comrades, saying, There they are; you may judge by their weight that they are whole, or you may tell them if you please. His comrades answered, there was no occasion, they did not mistrust him; so opened one of the bags, and took out ten drams, and each of the other blind men did the like.

My brother put the bags into their place again; after which one of them said to him, There is no need to lay out any thing for supper, for I have got as much provision from good people as will serve us all three. At the same time he took out of his bag bread and cheese, and some fruit; and, putting them all upon the table, they began to eat. The highwayman, who sat at my brother's right hand, picked out the best, and ate with them; but, whatever care he took to make no noise, Backback heard his jaws going, and cried out immediately, We are undone! there is a stranger among us! and having said so, he stretched out his hand, and catching hold of the highwayman by the arm, cried out, Thieves! fell upon him, and boxed him. The other blind men fell upon him in like manner, and the highwayman defended himself as well as he could; but being young and vigorous, and having the advantage of his eyes, he gave furious blows, sometimes to one, sometimes to another, as he could come at them, and cried out Thieves! louder than they did. The neighbours came running at the noise, broke

open the door, and had much ado to separate the combatants; but, having at last done it, they asked the cause of their quarrel. My brother, who still had hold of the highwayman, cried out, Gentlemen, this man I have hold of is a thief, and stole in with us on purpose to rob us of the little money we have. The thief, who shut his eyes as soon as the neighbours came, feigned himself also to be blind, and cried out, Gentlemen, he is a liar. I swear to you by Heaven, and by the life of the caliph, that I am their companion, and they refuse to give me my just share! They have all three fallen upon me, and I demand justice. The neighbours would not meddle with their quarrel, but carried them all before a judge.

When they came before the magistrate, the highwayman, without staying to be examined, cried out, still feigning himself to be blind, Sir, since you are deputed to administer justice by the caliph, whom God prosper, I declare to you that we are equally criminal, my three comrades and I; but we have all engaged upon oath to confess nothing unless we be bastinadoed; so that if you would know our crime, you need only order us to be bastinadoed, and begin with me. My brother would have spoken, but was not allowed to do so; and the highwayman was put under the bastinado.

The robber, being under the bastinado, had the courage to bear twenty or thirty blows; when, seeming to be overcome with pain he first opened one eye, and then the other; and, crying out for mercy, begged the judge would put a stop to the blows, The judge, perceiving that he looked upon him with his eyes open, was much surprised, and said to him, Rogue! what is the meaning of this miracle? Sir, replied the highwayman, I will discover to you an important secret, if you pardon me, and give me, as a pledge that you will keep your word, the seal-ring which you have on your finger. The judge agreed to it, gave him his ring, and promised him pardon. Upon this, said the highwayman, I must confess to you, Sir, that I and my three comrades do all see very well: we feigned ourselves to be blind, that we might more freely enter people's houses, and into women's apartments, where we abuse their frailty. I must further, confess to you, that by this trick we have gained together ten thousand drams. This day I demanded of my partners two thousand five hundred that belong to me as my share, but they refused, because I told them I would leave them; and they were afraid I should accuse them. Upon pressing still to have my share, they all three fell upon me; for the truth of which I appeal to those people who brought us before you, I expect from your justice, that you will make them deliver to me the two thousand five hundred drams which are my due; and if you have a mind to make my comrades confess the truth, you must order them three times as many blows as I have had, and you will find they will open their eyes as well as I did.

My brother and the other two blind men would have cleared themselves of this horrid cheat, but the judge would not hear them: Villains! said he, do you feign yourselves blind then, and under that pretext cheat people, by begging their charity, and abusing poor women? He is a cheat, cried my brother; we take God to witness that none of us can see!

All that my brother could say was in vain; his comrades and he received each of them two hundred blows. The judge looked always

when they should have opened their eyes, and ascribed to their obstinacy what really they could not do. All the while the highwayman said to the blind men, Poor fools that you are, open your eyes, and do not suffer yourselves to be killed with blows. Then addressing himself to the judge, said, I perceive, sir, that they will be maliciously obstinate to the last, and will never open their eyes: they have a mind certainly to avoid the shame of reading their own condemnation in the face of every one who looks upon them; it were better, if you think fit, to pardon them, and to send some person along with me for the ten thousand drams they have hid.

The judge did so, gave the highwayman two thousand five hundred drams, and kept the rest to himself; and as for my brother and his two companions, he thought he showed them a great deal of pity by sentencing them only to be banished. As soon as I heard what befel my brother, I ran after him; he told me his misfortune, and I brought him back secretly to the town. I could easily have justified him to the judge, and have got the highwayman punished as he deserved, but durst not attempt it, for fear of bringing myself into trouble. Thus I finished the sad adventure of my honest blind brother. The caliph laughed at it, as much as at those he had heard before, and ordered again that something should be given me; but, without staying for it, I began the story of my fourth brother.

THE STORY OF THE BARBER'S FOURTH BROTHER.

Alcouz was the name of my fourth brother, who came to lose one of his eyes upon an occasion that I shall by and by acquaint your majesty with. He was a butcher by profession, and had a particular way of teaching rams to fight by which he procured the acquaintance and friendship of the chief lords of the country, who loved that sport, and for that end kept rams about their houses: he had, besides, a very good trade, and had his shop always full of the best meat, because he was very rich, and spared no cost for the best of every sort. One day, when he was in his shop, an old man with a long white beard came and bought six pounds of meat, gave him money for it, and went his way. My brother thought the money so fine, so white, and so well coined, that he put it apart by itself: the same old man came every day for five months together, bought a like quantity of meat, and paid for it in the same sort of money, which my brother continued to lay apart by itself.

At the end of five months, Alcouz having a mind to buy some sheep, and to pay for them with this fine money, opened his trunk; but, instead of finding money, was extremely surprised to see nothing but a parcel of leaves clipped round in the place where he had laid it: he beat his head, and cried out aloud, which presently brought the neighbours about him, who were as much surprised as he, when he told them the story. O! cried my brother, weeping, that this treacherous old fellow would come now

with his hypocritical looks! He had scarce done speaking, when seeing him coming at a distance, he ran to him, and laid hands on him, Mussulman, cried he, as loud as he could, help! hear what a cheat this wicked fellow has put upon me! and at the same time told a great crowd of people, who came about him, what he had formerly told his neighbours. When he had done, the old man, without any passion, said to him very gravely, You would do well to let me go, and by that means make amends for the affront you have put upon me before so many people, for fear I should put a greater affront upon you, which I am not willing to do. How! said my brother, what have you to say against me? I am an honest man in my business, and fear not you nor any body. You would have me to tell it then, said the old man; and turning to the people, said, Know, good people, that this fellow, instead of selling mutton as he ought, sells man's flesh. You are a cheat, said my brother. No! no! said the old man: Good people, this very minute that I am speaking, there is a man with his throat cut hung up in his shop like a sheep; do any of you go thither, and see if what I say be not true.

Before my brother had opened his trunk, he had just killed a sheep, dressed it, and exposed it in his shop, according to custom: he protested that what the old man said was false; but, notwithstanding all his protestations, the mob, being prejudiced against a man accused of such a heinous crime, would go to see whether the matter was true. They obliged my brother to quit the old man, laid hold of him, and ran like madmen into his shop, where they saw a man murdered and hung up, as the old man had told them; for he was a magician, and deceived the eyes of all people, as he did my brother's, when he made him take leaves instead of money. At this spectacle, one of those who held Alcouz gave him a great blow with his fist, and said to him, Thou wicked villain, dost thou make us eat man's flesh instead of mutton? At the same time the old man gave him another blow, which beat out one of his eyes, and every body that could get near him beat him; and, not content with that, they carried him before a judge, with the pretended carcass of the man, to be evidence against him. Sir, said the old magician to the judge, we have brought you a man, who is so barbarous as to murder people, and to sell their flesh instead of mutton; the public expect that you should punish him in an exemplary manner. The judge heard my brother with patience, but would believe nothing of the story of the money exchanged into leaves; called my brother a cheat, told him he would believe his own eyes, and ordered him to have five hundred blows. He afterwards made him tell where his money was, took it all from him, and banished him for ever, after having made him ride three days through the town upon a camel, exposed to the insults of the people.

I was not at Bagdad when this tragical adventure befel my fourth brother. He retired into a remote place, where he lay concealed till he was cured of the blows with which his back was terribly gored. When able to walk, he went by night to a certain town where nobody knew him, and there he took a lodging, from whence he seldom went out; but, being at last weary of his life, he took a walk into one of the suburbs, where he was suddenly alarmed with the noise of horsemen coming behind him. He was then by chance near the gate of a great house; and fearing, after what had befallen him, that these horsemen were pursuing him, he

opened the gate in order to hide himself; and, after shutting it again, he came into a wide court, where two servants immediately came and took him by the neck, and said, Heaven be praised that you are come voluntarily to surrender yourself up to us! You have frightened us so much these three last nights, that we could not sleep; nor would you have spared our lives, if you could have come at us! You may very well imagine that my brother was much surprised at this compliment. Good people, said he, I know not what you mean; you certainly take me for another! No, no, replied they; you and your comrades are great robbers: you were not contented with robbing our master of all that he had, and thereby reducing him to beggary, but you were also going to take his life; let us examine whether you have not a knife about you, which you had in your hand when you pursued us last night. Having said this, they searched him, and found that he had a knife. Ho! ho! cried they, laying hold of him; and dare you say that you are not a robber? Why, said my brother, cannot a man carry a knife without being a highwayman? If you will be attentive to my story, continued he, instead of having so bad an opinion of me, you will be touched with compassion at my misfortunes. But, far from hearkening to him, they fell upon him, trod him underfoot, took away his clothes, and tore his shirt. Then observing the scars on his back, O you dog! cried they, redoubling their blows, would you have us to believe you are an honest man, when your back convinces us to the contrary? Alas! said my brother, my faults must be very great, since, after having been abused already so unjustly, I am ill treated a second time without being more culpable!

The two servants, no way moved with his complaint, carried him before the judge, who asked him how he durst be so bold as to go into their house, and pursue them with a drawn knife. Sir, replied poor Alcouz, I am the most innocent man in the world, and am undone if you will not hear me patiently: nobody deserves more compassion. Sir, replied one of the domestics, will you listen to a robber, who enters people's houses to plunder and murder them? if you will not believe us, only look upon his back. Upon which they showed it to the judge, who, without any other information, immediately commanded one hundred lashes to be given him with a bull's pizzle over his shoulders, and caused him afterwards to be carried through the town on a camel, with one crying before him, Thus are such men punished as enter people's houses by force! After treating him thus, they banished him from the town, and forbade him ever to return to it. Some people, who met him after the second misfortune, brought me word where he was; and I went and fetched him to Bagdad privately, and gave him all the assistance I could.

The caliph, continued the barber, did not laugh so much at this story as at the other: he was pleased to bewail the unfortunate Alcouz, and ordered something to be given me. But, without giving his servants time to obey his orders, I continued my discourse, and said to him, My sovereign lord and master, you see that I do not speak much; and since your majesty has been pleased to do me the favour to listen to me so far, I beg you would likewise hear the adventures of my two other brothers; I hope they will be as diverting as those of the former. You may make a complete history of them, which will not be unworthy of your library. I do myself the honour, then, to acquaint you that my fifth brother was

called Alnaschar.

THE STORY OF THE BARBER'S FIFTH BROTHER.

Alnaschar, as long as our father lived, was very lazy; instead of working for his living, he used to go a begging in the evening, and to live upon what he got the next day. Our father died in a very old age, and left among us seven hundred drams of silver, which we equally divided; so that each of us had one hundred to his share. Alnaschar, who never had so much money before in his possession, was very much perplexed to know what he should do with it; he consulted a long time with himself, and at last resolved to lay it out in glasses, bottles, and other glass-work, which he bought of a great merchant, He put them all in an open basket, and chose a very little shop, where he sat with the basket before him, and his back against the wall, expecting that somebody would come and buy his ware. In this posture he sat with his eyes fixed on his basket; and beginning to rave, spoke the following words loud enough to be heard by a neighbour tailor: This basket, said he, cost me one hundred drams, which are all I have in the world; I shall make two hundred of it by retailing my glass; and of these two hundred drams, which I will again lay out in glass, I shall make four hundred; and, going on thus, I shall make at last make four thousand drams; of four thousand I shall easily make eight thousand; and when I come to ten thousand, I will leave off selling glass, turn jeweller and trade in diamonds, pearls, and all sorts of precious stones. Then, when I am as rich as I can wish, I will buy a fine house, a great estate, slaves, eunuchs, and horses: I will keep a good house, make a great figure in the world, and will send for all the musicians and dancers of both sexes in town. Nor will I stop here; I will, by the favour of Heaven, go on till I get a hundred thousand drams; and when I have got so much, I will think myself as great as a prince, send to demand the grand vizier's daughter in marriage, and represent to that minister that I have heard very much of the wonderful beauty, modesty, wit, and all the other qualities of his daughter; in a word, that I will give him one thousand pieces of gold the first night we are married; and if the vizier be so uncivil as to refuse his daughter, which cannot be, I will go and take her before his face, and carry her to my house, whether he will or no. As soon as I have married the grand vizier's daughter, I will buy her ten young black eunuchs, the handsomest that can be had; I will clothe myself like a prince, and ride upon a fine horse, with a saddle of rich gold, and housings of cloth, of gold, elegantly embroidered with diamonds and pearls. I will march through the city, attended both before and behind; and I will go to the vizier's palace, in the view of all sorts of people, who will show me profound reverence. When I alight at the foot of the vizier's stair-case, I will ascend it in the presence of all my people, ranged in files on the right and left; and the grand vizier, receiving me as his son-in-law, shall give me his right hand, and set me above him, to do me the more honour. If this comes to pass, as I hope it

will, two of my people shall have each of them a purse of a thousand pieces of gold, which they shall carry with them. I will take one, and presenting it to the grand vizier, will tell him, There are the thousand pieces that I promised the first night of marriage; and I will offer him the other, and say to him, there are as many more, to show you that I am a man of my word, and that I am better than my promise. After such an action as this, all the world will speak of my generosity, and I will return to my own house in the same pomp. My wife shall send to compliment me by some officer, on account of the visit I made to her father: I will honour the officer with a fine robe, and send him back with a rich present. If she thinks to send me one, I will not accept of it, but dismiss the bearer. I will not suffer her to go out of her apartment, on any account whatever, without giving me notice; and when I have a mind to go to her apartment, it shall be in such a manner as to make her respect me. In short, no house shall be better ordered than mine. I shall be always richly clad. When I retire with my wife in the evening, I will sit on the upper hand; I will assume a grave air, without turning my head to the one side or to the other; I will speak little; and whilst my wife, as beautiful as the full moon, stands before me in all her ornaments, will feign as if I did not notice her. The women about her will say to me, Our dear lord and master, here is your spouse, your humble servant, before you; she expects you will caress her, and is very much mortified that you do not so much as vouchsafe to look upon her: she is wearied with standing so long; bid her at least sit down. I will give no answer to this discourse, which will increase their surprise and grief; they will lay themselves at my feet; and, after they have done so a considerable time, begging me to relent, I will at last lift up my head, and give her a careless look. Afterwards I will return to my former posture; and then will they think that my wife is not well enough, nor handsome enough dressed, and will take her to her closet to change her apparel. At the same time I will get up and put on a more magnificent suit than before: they will return and hold the discourse with me as before; and I shall have the pleasure not so much as to look upon my wife, till they have prayed and entreated as long as they did at first. Thus I will begin, on the first day of marriage, to teach her what she is to expect during the rest of her life.

After the ceremonies of the marriage are over, said Alnaschar, I will take from one of my servants, who shall be about me, a purse of five hundred pieces of gold, which I will give to the tire-women, that they may leave me alone with my spouse. "When they are retired, my wife shall go to bed first, and then I will lie down beside her, with my back towards her, and will not speak even one word to her the whole night. The next morning she will certainly complain of my contempt of her, and of my pride, to her mother, the grand vizier's wife, which will rejoice me extremely. Her mother will then wait upon me, respectfully kiss my hands, and say to me, Sir, (for she will not dare to call me her son-in-law, for fear of provoking me by such familiarity), I pray you not to disdain my daughter, by refusing to approach her: I assure you that her chief study is to please you; and that she loves you with all her heart. But my mother-in-law might as well hold her peace; I will not make her the least answer, but keep my gravity. Then she will prostrate herself at my feet, kiss them, and say to me, Sir, is it possible that you can suspect my

daughter's chastity? I assure you that I never let her go out of my sight. You are the first man that ever saw her face; do not, then, mortify her so much. Do her the favour to look upon her, to speak to her, and confirm her in her good intentions to satisfy you in every thing. But nothing of this shall prevail; upon which my mother-in-law will take a glass of wine, and, putting it into the hand of her daughter, will say, Go, present him with this glass of wine yourself; perhaps he will not be so cruel as to refuse it from so fair a hand. My wife will come with the glass, and stand trembling before me; and when she finds that I do not look towards her, and that I continue my disdain, she will say to me, with tears in her eyes, My heart! my dear soul! my amiable lord! I conjure you, by the favours which Heaven bestows upon you, to receive this glass of wine from the hand of your most humble servant! But I will not look upon her still, nor answer her. My charming spouse! she will then say, redoubling her tears, and putting the glass to my mouth, I will never leave off till I prevail with you to drink! Then, being fatigued with her entreaties, I will dart a terrible look at her, give her a good box on the cheek, and such a kick with my foot, as will throw her quite off the alcove.

My brother was so full of these chimerical visions, that he acted with his foot as if she had been really before him; and unfortunately gave such a push against the basket and glasses, that they were thrown down in the street, and broken in a thousand pieces.

A tailor, who was his neighbour, and who had heard his extravagant discourse, fell into a fit of laughter when he saw the basket fall. O what an unworthy fellow art thou! said he to my brother; ought you not to be ashamed to abuse thus a young spouse, who gave you no cause to complain? You must be a very brutish fellow to despise the tears and charms of such a beautiful lady! Were I the vizier your father-in-law, I would order you a hundred lashes with a bull's pizzle, and send you through the town with your character written on your forehead. My brother, on this fatal accident, came to himself; and perceiving that he had brought this misfortune upon himself by his unsupportable pride, beat his face, tore his clothes, and cried so loud, that the neighbours came about him; and the people who were going to their noon-prayers stopped to know what was the matter. It being on a Friday, a greater number of people was going to prayers than usual; some of them took pity on Alnaschar, while others only laughed at his extravagance. In the mean time, his vanity being dispersed, as well as his glasses, he bitterly lamented his loss; and a lady of distinction passing by on a mule with rich caparisons, my brother's condition excited her compassion; she asked who he was, and what was the matter with him; they told her that he was a poor man, who had laid out a little money in buying a basket of glasses, and that the basket falling, all his glasses were broken. The lady immediately turned to an eunuch who attended her, and said to him, Give the poor man what money you have about you. The eunuch obeying, put into my brother's hand five hundred pieces of gold. Alnaschar was transported with excess of joy on receiving them; he bestowed a thousand blessings upon the lady, and shutting up his shop, where he had no longer occasion to sit, he returned to his house.

Whilst he was seriously reflecting upon his good fortune, he heard a knocking at the door; but, before he opened it, he thought it prudent first to inquire who it was; when knowing it to be a woman by her voice, he instantly admitted her. My son, said she, I have a favour to beg of you: the hour of prayer is come; be pleased, therefore, to let me wash myself, that I may be fit to say my prayers. My brother looked at her, and saw that she was a woman far advanced in years: though he knew her not, he granted what she required, and then sat down again, being still full of his new adventure. He put his gold into a long strait purse, proper to carry at his girdle. The old woman, in the mean time, said her prayers, and, when she had done, came to my brother, and bowed twice to the ground, so low that she almost touched it with her forehead; then raising herself up, she wished my brother all manner of happiness, and thanked him for his civility. Being meanly clad, and very humble to him, he thought she asked alms, upon which he offered her two pieces of gold. The old woman stepped back in a sort of surprise, as if my brother had done her an injury. Heavens! said she, what is the meaning of this? Is it possible, sir, said she, that you take me for an impudent beggar? Did you think I came so boldly into your house to ask alms? Take back your money; I have no need of it, thanks to Heaven! I belong to a young lady of this city, who is a charming beauty, and very rich; she does not let me want for any thing.

My brother was not cunning enough to perceive the craft of the old woman, who only refused the two pieces of gold that she might catch more. He asked her if she could not procure him the honour of seeing her lady. With all my heart, replied she, she will be very well satisfied to marry, and to put you in possession of her estate, by making you master of her person. Take up your money, and follow me. My brother being ravished with his good luck of finding so great a sum of money, and almost at the same time a beautiful and rich wife, his eyes were shut to all other considerations; so that he took his five hundred pieces of gold, and followed the old woman. She walked before him, and he followed at a distance, to the gate of a great house, where she knocked. He came up to her just as a young Greek slave opened the gate. The old woman made him enter first, went across a court very well paved, and introduced him into a hall, the furniture of which confirmed him in the good opinion he had conceived of the mistress of the house. While the old woman went to acquaint the lady, he sat down, and, the weather being hot, pulled off his turban, and laid it by him. He speedily saw the young lady come in, whose beauty and rich apparel perfectly surprised him. He got up as soon as he saw her. The lady, with a smiling countenance, prayed him to sit down again, and placed herself by him. She told him she was very glad to see him; and, after having spoken some engaging words, said, We do not sit here at our conveniency. Come, give me your hand. At these words, she presented her's, and carried him into an inner chamber, where she entertained him for some time; then she left him, bidding him stay, and she would be with him in a moment. He expected her; but, instead of the lady, came in a great black slave, with a scimitar in his hand; and looking upon my brother with a terrible aspect, said to him fiercely, What have you to do here? Alnaschar was so full of fear at the sight of the slave, that he had no power to answer. The black stripped him, carried off his gold, and gave him several

cuts with his scimitar. My unhappy brother fell to the ground, where he lay without motion, though he had still the use of his senses. The black, thinking him to be dead, asked for salt; the Greek slave brought him a basin full; they rubbed my brother's wounds with it; who had so much command of himself, notwithstanding the intolerable pain it put him to, that he lay still without showing any sign of life. The black and the Greek slave having retired, the old woman who drew my brother into the snare, came and dragged him by the feet to a trap-door, which she opened, and threw him into a place under ground, among the corpses of several other people who had been murdered. He perceived this as soon as he came to himself; for the violence of his fall had taken away his senses. The salt rubbed into his wounds preserved his life, and he recovered strength by degrees, so as to be able to walk. After two days he opened the trap-door during the night; and, finding a proper place in the court to hide himself, continued there till break of day, when he saw the cursed old woman open the gate, and go out to seek another prey. He staid in the place some time after she went out, that she might not see him, and then came to me for shelter, when he told me of his adventures.

In a month he was perfectly cured of his wounds by medicines that I gave him, and resolved to avenge himself of the old woman who had put upon him such a barbarous cheat. To this end, he took a bag, large enough to contain five hundred pieces of gold, and filled it with pieces of glass.

My brother, continued the barber, one morning fastened the bag of glass about him, disguised himself like an old woman, and took a scimitar under his gown. He met the old woman walking through the town to seek her prey: he went up to her, and, counterfeiting a woman's voice, said, Cannot you lend me a pair of scales? I am a woman newly come from Persia, have brought five hundred pieces of gold with me, and would know if they will hold out according to your weights. Good woman, answered the old hag, you could not have applied to a more proper person. Follow me; I will bring you to my son, who changes money, and will weigh them himself, to save you the trouble. Let us make haste, for fear he be gone to his shop. My brother followed her to the house where she carried him the first time, and the Greek slave opened the door.

The old woman carried my brother to the hall, where she bid him stay a moment till she called her son. The pretended son came, and proved to be the villanous black slave. Come, old woman, said he to my brother, rise and follow me. Having spoken thus, he went before to bring him to the place where he designed to murder him. Alnaschar got up, followed him, and, drawing his scimitar, gave him such a dexterous blow on the neck, as to cut off his head, which he took in one hand, and dragging the body with the other, threw them both into the place under ground before mentioned. The Greek slave, who was accustomed to the trade, came presently with a basin of salt; but when she saw Alnaschar with the scimitar in his hand, and without his veil, she laid down the basin, and fled. But my brother overtaking her, cut off her head also. The wicked old woman came running at the noise, and my brother seizing her, said to her, Treacherous wretch! do not you know me? Alas, sir, answered she, trembling, who are you? I do not remember that I ever saw you. I am, said he, the person to whose

house you came the other day to wash and say your prayers. Hypocritical hag! said he, do not you remember it? Then she fell upon her knees to beg his pardon; but he cut her in four pieces.

There remained only the lady, who knew nothing of what had passed. He sought her out, and found her in a chamber, where she was ready to sink when she saw him. She begged her life, which he generously granted. Madam, said he, how could you live with such wicked people as I have now so justly revenged myself upon? I was, said she, wife to an honest merchant; and the cursed old woman, whose wickedness I did not know, used sometimes to come to see me. Madam, said she one day, we have a very fine wedding at our house, which you will be pleased to see, if you give us the honour of your company. I was persuaded by her, put on my best apparel, and took with me a hundred pieces of gold. I followed her; she brought me to this house, where the black has kept me since by force, and I have been three years here to my very great sorrow. By the trade which the cursed black followed, replied my brother, he must have gathered together a vast deal of riches. There is so much, said she, that you will be made for ever, if you can carry them off. Follow me, and you shall see them, said she. Alnaschar followed her to a chamber, where she showed him several coffers full of gold, which he beheld with admiration. Go, said she, fetch people enough to carry it all off. My brother needed not to be bid twice; he went out, but staid only till he got ten men together, and he brought them with him, and was much surprised to find the gate open, but more when he found the lady and the coffers all gone; for she, being more diligent than he, had carried them all away. However, being resolved not to return empty-handed, he carried off all the goods he could find in the house; which were a great deal more than enough to make up the five hundred pieces of gold of which he was robbed; but, when he went out of the house, he forgot to shut the gate. The neighbours, who saw my brother and the porters come and go, went and acquainted the magistrate with it; for they looked upon my brother's conduct as suspicious. Alnaschar slept well enough all night; but next morning, when he came out of his house, twenty of the magistrate's men seized him. Come along with us, said they; our master would speak with you. My brother prayed them to have patience for a moment, and offered them a sum of money to let him escape; but, instead of listening to him, they bound him, and forced him to go along with them. They met in the street an old acquaintance of my brother's, who stopped them a while, and asked them why they seized my brother, and offered them a considerable sum to let him escape, and to tell the magistrate that they could not find him. But this would not do; so he was carried before the magistrate.

When the officers brought him before the magistrate, he asked him where he had the goods which he carried home last night? Sir, replied Alnaschar, I am ready to tell you all the truth; but allow me first to have recourse to your clemency, and to beg your promise that nothing shall be done to me. I give it you, said the magistrate. Then my brother told him the whole story without disguise, from the time the old woman came into his house to say her prayers, to the time the lady made her escape, after he had killed the black, the Greek slave, and the old woman; and as for what he had carried to his house, he prayed the judge to leave him part of it for the five hundred pieces of gold that he was

robbed of.

The judge, without promising any thing, sent his officers to bring all off; and, having put the goods into his own wardrobe, commanded my brother to quit the town immediately, and never to return; for he was afraid, if my brother had staid in the city, he would have found some way to represent this injustice to the caliph. In the mean time, Alnaschar obeyed without murmuring, and left that town to go to another. By the way he met with highwaymen, who stripped him naked; and when the ill news was brought to me, I carried him a suit, and brought him in secretly again to the town, where I took the like care of him as I did of his other brothers.

THE STORY OF THE BARBER'S SIXTH BROTHER.

I am now only to tell the story of my sixth brother, called Schacabac, with the hare-lips. At first he was industrious enough to improve the hundred drams of silver which fell to his share, and became very well to pass; but a reverse of fortune brought him to beg his bread, which he did with a great deal of dexterity. He studied chiefly to get into great men's houses by means of their servants and officers, that he might have access to their masters, and obtain their charity. One day, as he passed by a magnificent house, whose high gate showed a very spacious court, where there was a multitude of servants, he went to one of them, and asked to whom that house belonged. Good man, replied the servant, whence do you come, that you ask such a question? Does not all that you see make you understand that it is the palace of a Bermecide? [Footnote: The Bermecides were, as has been mentioned, a noble family of persia, who settled at Bagdad.] My brother, who very well knew the liberality and generosity of the Bermecides, addressed himself to one of his porters, (for he had more than one,) and prayed him to give him an alms. Go in, said he; nobody hinders you, and address yourself to the master of the house; he will send you back satisfied.

My brother, who expected no such civility, thanked the porter, and with his permission entered the palace, which was so large, that it took him a considerable time to reach the Bermecide's apartment. At last he came to a fine square building, of excellent architecture, and entered by a porch, through which he saw one of the finest gardens, with gravel-walks of several colours, extremely pleasant to the eye. The lower apartments round this square were most of them open, and shut only with great curtains, to keep out the sun, which were opened again when the heat was over.

Such an agreeable place struck my brother with admiration, and might well have done so to a man far above his quality. He went on till he came into a hall richly furnished, and adorned with paintings of gold and azure foliage, where he saw a venerable man with a long white beard, sitting at the upper end of an alcove,

whence he concluded him to be the master of the house; and in effect it was the Bermecide himself, who said to my brother, in a very civil manner, that he was welcome, and asked him what he wanted. My lord, answered my brother, in a begging tone, I am a poor man, who stand in need of the help of such rich and generous persons as yourself. He could not have addressed himself to a fitter person than this lord, who had a thousand good qualities.

The Bermecide seemed to be astonished at my brother's answer; and, putting both his hands to his stomach, as if he would rend his clothes for grief, Is it possible, cried he, that I am at Bagdad, and that such a man as you is so poor as you say? This is what must never be. My brother, fancying that he was going to give him some singular mark of his bounty, blessed him a thousand times, and wished him all sort of happiness. It shall not be said, replied the Bermecide, that I will abandon you, nor will I have you to leave me. Sir, replied my brother, I swear to you I have not swallowed one bit to-day! Is that true? replied the Bermecide; and are you fasting till now? Alas, for thee, poor man! he is ready to die for hunger. Ho, boy! cried he with a loud voice, bring a bason and water presently, that we may wash our hands. Though no boy appeared, that my brother saw, either with water or bason, the Bermecide fell a rubbing his hands, as if one had poured water upon them, and bid my brother come and wash with him. Schacabac judged by this that the Bermecide lord loved to be merry; and he himself understanding raillery, and knowing that the poor must be complaisant to the rich, if they would have any thing, came forward, and did as he did.

Come on, said the Bermecide, bring us something to eat, and do not let us stay for it. When he had said so, though nothing was brought, he cut as if something had been brought upon a plate; and, putting his hand to his mouth, began to chew, and said to my brother, Come, friend, eat as freely as if you were at home; come and eat: you said you were like to die of hunger; but you eat as if you had no stomach. Pardon me, my lord, said Schacabac, who perfectly imitated what he did, you see I lose no time, and that I do my part well enough. How like you this bread? said the Bermecide; do not you find it very good? O, my lord, said, my brother, who neither saw bread nor meat, I never ate any thing so white and so fine. Come, eat your bellyful, said the Bermecide; I assure you the baker-woman that bakes me this bread, cost me five hundred pieces of gold to purchase her.

The Bermecide, after having boasted so much of his bread, which my brother ate only in idea, cried, Boy, bring us another dish. Though no boy appeared, Come, my good friend, said he to my brother, taste this new dish, and tell me if ever you ate better mutton and barley broth than this. It is admirably good, replied my brother, and therefore you see I eat heartily. You oblige me mightily, replied the Bermecide: I conjure you, then, by the satisfaction I have to see you eat so heartily, that you eat all up, since you like it so well. A little while after he called for a goose and sweet sauce, vinegar, honey, dry raisins, grey peas, and dry figs, which were brought just in the same manner as the other was. The goose is very fat, said the Bermecide; eat only a leg and a wing; we must save our stomachs, for we have abundance of other dishes to come. He actually called for several other dishes, of which my brother, who was ready to die of hunger,

pretended to eat; but what he boasted of more than all the rest, was a lamb fed with pistacho nuts, which he ordered to be brought up in the same manner that the rest were. Here is a dish, said the Bermecide, that you will see at nobody's table but my own; I would have you eat unsparingly of it. Having spoken thus, he stretched out his hand as if he had a piece of lamb in it, and putting it to my brother's mouth, There, said he, swallow that, and you will know whether I had not reason to boast of this dish. My brother thrust out his head, opened his mouth, and made as if he took the piece of lamb, and ate it with extreme pleasure. I knew you would like it, said the Bermecide. There is nothing in the world more fine, replied my brother; your lamb is a most delicious thing. Come, bring the ragoo presently; I fancy you will like that as well as the lamb. Well, how do you relish it? said the Bermecide. O! it is wonderful! replied Schacabac, for here we taste all at once, amber, cloves, nutmeg, ginger, pepper, and the most odoriferous herbs; and all these tastes are so well mixed, that one does not hinder us from perceiving the other: O how pleasant it is. Honour this ragoo, said the Bermecide, by eating heartily of it, Ho, boy! cried he; bring us a new ragoo. No, my lord, an't please you, replied my brother; for indeed I cannot eat any more.

Come, take it away then, said the Bermecide, and bring the fruit. He staid a moment, as it were, to give time for his servants to carry away; after which, he said to my brother, Taste these almonds; they are fresh and new gathered. Both of them made as if they had peeled the almonds, and ate them. After this, the Bermecide invited my brother to eat something else. Look you, said he, there are all sorts of fruits, cakes, dry sweatmeats, and conserves; take what you like. Then stretching out his hand as if he had reached my brother something, Look, said he, there is a lozenge very good for digestion. Schacabac made as if he ate it, and said, My lord, there is no want of musk here. These lozenges, said the Bermecide, are made in my own house, where there is nothing wanting to make every thing good. He still bade my brother eat, and said to him, Methinks you do not eat as if you had been so hungry as you said when you came in. My lord, replied Schacabac, whose jaws ached with moving and having nothing to eat, I am so full, that I cannot eat one bit more.

Well, then, my friend, replied the Bermecide, we must drink now, after we have eaten so well. You drink wine, my lord, replied my brother; but I will, if you please, drink none, because I am forbidden. You are too scrupulous, replied the Bermecide, do as I do. I will drink then out of complaisance, said Schacabac; for I see you will have nothing wanting to make your treat noble: but, since I am not accustomed to drink wine, I am afraid that I shall commit some error in point of breeding, contrary to the respect that is due to you, and therefore I pray you once more to excuse me from drinking any wine; I will be content with water. No, no, said the Bermecide, you shall drink wine; and at the same time he commanded some to be brought in the same manner as the meat and fruit had been brought before. He made as if he poured out wine, drank first himself, and then pouring out for my brother, presented him the glass: Drink my health, said he, and let me know if you think this wine good. My brother made as if he took the glass, and looked as if the colour was good, and put it to his nose to try if it had a good flavour; he then made a low bow

to the Bermecide, to signify that he took the liberty to drink his health, making all the signs of a man who drinks with pleasure: My lord, said he, this is very excellent wine; but I think it is not strong enough. If you would have stronger, said the Bermecide, you need only speak, for I have several sorts in my cellar; try how you like this; upon which he made as if he poured out another glass to himself, and then to my brother; and did this so often, that Schacabac, feigning to be drunk with the wine, took up his hand, and gave the Bermecide such a box on the ear as made him fall down; he lifted up his hand to give him another blow; but the Bermecide, holding up his hand to ward it off, cried to him, What! are you mad? Then my brother, making as if he had come to himself again, said, My lord, you have been so good as to admit your slave into your house, and give him a great treat; you should have been satisfied in making me eat, and not have obliged me to drink wine; for I told you beforehand that it might occasion me to come short in my respect: I am very much troubled at it, and beg you a thousand pardons. He had scarcely finished these words, when the Bermecide, instead of being in a rage, fell a laughing with all his might. It is a long time, said he, since I wished a man of your character.

The Bermecide caressed Schacabac mightily, and told him, I not only forgive the blow you have given me, but am willing henceforward we should be friends; and that you take my house for your home: you have been so complaisant as to accommodate yourself to my humour, and have had the patience to bear the jest out to the last; we will now eat in good earnest. When he had finished these words, he clapped his hands, and commanded his servants, who then appeared, to cover the table; which was speedily done, and my brother was treated with all those viands in reality which he ate of before in fancy. At last they took them away, and brought wine; and at the same time a number of handsome slaves, richly apparelled, came in and sung some agreeable airs to their musical instruments. In a word, Schacabac had all the reason in the world to be satisfied with the Bermecide's civility and bounty; for he treated him as his familiar friend, and ordered him a suit out of his wardrobe.

The Bermecide found my brother to be a man of so much wit and understanding, that in a few days after he trusted him with his household, and all his affairs. My brother acquitted himself very well in that employment for twenty years, at the end of which the generous Bermecide died, and, leaving no heirs, all his estate was confiscated to the use of the prince; upon which my brother was reduced to his first condition, and joined a caravan of pilgrims going to Mecca, designing to accomplish that pilgrimage upon their charity; but by misfortune the caravan was attacked and plundered by a number of Beduins [Footnote: Vagabond Arabians, who wander in the deserts, and plunder the caravans when they are not strong enough to resist them.] superior to that of the pilgrims. My brother was then taken as a slave by one of the Beduins, who put him under the bastinado for several days, to oblige him to ransom himself. Schacabac protested to him that it was all in vain. I am your slave, said he, you may dispose of me as you please: but I declare unto you that I am extremely poor, and not able to redeem myself. In a word, my brother discovered to him all his misfortunes, and endeavoured to soften him with tears; but the Beduin had no mercy; and, being vexed to find

himself disappointed of a considerable sum, which he reckoned he was sure of, he took his knife, and slit my brother's lips, to avenge himself, by this inhumanity, for the loss that he imagined he had sustained.

The Beduin had a handsome wife; and frequently, when he went on his courses, he left my brother alone with her, and then she used all her endeavours to comfort my brother under the rigour of his slavery: she gave him tokens enough that she loved him; but he durst not yield to her passion, for fear he should repent it, and therefore he shunned to be alone with her, as much as she sought the opportunity to be alone with him. She had so great a custom of toying and jesting with the miserable Schacabac, whenever she saw him, that one day she happened to do it in presence of her husband. My brother, without taking notice that he observed them, (so his stars would have it) jested likewise with her. The Beduin, immediately supposing that they lived together in a criminal manner, fell upon my brother in a rage, and after he had mangled him in a barbarous manner, he carried him on a camel to the top of a desert mountain, where he left him. The mountain was on the way to Bagdad, so that the passengers who passed that road gave me an account of the place where he was. I went thither speedily, where I found the unfortunate Schacabac in a deplorable condition: I gave him what help he stood in need of, and brought him back to the city.

This is what I told the caliph, added the barber; that prince applauded me with new fits of laughter. Now, said he, I cannot doubt that they justly gave you the surname of Silent; nobody can say the contrary. For certain reasons, however, I command you to depart this town immediately, and let me hear no more of your discourse. I yielded to necessity, and went to travel several years in far countries. I understood at last that the caliph was dead, and returned to Bagdad, where I found not one of my brethren alive. It was on my return to this town that I did the important service to the same young man which you have heard. You are, however, witness of his ingratitude, and of the injurious manner in which he treated me. Instead of testifying his acknowledgments, he chose rather to fly from me, and to leave his own country. When I understood that he was not at Bagdad, though nobody could tell me truly whither he was gone, yet I did not forbear to go and seek him. I travelled from province to province a long time; and when I had given over all hopes, I met him this day; but I did not think to find him so incensed against me.

The tailor made an end of telling the sultan of Casgar the history of the lame young man, and the barber of Bagdad, after that manner I had the honour to tell your majesty.

When the barber, continued he, had finished his story, we found that the young man was not to blame for calling him a great prattler. However, we were pleased that he would stay with us, and partake of the treat which the master of the house had prepared for us. We sat down to table, and were merry together till afternoon prayers; then all the company parted, and I went to my shop, till it was time for me to return home.

It was during this interval that Hump-back came half drunk before my shop, where he sung and taboured. I thought that, by carrying

him home with me, I should divert my wife; therefore I brought him along. My wife gave us a dish of fish, and I presented Hump-back with some, which he ate without taking notice of a bone. He fell down dead before us; and, after having in vain essayed to help him, in the trouble occasioned us by such an unlucky accident, and through the fear of punishment, we carried the corpse out, and dexterously lodged it with the Jewish doctor. The Jewish doctor put it into the chamber of the purveyor, and the purveyor carried it forth into the street, where it was believed the merchant had killed him. This, sir, added the tailor, is what I had to say to satisfy your majesty, who must pronounce whether we be worthy of mercy or wrath, life or death.

The sultan of Casgar looked with a contented air, and gave the tailor and his comrades their lives. I cannot but acknowledge, said he, that I am more amazed at the history of the young cripple, at that of the barber, and at the adventures of his brothers, than at the story of my jester; but before I send you all four away, and before we bury Hump, I would see the barber, who is the cause that I have pardoned you. Since he is in my capital, it is easy to satisfy my curiosity. At the same time he sent a serjeant with the tailor to find him.

The serjeant and the tailor went immediately, and brought the barber, whom they presented to the sultan. The barber was an old man of ninety years; his eye-brows and beard were as white as snow, his ears hung down, and he had a very long nose. The sultan could not forbear laughing when he saw him. Silent man, said he to him, I understand that you know wonderful stories; will you tell me some of them? Sir, answered the barber, let us forbear the stories, if you please, at present. I most humbly beg your majesty to permit me to ask what that Christian, that Jew, that Mussulman, and that dead Hump-back, who lies on the ground, do here before your majesty. The sultan smiled at the barber's liberty, and replied, Why do you ask? Sir, replied the barber, it concerns me to ask, that your majesty may know that I am not so great a talker as some pretend, but a man justly called Silent.

The sultan of Casgar was so complaisant as to satisfy the barber's curiosity. He commanded them to tell him the story of the Hump-back, which he earnestly wished for. When the barber heard it, he shook his head, as if he would say, there was something under this which he did not understand. Truly, cried he, this is a surprising story; but I am willing to examine Hump-back a little closely. He drew near him, sat down on the ground, put his head between his knees, and after he had looked upon him steadfastly, he fell into so great a fit of laughter, and had so little command of himself, that he fell backwards on the ground, without considering that he was before the sultan of Casgar. As soon as he came to himself, It is said, cried he, and without reason, that no man dies without a cause. If ever any history deserved to be written in letters of gold, it is this of Hump-back.

At this all the people looked on the barber as a buffoon, or a doting old man. Silent man, said the sultan, speak to me; why do you laugh so hard? Sir, answered the barber, I swear by your majesty's good humour that Hump-back is not dead! he is yet alive; and I shall be willing to pass for a madman, if I do not

let you see it this minute. Having said these words, he took a box, wherein he had several medicines, that he carried about to make use of on occasion; and took out a phial with balsam, with which he rubbed Hump-back's neck a long time; then he took out of his case a neat iron instrument, which he put betwixt his teeth, and, after he had opened his mouth, he thrust down his throat a pair of pincers, with which he took out a bit of fish and bone, which he showed to all the people. Immediately Hump-back sneezed, stretched forth his arms and feet, and gave several other signs of life.

The sultan of Casgar, and those with him, who were witnesses to this operation, were less surprised to see Hump-back revive, after he had passed a whole night and great part of a day without giving any signs of life, than at the merit and capacity of the barber who performed this; and, notwithstanding all his faults, began to look upon him as a great person. The sultan, ravished with joy and admiration, ordered the story of Hump-back to be recorded, with that of the barber, that the memory of it might, as it deserved, be preserved for ever. Nor did he stop here; but that the tailor, Jewish doctor, purveyor, and Christian merchant, might remember, with pleasure, the adventure which the accident of Hump-back had occasioned to them, he did not send them away till he had given each of them a very rich robe, with which he caused them to be clothed in his presence. As for the barber, he honoured him with a great pension, and kept him near his person.

Thus the sultanness finished this long train of adventures, to which the pretended death of Hump-back gave occasion; then held her peace, because day appeared; upon which her sister Dinarzade said to her, My princess, my sultanness, I am so much the more charmed with the story you just now told, because it concludes with an incident I did not expect. I verily thought Hump-back was dead. This surprise pleases me, said Schahriar, as much as the adventures of the barber's brothers. The story of the lame young man of Bagdad diverted me also very much, replied Dinarzade. I am very glad of it, dear sister, said the sultanness; and since I have the good fortune not to tire out the patience of the sultan, our lord and master, if his majesty will still be so gracious as to preserve my life, I shall have the honour to give him an account to-morrow of the history of the amours of Aboulhassen Ali Ebn Becar and Schemselnihar, favourite of the caliph Haroun Alraschid, which is no less worthy of your notice than the history of Hump-back.

The sultan of the Indies, who was very well satisfied with the stories which Scheherazade had told him hitherto, was willing to hear the history which she promised. He rose, however, to go to prayers, and hold his council, without giving any signification of his pleasure towards the sultanness.

Dinarzade, being always careful to awake her sister, called this night at the ordinary hour. My dear sister, said she, day will soon appear. I earnestly beg of you to tell us some of your fine stories. We need no other, said Schahriar, but that of the amours of Aboulhassen Ali Ebn Becar and Schemselnihar, the favourite of caliph Haroun Alraschid. Sir, said Scheherazade, I will satisfy your curiosity; and began thus.

THE HISTORY OF ABOULHASSEN ALI EBN BECAR,
AND SCHEMSELNIHAR, FAVOURITE OF CALIPH
HAROUN ALRASCHID.

In the reign of the caliph Haroun Alraschid, there was at Bagdad a druggist, called Aboulhassen Ebn Thaher, a very rich and handsome man. He had more wit and politeness than those of his profession generally have. His integrity, sincerity, and jovial humour, made him to be loved and sought after by all sorts of people. The caliph, who knew his merit, had entire confidence in him; and so great was his esteem for him, that he entrusted him with the care of providing the ladies his favourites with all things they stood in need of. He chose for them their clothes, furniture, and jewels, with admirable judgment.

His good qualities, with the favour of the caliph, made the sons of emirs, officers, and others of the first rank, to be always about him. His house was the rendezvous of all the nobility of the court. But, among the young lords who daily visited him, there was one of whom he took more notice, and with whom he contracted a particular friendship, called Aboulhassen Ali Ebn Becar, originally of an ancient royal family of Persia. This family had continued at Bagdad ever since the Mussul-men made a conquest of that kingdom. Nature seemed to have taken pleasure to endow this young prince with many of the rarest qualities both of body and mind. His face was so very beautiful, his shape so fine, and his physiognomy so prepossessing; that none could see him without loving him immediately. When he spoke, he expressed himself always in terms the most proper and well chosen, with a new and agreeable turn, and his voice charmed all who heard him. He had withal so much wit and judgment, that he thought and spoke on every subject with admirable exactness. He was so reserved and modest, that he advanced nothing till he had taken all possible precautions to avoid giving any ground of suspicion that he preferred his own opinion to that of others.

Being such a person as I have represented him, we need not wonder that Ebn Thaher distinguished him from all the other young noblemen of the court, most of whom had vices contrary to his virtues. One day, when the prince was with Ebn Thaher, there came a lady mounted on a piebald mule, surrounded by six women-slaves, who accompanied her on foot, all very handsome, as far as could be judged by their air, and through the veils which covered their faces. The lady had a girdle of a rose colour, four inches broad, embroidered with pearls and diamonds of an extraordinary bigness; and it was easy to perceive that she surpassed all her women in beauty as much as the full moon does that of two days old. She came to buy something; and when she had spoken to Ebn Thaher, entered his shop, which was very neat and large, and receiving her with all the marks of the most profound respect, entreated her to sit down, and showed her the most honourable place.

In the mean time the prince of Persia, unwilling to let such an

opportunity pass to show his good-breeding and courtly temper, beat up the cushion of gold cloth for the lady to lean on; upon which he retired speedily, that she might sit down; and having saluted her, by kissing the tapestry under her feet, he rose, and stood at the lower end of the sofa. It being her custom to be free with Ebn Thaher, she lifted her veil, and discovered to the prince of Persia such extraordinary beauty, that he was struck with it to the heart. On the other hand, the lady could not contain herself from looking on the prince, the sight of whom had made the same impression, upon her. My lord, said she to him, with an obliging air, pray sit down. The prince of Persia obeyed, and sat down upon the edge of the sofa. He had his eyes constantly fixed upon her, and swallowed large draughts of the sweet poison of love. She quickly perceived what worked in his heart, and this discovery inflamed her the more towards him. She rose up, went to Ebn Thaher, and, after whispering to him the cause of her coming, asked the name and country of the prince. Madam, answered Ebn Thaher, this young nobleman's name is Aboulhassen Ali Ebn Becar, and he is a prince of the blood-royal.

The lady was overjoyed to hear that the person she already so passionately loved was of a quality so high. You certainly mean, said she, that he is descended from the kings of Persia. Yes, madam, replied Ebn Thaher; the last kings of Persia were his ancestors, and, since the conquest of that kingdom, the princes of his family have always made themselves acceptable at the court of the caliphs. You will oblige me much, added she, in making me acquainted with this young nobleman. When I send this woman, said she, pointing to one of her slaves, to give you notice to come and see me, pray bring him with you; I shall be very glad to display to him the magnificence of my house, that he may see that avarice does not reign at Bagdad among persons of quality. You know what I mean; therefore do not fail, other, wise I will be very angry with you, and beg you will never come hither again while I live.

Ebn Thaher was a man of too much penetration not to perceive the lady's mind by these words. My princess! my queen! replied he; God preserve me from ever giving you any occasion of anger against me! I shall always make it a law to obey your commands. At this answer, the lady bowed to Ebn Thaher, and bid farewell; and, after giving a favourable look to the prince of Persia, remounted her mule, and went away.

The prince of Persia was so deeply smitten with the lady, that he looked after her as far as he could see; and, for a long time after she was out of sight, he still looked that way. Ebn Thaher told him, that several persons were observing him, and were laughing to see him in this posture. Alas! said the prince, the world and you would have compassion on me, if you knew that the fine lady who is just now gone, has carried with her the best part of me, and that the remaining part seeks for an opportunity to go after her. Tell me, I conjure you, added he, what cruel lady this is, who forces people to love her, without giving them time to advise? My lord, answered Ebn Thaher, this is the famous Schemselnihar, [Footnote: This word signifies the sun of the day.] the principal favourite of the caliph our master. She is justly so called, added the prince, since she is more beautiful than the sun at noon-day. That is true, replied Ebn Thaher;

therefore the commander of the faithful loves, or rather adores her: he gave me express orders to furnish all that she asked of me, and to prevent, as much as possible, every thing that she can desire of me.

He spoke in this manner, in order to hinder him from engaging in an amour which could not but prove unhappy to him; but it served only to inflame him the more. I was very doubtful, charming Schemselnihar, said he, that I should not be allowed so much as to think of you. I perceive well, however, that, without hopes of being loved by you, I cannot forbear loving you. I will love you then, and bless my lot that I am slave to an object fairer than the meridian sun.

While the prince of Persia was thus consecrating his heart to fair Schemselnihar, this lady, upon returning home, thought upon a way how she might see and have free converse with him. She no sooner entered her palace, than she sent to Ebn Thaher the woman she had shown him, and in whom she put all her confidence, to tell him to come and see her without delay, and to bring the prince of Persia with him. The slave came to Ebn Thaher's shop while he was speaking with the prince, and endeavouring, by very strong arguments, to dissuade him from loving the caliph's favourite. When she saw them together, Gentlemen, said she, my honourable mistress Schemselnihar, the chief favourite of the commander of the faithful, entreats you to come to her palace, where she waits for you. Ebn Thaher, to testify his obedience, rose up immediately, without answering the slave, and followed her, though with some reluctance. As for the prince, he followed without reflecting upon the danger that might happen in such a visit: the company of Ebn Thaher, who had liberty to visit the favourite whenever he pleased, made the prince very easy in the affair. They followed the slave, who went a little before them, entering after her into the caliph's palace, and joined her at the gate of Schemselnihar's little palace, which was already open: she introduced them into a great hall, where she entreated them both to sit down.

The prince of Persia thought himself in one of those magnificent palaces that are promised us in the other world, for he had never seen any thing that equalled the shining splendour of the place; the carpets, cushions, and other furniture of the sofas, the moveables, ornaments, and architecture, were all surprisingly beautiful. A little time after Ebn Thaher and he were sat down, a very handsome black slave set before them a table covered with several very fine dishes, the delicious smell of which made them judge of the delicacy of the sauce. While eating, they were waited upon by the slave who had introduced them, and who invited them to eat of what she knew to be the greatest dainties; when they had done, they were served with excellent wine by the other slaves, who afterwards presented to each of them a fine gold basin full of water to wash their hands, and also a golden pot full of the perfume of aloes, with which they both perfumed their beards and clothes; nor was odoriferous water forgotten, which the slaves brought to them in a golden vessel, enriched with diamonds and rubies, made particularly for that use, and which they threw upon their beards and faces, according to custom. They then went to their places; but had scarcely seated themselves, when the slave entreated them to rise and follow her; and opening

a gate of the hall in which they were, they entered into a spacious saloon of a marvellous structure. It was a dome of the most agreeable fashion, supported by a hundred pillars of marble, white as alabaster; the bases and chapiters of the pillars were adorned with four-footed beasts and birds of several sorts gilded. The foot-carpet of this noble parlour consisted of one piece of gold cloth, embroidered with garlands of roses in red and white silk; and the dome being painted in the same manner, after the Arabian form, was one of the most charming objects the eye ever beheld: betwixt each column was placed a little sofa adorned in the same manner, and great vessels of china, crystal, jasper, jet, porphyry, agate, and other precious materials, garnished with gold and jewels: the spaces betwixt the columns were so many large windows, with jets high enough to lean on, covered with the same sort of stuff as the sofas, from which was a prospect into one of the most delightful gardens in the world, the walks of which, being made of little pebbles of different colours, much resembled the foot-carpet of the saloon; so that it appeared, both within and without, as if the dome and the garden, with all their ornaments, had stood upon the same carpet. The prospect round was thus diversified: at the ends of the walks were two canals of clear water, of the same circular figure as the dome; one of which, being higher than the other, emptied itself into the lowermost, in form of a table-cloth; and curious pots of gilded brass, with flowers and greens, were placed at equal distances on the banks of the canals: the walks lay betwixt great plots of ground, planted with straight and bushy trees, among which were thousands of birds, whose notes formed a melodious concert, and entertained the beholder by sometimes flying about, at others by playing together, and sometimes by fighting in the air.

The prince of Persia and Ebn Thaher diverted themselves for some time with viewing the magnificence of the place, and testified great surprise at everything they saw, especially the prince, who had never before seen any thing to equal it; and Ebn Thaher, though he had several times been in that delightful place, yet could now observe many new beauties: in a word, they never grew weary of admiring so many singular things; and were thus agreeably employed, when they perceived, at some distance from the dome, a company of ladies richly apparelled, each of them sitting upon a seat of Indian wood, inlaid with silver wire in figures, with instruments of music in their hands, expecting orders to play. They both advanced to the jet which fronted the ladies, and on the right they saw a large court, with a stair up from the garden, encompassed with beautiful apartments. The slave having retired, and left them alone, they entered into conversation: As to you, who are a wise man, said the prince of Persia to Ebn Thaher, I doubt not but that you look with much satisfaction upon all these marks of grandeur and power. For my part, I do not think there is any thing in the world more surprising. But when I consider that this is the glorious habitation of the lovely Schemselnihar, and that he who keeps her here is the greatest monarch of the earth, I confess to you that I look upon myself to be the most unfortunate of all mankind; that no destiny can be more cruel than mine, in loving an object possessed by a rival, and that too in a place where he is so potent, that I cannot think myself sure of my life one moment!

Ebn Thaher hearing the prince of Persia speak, said to him, Sir, I wish you could give me as good an assurance of the happy success of your amours, as I can give you of the safety of your life. Though this stately palace belongs to the caliph, who built it on purpose for Schemselnihar, and called it the palace of eternal pleasures, and that it makes part of his own palace, yet you must know that this lady lives here at entire liberty; she is not surrounded by eunuchs as spies over her; this is her own particular house, which is absolutely at her disposal: she goes into the city when she pleases, and returns again, without asking leave of any body; and the caliph never comes to see her without sending Mesrour, the chief of his eunuchs, to give her notice, that she may be prepared to receive him. Therefore you may be easy, and give full attention to the concert of music, which I perceive, Schemselnihar is preparing on purpose for you.

Just as Ebn Thaher spoke these words to the prince of Persia, they observed the favourite's trusty slave coming with orders for the ladies to begin singing and playing on the instruments, which they instantly obeyed, and all began playing together as a prelude; after which, one of them began singing alone, at the same time playing admirably well upon her lute, having been before advertised of the subject on which she was to sing. The words were so agreeable to the prince of Persia's sentiments, that he could not forbear applauding her at the end of the stave. Is it possible, cried he, that you have the gift of knowing people's hearts, and that the knowledge of what is in my mind has occasioned you to give us a taste of your charming voice by those words? Were I to choose, I should not express myself otherwise. The lady made no reply, but went on, and sung several other staves, with which the prince was so much affected, that he repeated some of them with tears in his eyes, which plainly discovered that he applied them to himself. When she had made an end, she and her companions rose up, and sung all together, signifying by their words that the full moon was going to rise in all her splendour, and that they should speedily see her approach the sun; by which it was meant that Schemselnihar was just coming, and that the prince of Persia should have the pleasure of seeing her.

In effect, as they were looking towards the court, they saw Schemselnihar's confident coming towards them, followed by ten black women, who, with much difficulty, carried a throne of massy silver most curiously wrought, which they set down, before them at a certain distance; upon which the black slaves retired behind the trees to the entrance of a walk. After this there came twenty handsome ladies, all alike most elegantly appalled: they advanced in two rows, singing and playing upon instruments which each of them held in her hand; and, coming near the throne, ten of them sat down on each side of it.

All these things kept the prince of Persia and Ebn Thaher in very great suspense, both of them being impatient to know how they would end. In this state of anxious expectation, they saw ten handsome ladies, well dressed, come out of the same gate whence the ten black women came, where they stopped for a few moments, expecting the favourite, who came out last, and placed herself in the midst of them.

Schemselnihar was easily distinguished from the rest by her fine shape and majestic air, as well as by a sort of mantle, of very fine stuff of gold and sky-blue, fastened to her shoulders over her other apparel, which was the most handsome, best contrived, and most magnificent, that could be thought of. The pearls, rubies, and diamonds, with which she was adorned, though few in number, were well chosen, and of inestimable value, and were displayed in excellent order. She came forward with a majesty resembling the sun in his course amidst the clouds, which receive his splendour without hiding his lustre, and seated herself on the silver throne that was brought for her.

As soon as the prince of Persia beheld Schemselnihar, nothing else could attract his notice: We cease inquiring after what we seek, said he to Ebn Thaher, when we see it; and there is no doubt remaining when once the truth makes itself manifest. Do you see this charming beauty? She is the cause of all my sufferings, which I hug, and will never forbear blessing them, however lasting they may be! At the sight of this object, I am not my own master; my soul rebels, and disturbs me; and I fancy it has a mind to leave me! Go then, my soul, I allow thee; but let it be for the welfare and preservation of this weak body! It is you, cruel Ebn Thaher, who are the cause of this disorder! You thought to do me great pleasure in bringing me hither, and I perceive I am only come to complete my ruin! Pardon me, said he, interrupting himself; I am mistaken: I was willing to come, and can blame nobody but myself. At these words, he could not refrain from tears. I am very well pleased, said Ebn Thaher, that you do me justice; when at first I told you that Schemselnihar was the caliph's chief favourite, I did it on purpose to prevent that fatal passion which you please yourself with entertaining in your breast. All that you see here ought to disengage you, and you are to think of nothing but of acknowledgments for the honour which Schemselnihar was willing to do you, by ordering me to bring you with me. Call in, then, your wandering reason, and put yourself in a condition to appear before her, as good-breeding requires. Behold, there she comes! Were the matter to begin again, I would take other measures; but, since the thing is done, I wish we may not repent of it. What I have further to say to you is this, that love is a traitor, who may throw you into a pit from which you will never be able to escape.

Ebn Thaher had not time to say more, because Schemselnihar came, and, sitting down upon her throne, saluted them both with an inclination of the head; but she fixed her eyes on the prince of Persia, and they spoke to one another in a silent language, intermixed with sighs; by which, in a few moments, they spoke more than could have been done by words in a great deal of time. The more Schemselnihar looked upon the prince, the more she found from his looks that he was in love with her; and, being thus persuaded of his passion, thought herself the happiest woman in the world. At last, turning her eyes from him to command the women who began to sing first to come near; they got up, and whilst they advanced, the black women, who came out of the walk into which they retired, brought their seats, and set them near the window, in the jet of the dome, where Ebn Thaher and the prince of Persia stood; and then they so disposed them on each side of the favourite's throne, that they formed a semicircle.

The women who were sitting before she came, took each of them their places again, with the permission of Schemselnihar, who ordered them by a sign. That charming favourite chose one of these women to sing; who, after she had spent some moments in tuning her lute, played a song, the meaning whereof was, that two lovers, who entirely loved each other, and whose affection was boundless, their hearts, though in two bodies, were one and the same; and, when any thing opposed their desires, could say, with tears in their eyes, if we love, because we find one another amiable, ought we to be blamed for this? Let destiny bear the blame.

Schemselnihar discovered so well, by her eyes and gestures, that these sayings ought to be applied to her and the prince of Persia, that he could not maintain himself; he rose, and came to a balluster, which he leaned upon, and obliged one of the women, who came to sing, to observe him. When she was near him, Follow me, said he to her, and do me the favour to accompany with your lute a song which you shall forthwith hear. Then he sang with an air so tender and passionate, as perfectly expressed the violence of his love. When he had done, Schemselnihar, following his example, said to one of the women, Follow me likewise, and accompany my voice; at the same time she sung after such a manner, as further pierced the heart of the prince of Persia, who answered her by a new air as passionate as the former.

These two lovers declared their mutual affection by their songs. Schemselnihar yielded to the force of hers; she rose from her throne, and advanced towards the door of the hall. The prince, who knew her design, rose likewise, and went towards her in all haste. They met at the door, where they took each other by the hand, embracing with so much passion, that they fainted, and would have fallen, if the women who followed them had not helped them. But they were supported and carried to a sofa, where they were brought to themselves again, by throwing odoriferous water upon their faces, and giving them other things to smell.

When they came to themselves, the first thing that Schemselnihar did was to look about; and not seeing Ebn Thaher, she asked, with a great deal of concern, where he was. He had withdrawn out of respect, whilst her women were applying things to recover her, and dreaded, not without reason, that some troublesome consequence might attend what had happened; but as soon as he heard Schemselnihar ask for him, he came forward, and presented himself before her.

Schemselnihar was very well pleased to see Ebn Thaher, and expressed her joy in these terms: Kind Ebn Thaher, I do not know how to make amends for the great obligation you have put upon me: without you I should never have seen the prince of Persia, nor have loved him who is the most amiable person in the world; but you may assure yourself, however, that I shall not die ungrateful, and that my acknowledgment, if possible, shall be equal to the obligation. Ebn Thaher answered this compliment by a low bow, and wished the favourite the accomplishment of all her desires.

Schemselnihar, turning towards the prince of Persia, who sat by her, and looking upon him with some sort of confusion, after what

had passed between them, said to him, Sir, I am very well assured you love me; and, however great your love may be to me, you need not doubt but mine is as great towards you; but let us not flatter ourselves; for, though we are both agreed, yet I see nothing for you and me but trouble, impatience, and tormenting grief. There is no other remedy for our evils but to love one another constantly, to refer ourselves to the disposal of Heaven, and to wait till it shall determine our destiny. Madam, replied the prince of Persia, you will do me the greatest injustice in the world if you doubt but one moment of the continuance of my love. It is so united to my soul, that I can justly say it makes the best part of it, and that I shall persevere in it till death. Pains, torments, obstacles, nothing shall be capable of hindering me to love you. Speaking these words, he shed tears in abundance, and Schemselnihar was not able to restrain hers.

Ebn Thaher took this opportunity to speak to the favourite: Madam, said he, allow me to represent to you, that, instead of breaking forth into tears, you ought to rejoice that you are together. I understand not this grief. What will it be when you are obliged to part? But why do I talk of that? We have been a long time here; and you know, madam, that it is time for us to be going. Ah, how cruel you are! replied Schemselnihar. You, who know the cause of my tears, have you no pity for my unfortunate condition? Oh, sad fatality! What have I done to be subject to the severe law of not being able to enjoy the person whom I love?

She being persuaded that Ebn Thaher spoke to her only out of friendship, did not take amiss what he said to her, but made a right use of it. Then she made a sign to the slave, her confidant, who immediately went out, and in a little time brought a collation of fruit upon a small silver table, which she set down between her mistress and the prince of Persia. Schemselnihar presented some of the best to the prince, and prayed him to eat for her sake: he did so, and put that part to his mouth which she had touched; and then he presented some to her, which she took, and ate in the same manner. She did not forget to invite Ebn Thaher to eat with them; but he not thinking himself safe in that place, ate only from complaisance. After the collation was taken away, they brought a silver basin with water in a vessel of gold, and washed together; they afterwards returned to their places, when three of the ten black women brought each of them a cup of rock crystal full of curious wines, upon a golden salver, which they set down before Schemselnihar, the prince of Persia, and Ebn Thaher. That they might be more private, Schemselnihar kept with her only ten black women, with ten others who began to sing and play upon instruments; and, after she had sent away all the rest, she took up one of the cups, and holding it in her hand, sung some tender expressions, which one of her women accompanied with her lute. When she had done, she drank, and afterwards took up one of the other cups, and presented it to the prince, praying him to drink for love of her, as she had drunk for love of him. He received the cup with a transport of love and joy, but, before drinking, he also sung a song, which another woman accompanied with an instrument and as he sung, the tears fell from his eyes in such abundance, that he could not forbear expressing in his song that he knew not whether he was going to drink the wine she had presented to him, or his own tears. Schemselnihar at last presented the third cup to Ebn Thaher, who thanked her for her

kindness, and for the honour she did him.

She then took a lute from one of her women, and sung to it in such a passionate manner as bespoke her to be beside herself, the prince of Persia standing with his eyes fixed upon her, as if he had been enchanted. As these things were passing, her trusty slave arrived all in a fright; and, addressing herself to her mistress, said, Madam, Mesrour and two other officers, with several eunuchs that attend them, are at the gate and want to speak with you from the caliph. When the prince of Persia and Ebn Thaher heard these words, they changed colour, and began to tremble, as if they had been undone; but Schemselnihar, who perceived it, recovered their courage by a smile.

After Schemselnihar had quieted the prince of Persia and Ebn Thaher's fears, she ordered the slave, her confidant, to go and entertain Mesrour and the two other officers till she was in a condition to receive them, and send to her to bring them in. She immediately ordered all the windows of the saloon to be shut, and the painted cloth on the side of the garden to be let down; and having assured the prince and Ebn Thaher that they might continue there without fear, she went out at the gate leading to the garden, and shut it upon them; but, whatever assurance she had given them of their being safe, they were still much terrified all the while they were there.

As soon as Schemselnihar was in the garden with the women that followed her, she ordered all the seats which served the women who played on the instruments to be set near the window where Ebn Thaher and the prince of Persia heard them, and having got things in order, she sat down upon a silver throne; then she sent by the slave, her confidant, to bring in the chief of the eunuchs, and his subaltern officers.

They appeared, followed by twenty black eunuchs, all handsomely clothed, with scimitars by their sides, and gold belts of four inches broad. As soon as they perceived the favourite Schemselnihar at a distance, they made her a profound reverence, which she returned them from her throne. When they came near, she got up and went to meet Mesrour, who came first. She asked what news he brought. He answered, Madam, the commander of the faithful has sent me to signify that he cannot live longer without seeing you; he designs to come to you tonight, and I come beforehand to give notice, that you may be prepared to receive him. He hopes, madam, that you long as much to see him as he is impatient to see you.

Upon this discourse of Mesrour, the favourite Schemselnihar prostrated herself to the ground, as a mark of the submission with which she received the caliph's order. When she rose again, she said, Pray tell the commander of the faithful, that I shall always esteem it my glory to execute his majesty's commands, and that his slave will do her utmost to receive him with all the respect that is due to him. At the same time she ordered the slave, her confidant, to tell the black women appointed for that service to get the palace ready to receive the caliph; and dismissing the chief of the eunuchs, said to him, You see it requires some time to get all things ready, therefore I pray you to take care that his majesty may have a little patience, that,

when he arrives, he may not find things out of order.

The chief of the eunuchs and his retinue being gone, Schemselnihar returned to the saloon, extremely concerned at the necessity she was under of sending back the prince of Persia sooner than she thought to have done. She came up to him again with tears in her eyes, which heightened Ebn Thaher's fear, who thought it no good omen. Madam, said the prince to her, I perceive you are come to tell me that we must part; provided there be nothing more to dread, I hope Heaven will give me the patience which is necessary to support your absence. Alas, my dear heart, my dear soul, replied the tender-hearted Schemselnihar, how happy do I think you, and how unhappy myself, when I compare your lot with my sad destiny! No doubt, you will suffer by my absence; but that is all, and you may comfort yourself with the hope of seeing me again; but as for me, just Heaven! what a terrible trial am I brought to! I must not only be deprived of the sight of the only person whom I love, but I must be tormented with the sight of one whom you have made hateful to me. Will not the arrival of the caliph put me in mind of your departure? And how can I, when I think of your sweet face, entertain that prince with that joy which he always observed in my eyes whenever he came to see me? I shall have my mind wavering when I speak to him; and the least complaisance which I show to him, will stab me to the heart like a dagger. Can I relish his kind words and caresses? Think, prince, to what torments I shall be exposed when I can see you no more! Her tears and sighs hindered her to go on, and the prince of Persia would have replied to her; but his own grief, and that of his mistress, made him incapable.

Ebn Thaher, whose chief business was to get out of the palace, was obliged to comfort them, and to exhort them to have patience. But the trusty slave interrupted them: Madam, said she to Schemselnihar, you have no time to lose, the eunuchs begin to arrive, and you know the caliph will be here immediately. O Heaven, how cruel is this separation! cried the favourite. Make haste, said she to the confident, carry them both to the gallery which looks into the garden on the one side, and to the Tigris on the other; and when the night grows dark, let them out by the back gate, that they may retire with safety. Having spoken thus, she tenderly embraced the prince of Persia, without being able to say one word more, and went to meet the caliph in such disorder as cannot well be imagined.

In the mean time the trusty slave carried the prince and Ebn Thaher to the gallery, as Schemselnihar had appointed; and having brought them in, left them there, and shut the door upon them, after having assured them that they had nothing to fear, and that she would come for them when it was time.

Schemselnihar's trusty slave leaving the prince of Persia and Ebn Thaher, they forgot she had assured them that they needed not to be afraid; they searched all the gallery, and were seized with extreme fear, because they knew no place where they might escape, in case the caliph, or any of his officers, should happen to come there.

A great light, which came on a sudden from the side of the garden

through the windows, caused them to approach to see from whence it came. It was occasioned by a hundred flambeaux of white wax, carried by as many young eunuchs; these were followed by as many others, who guarded the ladies of the caliph's palace, clothed, and armed with scimitars, in the same manner as those already mentioned; and the caliph came after them, betwixt Mesrour, their captain, on his right, and the vassif, their second officer, on his left hand.

Schemselnihar waited for the caliph at the entry of an alley, accompanied by twenty women, all of surprising beauty, adorned with necklaces and ear-rings of large diamonds, and some of them had their whole heads covered with them. They played upon instruments, and made a charming concert. The favourite no sooner saw the prince appear than she advanced, and prostrated herself at his feet; and while doing this, Prince of Persia, said she within herself, if your sad eyes bear witness to what I do, judge of my hard lot; if I was humbling myself so before you, my heart should feel no reluctance.

The caliph was ravished to see Schemselnihar. Rise, madam, said he to her; come near: I am angry that I should have deprived myself so long of the pleasure of seeing you. Saying this, he took her by the hand, and, after abundance of tender expressions, went and sat down upon a silver throne which Schemselnihar caused to be brought for him, and she sat down upon a seat opposite, and the twenty women made a circle round about them upon other seats, while the young eunuchs, who carried flambeaux, dispersed themselves at a certain distance from each other, that the caliph might enjoy the cool of the evening the better.

When the caliph sat down, he looked round him, and beheld with satisfaction a great many other lights besides those flambeaux which the young eunuchs held; but taking notice that the saloon was shut, was astonished thereat, and demanded the reason. It was done on purpose to surprise him; for he had no sooner spoken, than the windows were at once opened, and he saw it illuminated within and without in a much better manner than ever he had seen it before. Charming Schemselmhar, cried he at this sight, I understand you; you would have me to know there are as fine nights as days. After what I have seen, I cannot disown it.

Let us return to the prince of Persia and Elm Thaher, whom we left in the gallery. Ebn Thaher could not enough admire all he saw. I am not very young, said he, and in my time have seen great entertainments; but I do not think any thing can be more surprising and magnificent. All that is said of enchanted palaces does no way come near this prodigious spectacle we now see. O strange! what riches and magnificence together!

The prince of Persia was nothing moved with those objects which were so pleasant to Ebn Thaher; he could look on nothing but Schemselnihar, and the presence of the caliph threw him into inconceivable grief. Dear Ebn Thaher, said he, would to God I had my mind as free to admire these things as you! But, alas! I am in a quite different condition; all those objects serve only to increase my torment. Can I see the caliph cheek to cheek with her that I love, and not die of grief? Must such a passionate love as mine be disturbed by so potent a rival? O heavens, how cruel is

my destiny! It is but a moment since I esteemed myself the most fortunate lover in the world, and at this instant I feel my heart so struck, that it is like to kill me. I cannot resist it, my dear Ebn Thaher; my patience is at an end; my distemper overwhelms me, and my courage fails. While speaking, he saw something pass in the garden, which obliged him to keep silence, and to turn all his attention that way.

The caliph had ordered one of the women, who was near him, to play on her lute, and she began to sing. The words that she sung were very passionate; and the caliph was persuaded that she sung thus by order of Schemselnihar, who had frequently entertained him with the like testimonies of her affection; therefore he interpreted all in his own favour. But this was not now Schemselnihar's meaning; she applied it to her dear Ali Ebn Becar, and was so sensibly touched with grief, to have before her an object whose presence she could no longer enjoy, that she fainted and fell backwards upon her seat, which having no arms to support her, she must have fallen down, had not some of the women helped her in time; who took her up, and carried her into the saloon.

Ebn Thaher, who was in the gallery, being surprised at this accident, turned towards the prince of Persia; but, instead of seeing him stand and look through the window as before, he was extremely amazed to see him fall down at his feet, and without motion. He judged it to proceed from the violence of his love to Schemselnihar, and admired the strange effect of sympathy which threw him into great fear, because of the place in which they were. In the mean time he did all he could to recover the prince, but in vain. Ebn Thaher was in this perplexity when Schemselnihar's confident, opening the gallery door, came in out of breath, as one who knew not where she was. Come speedily, cried she, that I may let you out. All is confusion here, and I fear this will be the last of our days. Ah! how would you have us go? replied Ebn Thaher, with a mournful voice. Come near, I pray you, and see in what condition the prince of Persia is. When, the slave saw him in a swoon, she ran for water in all haste, and returned in an instant.

At last the prince of Persia, after they had thrown water on his face, recovered his spirits. Prince, said Ebn Thaher to him, we run the risk of being destroyed, if we stay here any longer; let us therefore endeavour to save our lives. He was so feeble that he could not rise unassisted. Ebn Thaher and the confident lent him their hands, and supported him on each side. They came to a little iron gate which opened towards the Tigris, went out at it, and got to the side of a little canal communicating with the river. The confident clapped her hands, and immediately a little boat appeared, which came towards them with one rower. Ali Ebn Becar and his comrade went aboard, and the trusty slave staid at the side of the canal. As soon as the prince sat down in the boat, he stretched out one hand towards the palace and laid the other upon his heart. Dear object of my soul! cried he with a feeble voice, receive my faith with this hand, while I assure you with the other, that for you my heart shall for ever preserve the fire with which it burns!

In the mean time the boatman rowed with all his might; and

Schemselnihar's trusty slave accompanied the prince of Persia and Ebu Thaher, walking along the side of the canal, until they came to the Tigris; and when she could go no further, she took farewell of them, and returned.

The prince of Persia continued very feeble. Ebn Thaher comforted him, and exhorted him to take courage. Consider, said he, that when we are landed, we have a great way to go before we come to my house; and I would not at this hour, and in this condition, advise you home to your lodgings, which are a great way further off than mine. At length they got out of the boat, but the prince was so weak that he could not walk, which put Ebn Thaher into great perplexity. He remembered he had a friend in the neighbourhood, and carried the prince thither with great difficulty. His friends received them very cheerfully; and, when he made them sit down, asked where they had been so late. Ebn Thaher answered him, I was this evening with a man who owed me a considerable sum of money, and designed to go a long voyage. I was unwilling to lose time to find him, and by the way I met with this young nobleman whom you see, and to whom I am under a thousand obligations; for, knowing my debtor, he would needs do me the favour of going along with me. We had a great deal of trouble to bring the man to reason; besides, we went out of the way, and that is the reason we are so late. In our return home, this good lord, for whom I have all possible respect, was attacked by a sudden distemper; which made me take the liberty of calling at your house, flattering myself that you would be pleased to give us quarters for this night.

Ebn Thaher's friend, who believed all this, told them they were welcome, and offered the prince of Persia, whom he knew not, all the assistance he could desire; but Ebn Thaher spoke for the prince, and said, that his distemper was of a nature that required nothing but rest. His friend understood by this that they desired to go to bed; on which he conducted them to an apartment, where he left them.

Though the prince of Persia slept, he had troublesome dreams, which represented Schemselnihar in a swoon at the caliph's feet, and increased his affliction. Ebn Thaher was very impatient to be at home, and doubted not but his family were in great trouble, because he never used to lie abroad. He rose and departed early in the morning, after taking leave of his friend, who rose at break of day to say his prayers. At last he came home; and the prince of Persia, who had walked so far with much trouble, lay down upon a sofa, as weary as if he had travelled a long journey. Not being in a condition to go home, Ebn Thaher ordered a chamber to be got ready for him, and sent to acquaint his friends with his condition, and where he was. In the mean time he begged him to compose himself, to command in his house, and order things as he pleased. I thank you heartily for these obliging offers, said the prince of Persia; but, that I may not be any way troublesome to you, I conjure you to deal with me as if I were not at your house. I would not stay one moment, if I thought my presence would incommode you in the least.

As soon as Ebn Thaher had time to recollect himself, he told his family all that had passed at Schemselnihar's palace, and concluded by thanking God, who had delivered him from the danger

he was in. The prince of Persia's principal domestics came to receive his orders at Ebn Thaher's house, and in a little time several of his friends who had notice of his indisposition arrived. Those friends passed the greater part of the day with him; and, though their conversation could not dissipate those sad ideas which were the cause of his trouble, yet it gave him some relief. He would have taken his leave of Ebn Thaher towards the evening; but this faithful friend found him still so weak, that he obliged him to stay till next day, and in the mean time, to divert him, gave him a concert of vocal and instrumental music in the evening; but this concert served only to put him in mind of the preceding night, and renewed his trouble, instead of assuaging it; so that next day his distemper seem'd to increase. Upon this, Ebn Thaher did not oppose his going home, but took care to accompany him thither; and, when alone with him in his chamber, he represented to him all those arguments which might influence him to a generous endeavour to overcome that passion, which in the end would neither prove lucky to himself nor to the favourite. Ah, dear Ebn Thaher! cried the prince, how easy is it for you to give this advice, but how hard is it for me to follow it! I am sensible of its importance, but am not able to profit by it, I have said already, that I shall carry with me to the grave the love that I bear to Schemselnihar. When Ebn Thaher saw that he could not prevail on the prince, he took his leave of him, and would have retired.

The prince of Persia detained him, and said, Kind Ebn Thaher, since I have declared to you that it is not in my power to follow your wise counsels, I beg you will not charge it on me as a crime, nor forbear to give me the usual testimonies of your friendship; you cannot do me a greater favour than to inform me of the destiny of my dear Schemselnihar, when you hear any news of it. The uncertainty I am in concerning her fate, and the apprehensions which her fainting occasioned me, keep me in this languishing condition you reproach me with. My lord, answered Ebn Thaher, you have reason to hope that her fainting was not attended with any serious consequences; her confidant, will soon come and inform me of the issue, and as soon as I know the particulars, I shall not fail to impart them.

Ebn Thaher left the prince in this hope, and returned home where he expected Schemselnihar's confidant all day, but in vain, nor did she come next day. His uneasiness to know the state of the prince of Persia's health would not suffer him to stay any longer without seeing him; he went to his lodgings to exhort him to patience, and found him lying in bed as sick as ever, surrounded by many of his friends, and several physicians, who used all their art to discover the cause of his distemper. As soon as he saw Ebn Thaher, he looked upon him smiling, to signify that he had two things to tell him; the one, that he was glad to see him; the other, how much the physicians, who could not discover the cause of his distemper, were mistaken in their reasonings.

His friends and physicians retired one after another; so that Ebn Thaher, being alone with him, came near his bed, to ask how he did since he saw him. I must tell you, answered the prince, that my passion, which continually gathers new strength, and the uncertainty of the lovely Schemselnihar's destiny, augment my distemper every moment, and throw me into such a condition as

afflicts my kindred and friends, and breaks the measures of my physicians, who do not understand it. You cannot think, added he, how much I suffer to see so many importunate people about me, and whom I cannot in civility put away. It is your company alone that is comfortable to me: but, in a word, I conjure you not to dissemble with me; what news do you bring of Schemselnihar? Have you seen her confident? What said she to you? Ebn Thaher answered, that he had not yet seen her; and no sooner had he told the prince of Persia this sad news, than tears came from his eyes, and his heart was so oppressed that he could not answer him one word. Prince, added Ebn Thaher, suffer me to tell you, that you are very ingenious in tormenting yourself. In the name of God, wipe away your tears: If any of your people should come in just now, they would discover you by this, notwithstanding the care you ought to take to conceal your thoughts. Whatever this judicious confident could say, it was impossible for the prince to refrain from weeping. Wise Ebn Thaher, said he, when he had recovered his speech, I may well hinder my tongue from revealing the secrets of my heart, but I have no power over my tears upon such a direful subject as Schemselnihar's danger! If that adorable and only object of my desires be no longer in the world. I shall not be one moment after! Reject so afflicting an idea, replied Ebn Thaher; Schemselnihar is yet alive; you need not doubt the certainty of it. If you have heard nothing of her, it is because she could find no occasion to send to you; and I hope you will hear from her to-day. To this he added several other comfortable things, and then retired.

Ebn Thaher was scarcely at his own house, when Schemselnihar's confident arrived with a melancholy countenance, which he reckoned a bad omen. He asked concerning her mistress. Tell me yours first, said the confident; for I was in great trouble to see the prince of Persia go away in that condition. Ebn Thaher told her all that she desired to know, and when he had done, the slave began her discourse: If the prince of Persia, said she, has suffered, and does still suffer, for my mistress, she suffers no less for him. After I departed from you, continued she, I returned to the saloon, where I found Schemselnihar not yet recovered from her swoon, notwithstanding all the help they endeavoured to give her. The caliph was sitting near her with all the signs of real grief; he asked the women, and me in particular, if we knew the cause of her distemper; but we all kept secret, and told him we were altogether ignorant of it. In the mean time, we wept to see her suffer so long, and forgot nothing that might any ways help her. In a word, it was almost midnight before she recovered. The caliph, who had the patience to wait, was truly glad at her recovery, and asked Schemselnihar the cause of her distemper. As soon as she heard him speak, she endeavoured to resume her seat; and, after she had kissed his feet before he could hinder her, Sir, said she, I have reason to complain of Heaven, that it did not allow me to expire at your majesty's feet, to testify thereby how sensible I am of your favours!

I am persuaded you love me, said the caliph to her, and I command you to preserve yourself for my sake. You have probably exceeded in something today, which has occasioned this indisposition; take heed, I pray you, abstain from it for the future. I am glad to see you better; and I advise you to stay here tonight, and not to

return to your chamber, lest the motion disturb you. Upon this he commanded a little wine to be brought her, in order to strengthen her; and then taking his leave, returned to his apartment.

As soon as the caliph was gone, my mistress gave me a sign to come near her. She asked me earnestly concerning you: I assured her that you had been gone a long time, which made her easy as to that matter. I took care not to speak of the prince of Persia's fainting, lest it should make her fall into the same condition from which we had so much trouble to recover her; my precautions were all in vain, as you shall hear. Prince, said she, I henceforth renounce all pleasure as long as I am deprived of a sight of you. If I have understood your heart right, I only follow your example. Thou wilt not cease to weep until thou seest me again; it is but just, then, that I weep and mourn till I see you! At these words, which she uttered in such a manner as expressed the violence of her passion, she fainted in my arms a second time.

My comrades and I, said she, were long in recovering her; at last she came to herself; and then I said to her, Madam, are you resolved to kill yourself, and to make us also die with you? I beg of you to be persuaded, in the name of the prince of Persia, for whom it is your interest to live, to save yourself, as you love yourself, as you love the prince, and for our sakes, who are so faithful to you! I am very much obliged to you, replied she, for your care, zeal, and advice; but alas! these are useless to me! You are not to flatter us with hopes; for we can expect no end of our torment but in the grave! One of my companions would have diverted those sad ideas by playing on her lute; but she commanded her to be silent, and ordered all of them to retire, except me, whom she kept all night with her. O heavens! what a night was it! She passed it in tears and groans, always naming the prince of Persia; lamented her lot, which had destined her to the caliph, whom she could not love, and not to him she loved so dearly.

Next morning, because she was not commodiously lodged in the saloon, I helped her to her chamber, where she no sooner arrived, than all the physicians of the palace came to see her by order of the caliph, who was not long in coming himself. The medicines which the physicians prescribed for Schemselnihar were to no purpose, because they were ignorant of the cause of her distemper, and the presence of the caliph augmented it. She got a little rest, however, this night; and as soon as she awoke, she charged me to come to you to hear concerning the prince of Persia. I have already informed you of his case, said Ebn Thaher; so return to your mistress, and assure her that the prince of Persia waits to hear from her with the like impatience that she does from him; besides, exhort her to moderation, and to overcome herself, lest she drop some words before the caliph, which may prove fatal to us all. As for me, replied the confident, I confess I dread her transport; I have taken the liberty to tell her my mind, and am persuaded that she will not take it ill that I tell her this from you.

Ebn Thaher, who had but just come from the prince of Persia's lodgings, thought it not convenient to return so soon, and neglect his own important affairs, and therefore went not till

the evening. The prince was alone, and no better than in the morning. Ebn Thaher, said he, you have doubtless many friends; but they do not know your worth, which you discover to me by the zeal, care, and trouble, you give yourself to oblige me in my condition. I am confounded with all that you do for me with so great affection, and I know not how I shall be able to express my gratitude! Prince, answered Ebn Thaher, do not speak so, I entreat you; I am ready not only to give one of my own eyes to save one of yours, but to sacrifice my life for you. But this is not the present business; I come to tell you that Schemselnihar sent her confidant to ask me about you, and at the same time to inform me of her condition. You may assure yourself that I said nothing but what might confirm the excess of your passion for her mistress, and the constancy with which you love her. Then Ebn Thaher gave him a particular account of all that had passed betwixt the trusty slave and him. The prince listened with all the different emotions of fear, jealousy, affection, and compassion, with which this discourse could inspire him, making, upon every thing which he heard, all the afflicting or comforting reflections that so passionate a lover was capable of.

Their conversation continued so long, that the night was far advanced, so that the prince of Persia obliged Ebn Thaher to stay with him. Next morning, as this trusty friend was returning home, there came to him a woman, whom he knew to be Schemselnihar's confidant, who eagerly addressed him thus: My mistress salutes you; and I am come to entreat you, in her home, to deliver this letter to the prince of Persia. The zealous Ebn Thaher took the letter, and returned to the prince, accompanied by the confidant.

When Ebn Thaher entered the prince of Persia's house with Schemselnihar's confidant, he prayed her to stay one moment in the drawing room. As soon as the prince of Persia saw him, he earnestly asked what news he had. The best you can expect, answered Ebn Thaher; you are as dearly beloved as you love; Schemselnihar's confidant is in your drawing room; she has brought you a letter from her mistress, and waits for your orders to come in. Let her come in! cried the prince, with a transport of joy; and, speaking thus, sat down to receive her.

The prince's attendants retired as soon as they saw Ebn Thaher, and left him alone with their master. Ebn Thaher went and opened the door, and brought in the confidant. The prince knew her, and received her very civilly. My lord, said she to him, I am sensible of the afflictions you have endured since I had the honour to conduct you to the boat which waited to bring you back; but I hope this letter I have brought will contribute to your cure. Upon this, she presented him the letter. He took it, and, after kissing it several times, opened it, and read as follows:

Letter from Schemselnihar to Ali Ebn Becar, Prince of Persia.

The person who carries this letter will give you a better account concerning me than I can do, for I have not been myself since I saw you: deprived of your presence, I sought to divert myself by entertaining you with these ill-written lines, as if I had the good fortune to speak to you.

It is said that patience is a cure for all distempers; but it

sours mine instead of sweetening it. Although your picture be deeply engraven in my heart, my eyes desire constantly to see the original; and their sight will vanish if they are much longer deprived of that pleasure. May I flatter myself that yours have the same impatience to see me? Yes I can; their tender glances discovered it to me. How happy, prince, should you and Schemselnihar both be, if our agreeable desires were not crossed by invincible obstacles, which afflict me as sensibly as they do you!

Those thoughts which my fingers write, and which I express with incredible pleasure, and repeat again and again, speak from the bottom of my heart, and from the incurable wound which you have made in it; a wound which I bless a thousand times, notwithstanding the cruel torments I endure for your absence. I would reckon all that opposes our love nothing, were I only allowed to see you sometimes with freedom; I would then enjoy you, and what more could I desire?

Do not imagine that I say more than I think. Alas! whatever expressions I am able to use, I am sensible that I think more than I can tell you. My eyes, which are continually watching and weeping for your return; my afflicted heart, which desires nothing but you alone; the sighs that escape me as often as I think on you, that is, every moment; my imagination, which represents no other object than my dear prince; the complaints that I make to Heaven for the rigour of my destiny; in a word, my grief, my trouble, my torments, which give me no ease ever since I lost the sight of you, are witnesses of what I write.

Am not I unhappy to be born to love, without hope of enjoying him whom I love? This doleful thought oppresses me so much, that I should die, were I not persuaded that you love me: but this sweet comfort balances my despair, and preserves my life. Tell me that you love me always; I will keep your letter carefully, and read it a thousand times a day; I will endure my afflictions with less impatience. I pray Heaven may cease to be angry at us, and grant us an opportunity to say that we love one another without fear; and that we may never cease to love! Adieu. I salute Ebn Thaher, who has so much obliged us.

The prince of Persia was not satisfied to read the letter once; he thought he had read it with too little attention, and therefore read it again with more leisure; and as he read, sometimes he uttered sighs, sometimes he wept, and sometimes he discovered transports of joy and affection, as one who was touched with what he read. In a word, he could not keep his eyes off those characters drawn by so lovely a hand, and therefore began to read it a third time. Then Ebn Thaher told him that the confidant could not stay, and he ought to think of giving an answer. Alas! cried the prince, how would you have me answer so kind a letter? In what terms shall I express the trouble that I am in? My spirit is tossed with a thousand tormenting things, and my thoughts destroy one another the same moment they are conceived, to make way for more; and so long as my body suffers by the impressions of my mind, how shall I be able to hold paper, or a reed [Footnote The Arabians, Persians, and Turks, when they write, hold the paper ordinarily upon their knees with their left hands, and write with their right, with a little reed or cane cut

like our pens; this cane is hollow, and resembles our reeds, but is harder.], to write? Having spoken thus, he took out of a little desk paper, cane, and ink.

The prince of Persia, before he began to write, gave Schemselnihar's letter to Ebn Thaher, and prayed him to hold it open while he wrote, that, by casting his eyes upon it, he might see the better what to answer. He began to write; but the tears that fell from his eyes upon the paper obliged him several times to stop, that they might trickle down the more freely. At last he finished his letter, and giving it to Ebn Thaher, Read it, I pray, said he, do me the favour to see if the disorder of my mind has allowed me to give a reasonable answer. Ebn Thaher took it, and read as follows:

The Prince of Persia's Answer to Schemselnihar's Letter.

I was swallowed up with mortal grief before I received your letter, at the sight of which I was transported with unspeakable joy; and the view of the characters written by your lovely hand enlightened my eyes more sensibly than they were darkened when yours were closed on a sudden at the feet of my rival. Those words which your courteous letter contains, are so many rays of light, which have dispelled the darkness with which my soul was obscured; they show me how much you suffer by your love to me, and that you are not ignorant of what I endure for you, and thereby comfort me in my afflictions. On the one hand, they make me shed tears in abundance; and, on the other, they inflame my heart--with a fire which supports it, and hinders my dying of grief. I have not had one moment's rest since our cruel separation. Your letter only gave me some ease. I kept a sorrowful silence till the moment I received it, and then it restored me to speech. I was buried in a profound melancholy, but it inspired me with joy, which immediately appeared in my eyes and countenance. But my surprise at receiving a favour which I had not deserved was so great, that I knew not which way to begin to testify my thankfulness for it. In a word, after having kissed it as a valuable pledge of your goodness, I read it over and over, and was confounded at the excess of my good fortune. You would have me to signify to you that I always love you. Ah! though I did not love you so perfectly as I do, I could not forbear adoring you, after all the marks you have given me of a love so uncommon: yes, I love you, my dear soul, and shall account it my glory to burn all my days with that sweet fire you have kindled in my heart. I will never complain of the brisk ardour with which I find it consumes me; and how rigorous soever the grief be which I suffer, I will bear it courageously, in hopes to see you some time or other. Would to Heaven it were today; and that, instead of sending you my letter, I might be allowed to come and assure you that I die for love of you! My tears hinder me from saying any more. Adieu.

Ebn Thaher could not read these last lines without weeping. He returned the letter to the prince of Persia, and assured him it wanted no correction. The prince shut it, and when he had sealed it, desired the trusty slave to come near, and told her, This is my answer to your dear mistress; I conjure you to carry it to her, and to salute her in my name. The slave took the letter, and retired with Ebn Thaher.

After Ebn Thaher had walked some way with the slave, he left her, went to his house, and began to think in earnest upon the amorous intrigue in which he found himself unhappily engaged. He considered that the prince of Persia and Schemselnihar, notwithstanding their interest to conceal their correspondence, managed with so little discretion, that it could not be long a secret. He drew all the consequences from it which a man of good sense ought to do. Were Schemselnihar, said he to himself, an ordinary lady, I would contribute all in my power to make her and her sweetheart happy; but she is the caliph's favourite, and no man can without danger undertake to displease him. His anger will fall at first upon Schemselnihar; it will cost the prince of Persia his life; and I shall be embarked in his misfortune. In the mean time, I have my honour, my quiet, my family, and my estate to preserve; I must then, while I can, deliver myself out of so great a danger.

He was taken up with these thoughts all the day; next morning he went to the prince of Persia, with a design to use his utmost endeavors to oblige him to conquer his passion. He actually represented to him what he had formerly done in vain; that it would be much better to make use of all his courage to overcome his inclinations for Schemselnihar, than to suffer himself to be conquered by it; and that his passion was so much the more dangerous, as his rival was the more potent. In a word, sir, added he, if you will hearken to me, you ought to think of nothing but to triumph over your amour, otherwise you run a risk of destroying yourself, with Schemselnihar, whose life ought to be dearer to you than your own. I give you this counsel as a friend, for which you will thank me some time or other.

The prince heard Ebn Thaher with a great deal of impatience, but suffered him, however, to speak out his mind; and then replied to him thus: Ebn Thaher, said he, do you think I can forbear to love Schemselnihar, who loves me so tenderly? She is not afraid to expose her life for me, and would you have me to regard mine? No; whatever misfortune befall me, I will love Schemselnihar to my last breath.

Ebn Thaher, being offended at the obstinacy of the prince of Persia, left him hastily; and, going to his own house, recalled to mind what he thought on the other day, and began to think in earnest what he should do. At the same time a jeweller, one of his intimate friends, came to see him: this jeweller had perceived that Schemselnihar's confidant came oftener to Ebn Thaher than usual, and that he was constantly with the prince of Persia, whose sickness was known to every one, though not the cause of it. The jeweller began to be suspicious, and finding Ebn Thaher very pensive, judged presently that he was perplexed with some important affair; and fancying that he knew the cause, he asked what Schemselnihar's confidant wanted with him. Ebn Thaher, being struck with this question, dissembled, and told him, that it was a mere trifle that brought her so frequently to him. You do not tell me the truth, said the jeweller, and give me ground to think, by your dissimulation, that this trifle is an affair of more importance than at first I thought. Ebn Thaher, perceiving that his friend pressed him so much, said to him, It is true that it is an affair of the greatest consequence: I had

resolved to keep it secret; but since I know how much you are my friend, I choose rather to make you my confident, than to suffer you to be in a mistake about it. I do not recommend it to you to keep the secret, for you will easily judge, by what I am going to tell you, how important it is to keep it. After this preamble, he told him the amour between Schemselnihar and the prince of Persia. You know, continued he, in what esteem I am at court, in the city, and with lords and ladies of the greatest quality; what a disgrace would it be for me, should this rash intrigue come to be discovered? But what do I say? Should not I and my family be quite destroyed? That is the thing perplexes my mind. But I have just now come to such a resolution as I ought to make: I will go immediately and satisfy my creditors, and recover my debts; when I have secured my estate, I will retire to Balsora, and stay till the tempest I foresee blows over. The friendship I have for Schemselnihar and the prince of Persia makes me very sensible to what danger they are exposed. I pray Heaven to discover it to themselves, and to preserve them; but if their ill destiny will have their amours come to the knowledge of the caliph, I shall at least be out of the reach of his resentment; for I do not think them so wicked as to design to draw me into their misfortunes. It would be extreme ingratitude in them to do so, and a sorry reward for the good service I have done them, particularly to the prince of Persia, who may save himself and his mistress from this precipice, if he pleases: he may as easily leave Bagdad as I; absence would insensibly disengage him from a passion which will only increase whilst he continues in this place.

The jeweller was extremely surprised at what Ebn Thaher told him. What you say to me, said he, is of so great importance, that I cannot understand how Schemselnihar and the prince have been capable of abandoning themselves to such a violent amour. What inclination soever they may have for one another, instead of yielding to it, they ought to resist it, and make a better use of their reason. Is it possible they can be insensible of the dangerous consequences of their correspondence? How deplorable is their blindness! I perceive all the consequences of it as well as you; but you are wise and prudent, and I approve your resolution; that is the only way to deliver yourself from the fatal events which you have reason to fear. The jeweller then rose, and took his leave of Ebn Thaher.

Before the jeweller retired, Ebn Thaher conjured him, by the friendship betwixt them, to speak nothing of this to any person. Be not afraid, said the jeweller; I will keep this secret on peril of my life.

Two days after, the jeweller went to Ebn Thaher's shop; and, seeing it shut, doubted not that he had executed the design he had spoken of; but, to be certain, he asked a neighbour if he knew why it was shut? The neighbour answered, that he knew not, unless Ebn Thaher was gone a journey. There was no need of his inquiring further, and immediately he thought upon the prince of Persia: Unhappy prince, said he to himself, what grief will you suffer when you hear this news? By what means will you now carry on your correspondence with Schemselnihar? I fear you will die of despair. I have compassion on you; I must make up the loss that you have of a too timid confident.

The business that obliged him to come abroad was of no consequence, so that he neglected it; and though he did not know the prince of Persia, but only by having sold him some jewels, he went straight to his house, addressed himself to one of his servants, and prayed him to tell his master that he desired to speak with him about business of very great importance. The servant returned immediately to the jeweller, and introduced him to the chamber of the prince, who was leaning on a sofa, with his head upon a cushion. As soon as the prince saw him, he rose to receive him, said he was welcome, entreated him to sit down, and asked if he could serve him in any thing, or if he came to tell him any matter concerning himself. Prince, answered the jeweller, though I have not the honour to be particularly acquainted with you, yet the desire of testifying my zeal has made me take the liberty to come to your house, to impart to you some news that concerns you. I hope you will pardon my boldness, because of my good intention.

After this introduction, the jeweller entered upon the matter, and pursued it thus: Prince, I shall have the honour to tell you, that it is a long time since the conformity of humour, and several affairs we had together, united Ebn Thaher and myself in strict friendship. I know you are acquainted with him, and that he has been employed in obliging you in all that he could. I am informed of this from himself; for he keeps nothing secret from me, nor I from him. I went just now to his shop, and was surprised to find it shut. I addressed myself to one of his neighbours, to ask the reason; he answered me, that, two days ago, Ebn Thaher took his leave of him and other neighbours, offering them his service at Balsora, whither he was gone, he said, about an affair of great importance. Not being satisfied with this answer, the concern that I have for whatever belongs to him, determined me to come and ask you if you knew any thing particularly concerning his sudden departure.

At this discourse, which the jeweller accommodated to the subject, that he might come the better to his design, the prince of Persia changed colour, and looked so as made the jeweller sensible that he was afflicted with the news. I am surprised at what you inform me, said he; there could not befall me a greater misfortune. Ah! said he, with tears in his eyes, I am undone if what you tell me be true! Has Ebn Thaher, who was all my comfort, and in whom I put all my confidence, left me! I cannot think of living after so cruel a blow.

The jeweller needed no more to convince him fully of the prince of Persia's violent passion, which Ebn Thaher had told him: mere friendship would not let him speak so; nothing but love could produce such feeling expressions.

The prince continued some moments swallowed up with these melancholy thoughts: at last he lifted up his head, and calling one of his servants, Go, said he, to Ebn Timber's house, and ask any of his domestics if he be gone to Balsora; run and come back quickly, and tell me what you hear. While the servant was gone, the jeweller endeavoured to entertain the prince of Persia with indifferent subjects; but the prince gave little heed to him, for he was a prey to fatal grief. Sometimes he could not persuade himself that Ebn Thaher was gone; at other times he did not doubt

the truth of it, when he reflected upon the discourse he had the last time he saw him, and the angry countenance with which he left him.

At last the prince's servant returned, and reported that he had spoken to one of Ebn Thaher servants, who assured him that he was gone two days before to Balsora. As I came from Ebn Thaher's house, added the servant, a slave well arrayed came to me, and, asking if I had the honour to belong to you, she told me she wanted to speak with you, begging, at the same time, that she might come along with me: she is now in the house, and I believe has a letter to give you from some person of note. The prince commanded him to bring her in immediately: he doubted not but it was Schemselnihar's confident slave, as indeed it was. The jeweller knew who she was, having seen her several times at Ebn Thaher's house. She could not have come at a better time to hinder the prince from despair.

She saluted him, and the prince of Persia did likewise salute Schemselnihar's confident. The jeweller rose as soon as he saw her appear, and stepped aside, to leave them at liberty to speak together. The confident, after conversing some time with the prince, took leave, and departed. She left him quite another thing than before; his eyes appeared brighter, and his countenance more gay; which made the jeweller know that the good slave came to tell him some news that favoured his amour.

The jeweller having taken his place again near the prince, said to him, smiling, I see, prince, you have important affairs at the caliph's palace. The prince of Persia was astonished and alarmed at this discourse, and answered the jeweller, why do you judge that I have affairs at the caliph's palace? I judge, replied the jeweller, by the slave that is gone forth. To whom, think you, belongs this slave? said the prince. To Schemselnihar, the caliph's favourite, answered the jeweller. I know, continued he, both the slave and her mistress, who have several times done me the honour to come to my house, and buy jewels. Besides, I know that Schemselnihar keeps nothing secret from this slave; and I have seen her go and come for several days along the streets, very much troubled, which made me imagine that it was upon some affair of consequence concerning her mistress.

The jeweller's words did much trouble the prince of Persia. He would not say so, said he to himself, if he did not suspect, or rather know, my secret. He remained silent for some time, not knowing what to answer. At length he said to the jeweller, You have told me those things which make me believe that you know yet more than you have acquainted me with. It will tend much to my quiet if I be perfectly informed; I conjure you, therefore, not to dissemble.

Then the jeweller, who desired no better, gave him a particular account of what had passed between Ebn Thaher and himself; so that he let him know that he was informed of his correspondence with Schemselnihar; and forgot not to tell him that Ebn Thaher was afraid of the danger of being his confident in the matter, which was partly the occasion of his retiring to Balsora, to stay till the storm which he feared should be over. This he has done, added the jeweller; and I am surprised how he could determine to

abandon you in the condition he informed me you was in. As for me, prince, I confess I am moved with compassion towards you, and am come to offer you my service; and if you do me the favour to accept of it, I engage myself to be as faithful to you as Ebn Thaher; besides, I promise to be more constant, I am ready to sacrifice my honour and life for you; and, in fine, that you may not doubt my sincerity, I swear, by all that is sacred in our religion, to keep your secret inviolable! Be persuaded, then, that you will find in me the friend that you have lost. This discourse encouraged the prince, and comforted him under Ebn Thaher's absence. I am very glad, said he to the jeweller, to find in you a reparation of my loss: I want words to express the obligations I am under to you. I pray God to recompense your generosity; and I accept your obliging offer with all my heart. Believe it, continued he, that Schemselnihar's confident came to speak to me concerning you; she told me that it was you who advised Ebn Thaher to go from Bagdad; these were the last words she spoke to me when she went away, and had almost persuaded me of it. But do not resent it; for I doubt not but she is deceived, after what you have told me. Prince, replied the jeweller, I have had the honour to give you a faithful account of my conversation with Ebn Thaher. It is true, when he told me he would return to Balsora, I did not oppose his design, but said he was a wise and prudent man; and, that this may not hinder you from putting confidence in me, I am ready to serve you with all imaginable zeal; which though you do otherwise, this shall not hinder me from keeping your secret religiously according to my oath. I have already told you, replied the prince, that I would not believe what the confident said; it is her zeal that inspired her with this groundless suspicion, and you ought to excuse it, as I do.

They continued their conversation for some time, and consulted together of convenient means to continue the prince's correspondence with Schemselnihar: they agreed to begin by disabusing the confident, who was so unjustly prepossessed against the jeweller. The prince engaged to undeceive her the first time she returned, and to entreat her to engage herself to the jeweller, that she might bring the letters, or any other information, from her mistress to him. In fine, they agreed that she ought not to come so frequently to the prince's house, because she might thereby give occasion to discover that which was of so great importance to conceal. At last the jeweller rose, and, after having again prayed the prince of Persia to have an entire confidence in him, retired.

The jeweller, returning to his house, perceived before him a letter which somebody had dropped in the street; he took it up; and, not being sealed, he opened it, and found that it contained as follows:

Letter from Schemselnihar to the Prince of Persia.

I am informed by my confident of a piece of news which troubles me no less than it does you: By losing Ebn Thaher, we have indeed lost much; but let this not hinder you, dear prince, thinking to preserve yourself. If our confident has abandoned us through a slavish fear, let us consider that it is a misfortune which we could not avoid. I confess Ebn Thaher has left us at a time when we need him most; but let us fortify ourselves by patience

against this unlooked-for accident, and let us not forbear to love one another constantly. Fortify your heart against this misfortune. Nobody can obtain what they desire without trouble. Let us not discourage ourselves, but hope that Heaven will favour us; and that, after so many afflictions, we shall come to a happy accomplishment of our desires. Adieu.

While the jeweller was conversing with the prince of Persia, the confidant had time to return to the palace, and tell her mistress the ill news of Ebn Thaher's departure. Schemselnihar immediately wrote this letter, and sent back her confidant with it to the prince of Persia; but she negligently dropped it.

The jeweller was glad to find it; for it was a good way to set him right with the confidant, and bring him to the point he desired. When he had read it, he perceived the slave, who sought it with a great deal of uneasiness, looking about every where. He closed it again quickly, and put it into his bosom; but the slave took notice of it, and ran to him. Sir, said she, I have dropped a letter which you had just now in your hand; I beseech you be pleased to restore it. The jeweller, taking no notice that he heard her, continued his way till he came to his house. He did not shut the door behind him, that the confidant, who followed him, might come in. She accordingly did so; and when she came to his chamber, Sir, said she to him, you can make no use of the letter you have found; and you would make no difficulty in returning it to me, if you knew from whom it came, and to whom it is directed. Besides, let me tell you, you cannot honestly keep it.

Before the jeweller answered the confidant, he made her sit down, and said to her, Is not this letter from Schemselnihar, and directed to the prince of Persia? The slave, who expected no such question, blushed. The question puzzles you, replied he, but I assure you I do not propose it rashly: I could have given you the letter in the street, but I suffered you to follow me, on purpose that I might discourse with you. Tell me, is it just to impute an unhappy accident to people who no ways contributed towards it? Yet this you have done, in telling the prince of Persia that it was I who counselled Ebn Thaher to leave Bagdad for his own safety. I do not intend to lose time in justifying myself to you; it is enough that the prince of Persia is fully persuaded of my innocence in this matter: I will only tell you, that instead of contributing to Ebn Thaher's departure, I have been extremely afflicted at it; not so much for my friendship to him, as out of compassion for the condition in which he left the prince of Persia, whose correspondence with Schemselnihar he has acknowledged to me. As soon as I knew certainly that Ebn Thaher was gone from Bagdad, I presented myself to the prince, in whose house you found me, to inform him of this news, and to offer him the same service which he did him; and, provided you put the same confidence in me that you did in Ebn Thaher, you may serve yourself by my assistance. Inform your mistress of what I have told you, and assure her, that if I should die for engaging in so dangerous an intrigue, I will rejoice to have sacrificed myself for two lovers so worthy of each other.

The confidant, after having heard the jeweller with great satisfaction, begged him to pardon her the ill opinion she had

conceived of him, out of the zeal she had for her mistress. I am extremely glad, added she, that Schemselnihar and the prince have found you, who are a man fit to supply Ebn Thaher's place, and I shall not fail to signify to my mistress the good-will you bear her. After the confidant had testified to the jeweller her joy to see him so well disposed to serve Schemselnihar and the prince of Persia, the jeweller took the letter out of his bosom, and restored it to her, saying, Go, carry it quickly to the prince of Persia, and come back this way, that I may see the answer. Forget not to give him an account of our conversation.

The confidant took the letter, and carried it to the prince, who answered it immediately. She returned to the jeweller's house to show him the answer, which was this:

The Prince of Persia's Answer to Schemselnihar.

Your precious letter had a great effect upon me, but not so great as I could wish. You endeavour to comfort me for the loss of Ebn Thaher; but, alas! sensible as I am of this, it is the least of my troubles! You know my malady, and that your presence only can cure me. When will the time come that I shall enjoy it without fear of being ever deprived of it? O how long does it seem to me! But shall we rather flatter ourselves that we may see one another? You command me to preserve myself; I will obey, since I have renounced my own will to follow yours. Adieu.

After the jeweller had read this letter, he gave it again to the confidant, who said, when she was going away, I will tell my mistress to put the same confidence in you that she did in Ebn Thaher, and you shall hear of me to-morrow. Accordingly, next day she returned with a pleasant countenance. Your very look, said he to her, informs me that you have brought Schemselnihar to what you wished. That is true, said the confidant, and you shall hear how I effected it. Yesterday, continued she, I found Schemselnihar expecting me with impatience; I gave her the prince of Persia's letter, which she read with tears in her eyes; and when she had done, I observed she had abandoned herself to her usual sorrow. Madam, said I, it is doubtless Ebn Thaher's removal that troubles you; but suffer me to conjure you, in the name of God, not to concern yourself any further about that matter. We have found another who offers to oblige you with as much zeal, and, what is yet more important, with greater courage. Then I mentioned you, continued the slave, and acquainted her with the motive which made you go to the prince of Persia's house. In short, I assured her that you would inviolably keep the secret betwixt her and the prince of Persia, and that you was* resolved to favour their amours with all your might. She seemed to me much relieved by my discourse. Ah! what obligations, said she, are the prince of Persia and I under to that honest man you speak of? I must see him, that I may hear from his own mouth what you tell me, and thank him for such an unheard-of piece of generosity towards persons with whom he is no way obliged to concern himself. A sight of him will please me; and I will not omit any thing to confirm him in those good sentiments. Do not fail to bring him to-morrow. Therefore, pray, sir, go with me to the palace.

The confidant's discourse perplexed the jeweller. Your mistress,

replied he, must allow me to say, that she has not thought well of what she requires. Ebn Thaher's access to the caliph gave him admission every where; and the officers, who knew him, suffered him to go and come freely to Schemselnihar's palace; but, as for me, how dare I enter? You see well enough that it is not possible. I entreat you to represent those reasons to Schemselnihar which hinder me giving her that satisfaction, and acquaint her with all the ill consequences that would result from it. If she considers it ever so little, she will find that it would expose me needlessly to very great danger.

The confident endeavoured to encourage the jeweller: Believe me, said he, that Schemselnihar is not so unreasonable as to expose you to the least danger, from whom she expects such considerable services. Consider with yourself that there is not the least appearance of hazard: my mistress and I are too much interested in this affair to involve you in any danger. You may depend upon me, and leave yourself to my conduct. After the affair is over, you will confess to me that your fear was groundless.

The jeweller hearkened to the confident's discourse, and got up to follow her; but, notwithstanding his natural courage, he was seized with such terror that his whole body trembled. In the condition you are in, said she, I perceive it will be better for you to stay at home, and that Schemselnihar take other measures to see you. It is not to be doubted but that, to satisfy her desire, she will come hither herself. The case being so, sir, I would not have you to go, as I am persuaded it will not be long before she comes to you. The confident foresaw this very well; for she no sooner informed Schemselnihar of the jeweller's fear, than she made ready to go to his house.

He received her with all the marks of profound respect. When she sat down, being a little fatigued with walking, she unveiled herself, and discovered to the jeweller such beauty as made him acknowledge that the prince of Persia was excusable in giving his heart to her. Then she saluted the jeweller with a graceful countenance, and said to him, I am informed with what zeal you have engaged in the prince of Persia's concerns and mine; but, without immediately forming a design to express my gratitude, I thank Heaven, which has so soon made up Ebn Thaher's loss.

Schemselnihar said several other obliging things to the jeweller, after which she returned to her palace. The jeweller went immediately to give an account of this visit to the prince of Persia, who said to him, as soon as he saw him, I have expected you impatiently. The trusty slave has brought me a letter from her mistress, but she does not comfort me: whatever the lovely Schemselnihar says, I dare not hope for any thing; my patience is at an end; I know not now what measures to take. Ebn Thaher's departure makes me despair; he was my only support; I lost all by losing him, for I flattered myself with some hopes by reason of his access to Schemselnihar.

After these words, which the prince pronounced with so much eagerness that he gave the jeweller no time to interrupt him, he said to the prince, No man can bear a greater share of your affliction than I do; and if you will have patience to hear me, you will perceive that I am capable of giving you ease. Upon this

the prince became silent, and hearkened to him. I see very well, said the jeweller, that the only thing to give you satisfaction is to fall upon a way that you may converse freely with Schemselnihar. This I will procure you, and to-morrow will set about it. You must by no means expose yourself to enter Schemselnihar's palace; you know by experience the danger of that: I know a very fit place for this interview, where you shall be safe. When the jeweller had spoken thus, the prince embraced him with a transport of joy. You revive, said he, by this charming promise, an unhappy lover who was resolved to die; I see that you have fully repaired the loss of Ebn Thaher: whatever you do will be well done; I leave myself entirely to you.

The prince, after thanking the jeweller for his zeal, returned home, and next morning Schemselnihar's confidant came to him. He told her that he had put the prince of Persia in hopes that he should see Schemselnihar speedily. I am come purposely, answered she, to take measures with you for that end. I think, continued she, this house will be convenient enough for their interview. I could receive them very well here, replied he; but I think they will have more liberty in another house of mine, where nobody lives at present; I will quickly furnish it for receiving them. Since the matter is so, replied the confidant, there remains nothing for me to do but to make Schemselnihar consent to it. I will go tell her, and return speedily with an answer.

She was as diligent as her promise; and, returning to the jeweller, told him that her mistress would not fail to keep the appointment in the evening. In the mean time she gave him a purse of money to prepare a collation. He sent her immediately to the house where the lovers were to meet, that she might know whither to bring her mistress; and when she was gone, he went to borrow from his friends vessels of gold and silver, tapestry, rich cushions, and other furniture, with which he furnished the house very magnificently; and, when he had put all things in order, went to the prince of Persia.

You may easily conceive the prince of Persia's joy, when the jeweller told him that he came to conduct him to the house he had prepared to receive him and Schemselnihar. This news obliterated all his former trouble. He put on a magnificent robe, and went without his retinue along with the jeweller, who led him through several by-streets, that nobody might observe him, and at last brought him to the house, where they discoursed together until Schemselnihar came.

They did not stay long for this passionate lover. She came after evening-prayers, with her confidant and two other slaves. The excess of joy that seized those two lovers, when they saw one another, it is altogether impossible to express. They sat down together upon the sofa for some time, without being able to speak, they were so much overjoyed; but, when speech returned to them, they soon made up for their silence. They expressed themselves with so much tenderness, as made the jeweller, the confidant, and the two other slaves, weep. The jeweller, however, restrained his tears to think upon the collation, which he brought. The lovers ate and drank a little, after which they again sat down on the sofa. Schemselnihar asked the jeweller if he had a lute, or any other instrument. The jeweller, who took

care to provide all that might please them, brought her a lute, which she took some time to tune, and then played.

While Schemselnihar was thus charming the prince of Persia, and expressing her passion by words composed extempore, a great noise was heard, and immediately the slave whom the jeweller brought with him appeared in a terrible fright, to tell him that some people were breaking up the gate; that he asked who it was, but, instead of an answer, the blows were redoubled. The jeweller, being alarmed, left Schemselnihar and the prince, to go and inform himself of the truth of this bad news. There was already got into the court a company of men armed with bayonets and scimitars, who had entered privately, and, having broken up the gate, came straight towards him: he stood close to a wall for fear of his life, and saw ten of them pass without being perceived by them; and, finding that he could give no help to the prince of Persia and Schemselnihar, he satisfied himself with bewailing them, and fled for refuge to a neighbour's house, who was not yet gone to bed. He did not doubt that this unexpected violence was by the caliph's order, who, he thought, had been informed of his favourite's meeting with the prince of Persia. He heard a great noise in his own house, which continued till midnight; and when all was quiet, as he thought, he prayed his neighbour to lend him a scimitar, and, being thus armed, went on till he came to the gate of his own house. He entered the court full of fear, and perceived a man, who asked him who he was? He knew by his voice that it was his own slave. How didst thou do, said he, to avoid being taken by the watch? Sir, answered the slave, I hid myself in a corner of the court, and I went out as soon as I heard the noise. But it was not the watch who broke your house; they were highwaymen, who within these few days robbed another in this neighbourhood: they have doubtless had notice of the rich furniture you brought hither, and had that in their view.

The jeweller thought his slave's conjecture probable: he entered the house, and saw that the highwaymen had taken all the furniture out of the chamber where he received Schemselnihar and her lover; that they had also carried off the vessels of gold and silver, and, in a word, had left nothing. Being in this condition, O Heaven! cried he, I am irrecoverably undone! What will my friends say, and what excuse can I make, when I tell them that highwaymen have broken into my house, and robbed me of all that they generously lent me? I shall never be able to make up their loss. Besides, what is become of Schemselnihar and the prince of Persia? This business will be so public, that it is impossible but it must reach the caliph's ears. He will get notice of this meeting, and I shall fall a sacrifice to his fury. The slave, who loved him, endeavoured to comfort him thus: As to Schemselnihar, said he, the highwaymen probably would content themselves to strip her; and you have reason to think that she is retired to her palace with her slaves. The prince of Persia is probably in the same condition; so that you have reason to hope that the caliph will never know of this adventure. As for the loss your friends have sustained, that is a misfortune which you could not avoid. They know very well the highwaymen to be so numerous, that they have not only pillaged the house I have already spoken of, but many other houses of the principal noblemen of the court; and they are not ignorant that,

notwithstanding the orders given to apprehend them, nobody has yet been able to seize any of them. You will be acquitted by restoring your friends the value of the things that are stolen; and, blessed be God, you have enough left.

Waiting till day, the jeweller ordered the slave to mend the gate of the house, which was broken up, as well as he could: after which he returned to his ordinary house with his slave, making sad reflections on what had befallen him. Ebn Thaher, said he to himself, has been wiser than I; he foresaw the misfortune into which I have blindly thrown myself: would to God I had never meddled in this intrigue, which I fear will cost me my life!

It was scarcely day, when the report of the robbery had spread through the city, and there came to the house a great many of the jeweller's friends and neighbours, to testify their grief for this misfortune, but were curious to know the particulars. He thanked them for their affection, and was so much the better satisfied, that he heard nobody speak of Schemselnihar or the prince of Persia, which made him believe they were at their houses. or in some secure place.

When the jeweller was alone, his servants brought him something to eat, but he could not taste a bit. About noon one of his slaves came to tell him that a man was at the gate, whom he knew not, and desired to speak with him. The jeweller, not willing to receive a stranger into his house, rose up, and went to speak with him. Though you do not know me, said the man, I know you, and am come to discourse with you on an important affair. The jeweller prayed him to step in. No, answered the stranger; if you please, rather take the trouble to go with me to your other house. How know you, replied the jeweller, that I have another house? I know well enough, answered the stranger: follow me, do not fear any thing; I have something to communicate to you which will please you. The jeweller went immediately with him; and after he had considered by the way how the house they were going to was robbed, he said to him that it was not fit to receive him.

When they were before the house, and the stranger saw the gate half broken down, he said to the jeweller, I see you have told me the truth; I will carry you to a place which will be more convenient. He went on when he had spoken thus, and walked all the rest of the day without stopping. The jeweller being weary with walking, vexed to see night approach, and the stranger having walked all day without acquainting him where he was going, began to lose patience. Then they came to a path which led them to the Tigris; and as soon as they came to the river, they crossed in a little boat. The stranger led the jeweller through a long street, where he had never been before, and, after taking him through several streets, stopped at a gate, which he opened. He caused the jeweller to go in, shut the gate, bolted it with a huge iron bolt, and then conducted, him to a chamber, where there were ten other men, all as great strangers to the jeweller as his conductor.

The ten men received the jeweller without any compliments. They bid him sit down; of which he had great need, for he was not only weak with walking so far, but the fear he was in, on finding himself with people whom he thought he had reason to dread, would

have disabled him from standing. They waited for their leader to supper, and, as soon as he came, it was served up. They washed their hands, obliging the jeweller to do the like, and to sit at table with them. After supper, the men asked him if he knew to whom he spoke. He answered, No, and that he knew not the place he was in. Tell us your last nights adventure, said they to him, and conceal nothing from us. The jeweller, being astonished at this discourse, answered, Gentlemen, it is probable you know it already. That is true, replied they, the young man and the young lady, who were at your house yesternight, told it us; but we would know it from your own mouth. The jeweller needed no more to be informed that they were the highwaymen who had broken up and plundered his house. Gentlemen, said he, I am much troubled for that young man and the lady; can you tell me any thing of them?

Upon the jeweller's inquiry if they knew any thing of the young man and the young lady, the thieves answered, Be not concerned for them; they are safe enough, and in good health: which saying, they showed him two closets, where they assured him they were separately shut up. They added, We are informed you only know what relates to them; which we no sooner came to understand, than we showed them all imaginable respect, and were so far from doing them any injury, that we treated them with all the kindness we were capable of on your account. You may secure yourself the like favour, proceeded they, in regard to your own person, and put all manner of confidence in us without the least reserve.

The jeweller, being heartened at this, and overjoyed to hear that the prince of Persia and Schemselnihar were safe, resolved to engage the thieves yet further in their interest. For this purpose he commended them, flattered them, and gave them a thousand benedictions. Gentlemen, said he, I must confess I have not the honour of knowing you; yet it is no small happiness to me that I am not wholly unknown to you; and I can never be sufficiently grateful for the favours which that knowledge has procured me at your hands. Without mentioning so great an act of humanity as that I lately received from you, I must needs say, I am fully persuaded that no persons in the world can be so proper to be trusted with a secret, and none more fit to undertake a great enterprise, which you can best bring to a good issue by your zeal, courage, and intrepidity. In confidence of these great and good qualities, which are so much your due, I will not scruple to relate to you my whole history, with that of the two persons you found in my house.

After the jeweller had thus secured, as he thought, the thieves to secrecy, he made no scruple to relate to them the whole amour of the prince of Persia and Schemselnihar, from the beginning of it to the time he received them into his house.

The thieves were greatly astonished at the surprising particulars they heard, and could not forbear crying out, How! is it possible that the young man should be the illustrious Ali Elm Becar, prince of Persia; and the young lady the fair and celebrated Schemselnihar! The jeweller assured them nothing was more certain, and that they needed not to think it strange that persons of so distinguished a character should not care to be known.

Upon this assurance of their quality, the thieves went immediately, one after the other, and threw themselves at their feet, imploring pardon, and begging them to believe they would never have offered any violence to their persons, had they known who they were; but, seeing they did not, they would by their future conduct do their best endeavours to make some recompence at least for the crime they had thus ignorantly committed. Having made profound reverences, they returned to the jeweller, and told him they were heartily sorry they could not restore all that had been taken from him, some part of it being out of their possession; but as for what remained, if he would content himself with his plate, it should be forthwith put into his hands.

The jeweller was overjoyed at the favour; and after the thieves had delivered the plate, they required the prince, Schemselnihar, and him, to promise upon oath that they would not betray them, and they would carry them to a place whence they might easily go to their respective homes. The prince, Schemselnihar, and the jeweller, replied, that they might rely on their words; but since they desired an oath of them, they solemnly swore not to discover them so long as they were with them. With this the thieves were satisfied, and immediately set out to perform their promise.

By the way, the jeweller, being concerned that he could not see the confidant and the two slaves, came up to Schemselnihar and begged her to inform him what was become of them. She answered, she knew nothing of them, and that all she could tell him was, that she was carried away from his house, ferried over a river, and brought to the place from whence they were just now come.

Schemselnihar and the jeweller had no further discourse; they found themselves at the brink of a river, whence the thieves immediately took boat, and carried them to the other side.

Whilst the prince, Schemselnihar, and the jeweller, were landing, they heard a noise as of horse-guards that were coming towards them. The thieves no sooner perceived the danger, but they took to their oars, and got over to the other side of the river in an instant.

The commander of the brigade demanded of the prince, Schemselnihar, and the jeweller, who they were, and whence they came so late. This frightened them at first so much that they could not speak; but at length the jeweller found his tongue, and said, Sir, I can assure you, we are very honest people; but those persons who have just landed us, and are got to the other side of the water, are thieves, who, having last night broken open the house that we were in, pillaged it, and afterwards carried us to an obscure inn, where, by some entreaty and good management, we prevailed on them to let us have our liberty; to which end they brought us hither. They have restored us part of the booty they had taken from us. At these words he showed the plate he had recovered.

The commander, not being satisfied with what the jeweller told him, came up to him and the prince of Persia, and, looking steadfastly at them, said, Tell me truly who is this lady? how came you to know her? and whereabouts do you live?

This demand surprised them strangely, and tied their tongues, insomuch that neither of them could answer; till at length Schemselnihar, taking the commander aside, told him frankly who she was; which he no sooner came to know, than he alighted, paid both her and the company great respect, and caused two boats to be got ready for their service.

When the boats were come, he put Schemselnihar into one, and the prince of Persia and the jeweller into the other, with two of his people in each: they had orders to accompany them whithersoever they were bound. Being abroad, the two boats took different routes; but we shall at present speak only of that wherein were the prince and the jeweller.

The prince, to save his guides trouble, bid them land the jeweller with him, and named the place whither he would go. The guides, mistaking his orders, stopped just before the caliph's palace, which put both him and the jeweller into a fright, though he durst discover nothing of the matter; for though they had heard the commander's orders to his men, they could not help imagining they were to be delivered up to the guard, and brought before the caliph next morning.

This, nevertheless, was not the intention of the guides; for, after they had landed them, they, by their master's command, recommended them to an officer of the guard, who next morning assigned them soldiers to conduct them by land to the prince's chateau, which was at some distance from the river.

The prince being come home, what with the fatigue of his journey, and the affliction he conceived at being never likely again to see Schemselnihar, fell into a swoon on his sofa; and while the greater part of his servants was endeavouring to recover him, the other part gathered about the jeweller, and begged of him to tell them what had happened to the prince their lord, whose absence had occasioned inexpressible disquiet.

The jeweller, who would discover nothing to them that was not prudent to be repealed, told them it was not a proper time for such a relation, and that they would do better to go and assist the prince, than require anything of him, especially at that juncture. The prince fortunately came to himself that very moment; when those that but just before required his history with so much earnestness, began now to get at a distance, and pay that respect which was due from them. Although the prince had in some measure recovered himself, yet he continued so weak, that he could not open his mouth. He answered only by signs, and that even to his nearest relations who spoke to him. He remained in the same condition till next morning, when the jeweller came to take leave of him. His answer was only with a wink, holding forth his right hand; but when he saw he was loaded with the bundle of plate the thieves had taken from him, he made a sign to his servants that they should take and carry it along with him to his house.

The jeweller had been expected home with great impatience by his family the day he went forth with the man that came to ask for him, and whom he did not know; but no who was quite given over, and it was no longer doubted that some disaster had befallen him.

His wife, children, and servants, were in continual grief, and lamented him night and day; but at length, when they saw him again, their joy was so great, they could hardly contain themselves; yet they were troubled to find that his countenance was greatly altered from what it had been before, insomuch that he was hardly to be known. This was thought to have been occasioned by his great fatigue, and the fears he had undergone, which would not let him sleep. Finding himself something out of order, he continued within doors for two days, and would admit only one of his intimate friends to visit him.

The third day, perceiving himself better, he thought he might regain strength by going abroad, and therefore went to the shop of a rich friend of his, with whom he continued long in discourse. As he was rising to go home, he observed a woman make a sign to him, whom he presently knew to be the confidant of Schemselnihar. Partly out of fear, and partly through joy, he made what haste he could away, without looking at her; but she followed him, as he very well knew she would, the place in which they saw each other being by no means proper for an interview. As he walked a little faster than usual, she could not overtake him, and therefore every now and then called out to stop. He heard her, it is true; but, after what had happened, he did not think fit to take notice of her in public, for fear of giving cause to believe that he had been with Schemselnihar. In short, it was known to every body in Bagdad that this woman belonged to her, and therefore he thought it prudent to conceal his having any knowledge of her. He continued the same pace, and at last came to a mosque, where he knew but few people resorted; there he entered, and she after him, wherein they had a long converse together, without any body overhearing them.

Both the jeweller and the confidant expressed a great deal of joy at seeing each other after the strange adventure occasioned by the thieves, and their reciprocal concern for each other's welfare, without mentioning a word of what related to their own particular persons.

The jeweller would needs have her relate to him how she escaped with the two slaves, and what she knew of Schemselnihar from the time he had left her; but so great were her importunities to be informed of what had happened to him from the time of their unexpected separation, that he found himself obliged to comply. Having finished what she desired, he told her that he expected she would oblige him in her turn; which she did in the following manner.

When I first saw the thieves, said she, I imagined, rightly considered, that they were of the caliph's guard, who, being informed of the escape of Schemselnihar, had sent them to take away the lives of the prince and us all; but, being convinced of the error of that thought, I immediately got upon the leads of your house, at the same time that the thieves entered the chamber where the prince and Schemselnihar were, and was soon after followed by that lady's two slaves. From lead to lead, we came at last to a house of very honest people, who received us with a great deal of civility, and with whom we lodged that night.

Next morning, after we had returned thanks to the master of the house for our good usage, we returned to Schemselnihar's hotel, which we entered in great disorder, and the more so as we could not learn the fate of the two unfortunate lovers. The other women of Schemselnihar were astonished to see me return without their lady. We told them we had left her at the house of a lady, one of her friends, and that she would send for us when she had a mind to come home; with which excuse they seemed well satisfied.

For my part, I spent the day in great uneasiness; and when night came, opening a little back gate, I espied a boat driven along by the stream. Calling to the waterman, I desired him to row up the river, to see if he could not meet a lady, and, if he found her, to bring her along with him. The two slaves and I waited impatiently for his return; and at length, about midnight, we saw the boat coming down with two men in it, and a woman lying along in the stern. When the boat came up, the two men helped the woman to rise; and then it was that I knew her to be Schemselnihar. I rejoiced so greatly to see her, that I cannot sufficiently express myself.

I gave my hand to Schemselnihar to help her out of the boat. She had no small occasion for my assistance, for she could hardly stand. When she was ashore, she whispered me in the ear in an afflicted tone, bidding me go and take a purse of a thousand pieces of gold, and give to the soldiers who had waited on her. I obeyed, leaving her to be supported by the two slaves; and, having paid the waterman, shut the back door.

I then followed my lady, who was hardly got to her chamber before I overtook her. We undressed her, and put her to bed, where she had not long been before she was ready to give up the ghost; in which condition she continued the remainder of the night. The day following, her other women expressed a great desire to see her; but I told them she had been much fatigued, and wanted rest to restore her. The other women and I, nevertheless, gave her all the assistance we possibly could. She persisted in swallowing nothing which we offered; and we must have despaired of her life, had I not persuaded her to take a spoonful or two of wine, which had a sensible effect on her. By mere importunity, we at length prevailed upon her to eat also.

When she came to the use of her speech, for she had hitherto only mourned, groaned, and sighed, I begged her to tell me how she escaped out of the hands of the thieves. Why should you require of me, said she, with a profound sigh, what will but renew my grief? Would to God the thieves had taken away my life, rather than preserved it, as in that case my misfortunes would have had an end; whereas I now live but to increase my torment.

Madam, replied I, I beg you will not refuse me this favour. You cannot but know that unhappy people have a certain consolation in venting their misfortunes; and if you be pleased to relate yours, I doubt not that you will find some relief in so doing.

Why then, said she, lend your ear to a story the most afflicting that can be imagined. You must know, when I first saw the thieves entering with sword in hand, I believed it the last moment of my life: but dying did not then seem so shocking to me, since I

thought I was to die with the prince of Persia. However, instead of murdering, two of the thieves were ordered to take care of us, whilst their companions were busied in packing up the goods which they found in the house. When they had done, and had got their bundles upon their backs, they went away, carrying us along with them.

As we went along one of those who had the charge of us demanded of me briskly who I was: I answered, I was a dancer. He put the same question to the prince, who replied that he was a shopkeeper.

When they were come to the place whither they were going, I had new fears to alarm me; for they gathered about us, and, after considering well my habit, and the rich jewels I was adorned with, they seemed to think that I had disguised my quality. Dancers, said they, do not use to be dressed as you are; pray tell us truly who you are.

When they saw I answered nothing, they asked the prince once more who he was; for they told him they perceived he was not the person he pretended. He did not satisfy them any more than I had done; but only told them he came to see the jeweller, who was the owner of the house where they found us. I know this jeweller, said one of the rogues, who seemed to have some authority over the rest; I have some obligations to him, of which he yet knows nothing; and I take upon me to bring him hither to-morrow morning from another house he has; but you must not expect to stir till he come and tell us who you are; though, in the mean time, I promise there shall be no manner of injury offered to you.

The jeweller was brought next morning, as he said; who, thinking to oblige us, as he really did, declared to the rogues the whole truth of the matter. The thieves no sooner knew who we were, but they came and asked my pardon; and I believe did the like to the prince, who was shut up in another room. They protested to me, they would not have broken open the jeweller's house, had they known whose it was. They soon after took us, (the prince, the jeweller, and myself), and carried us to the river-side, where, having put us on board the boat, they rowed us across the water; but we were no sooner landed, than a party of the horse-guards came up to us.

The rogues fled. I took the commander aside, and told him my name, informing him withal, that the night before I had been seized by robbers who forced me along with them; but having been told who I was, they had released me, and the two persons he saw with me, on my account. He alighted and paid his respects to me; and expressing a great deal of joy for being able to oblige me, he caused two boats to be brought, putting me and two of his soldiers, whom you have seen, into one, and the prince, and jeweller, with two more, into the other. My guides have conducted me hither; but what is become of the prince and his friend, I cannot tell.

I trust in Heaven, added she, with a shower of tears, no harm has happened to them since our separation; and I do not doubt that the prince's concern is equal to mine. The jeweller, to whom we have been so much obliged, ought to be recompensed for the loss

he has sustained on our account. Do not you therefore fail, said she, speaking to the confident, to take two purses of a thousand pieces of gold each, and carry them to him to-morrow morning in my name; and, at the same time, be sure to inquire after the prince's welfare.

When my good mistress had done speaking, I endeavoured, as to the last article of inquiring into the prince's welfare, to calm her mind, which was in some disorder, and to persuade her not to yield so much to love, since the danger she had so lately escaped would be soon renewed by such indulgence. She bid me hold my tongue, and do what she had commanded. I was forced to be silent, and am come hither to obey her commands without any further scruple. I have been at your house, and, not finding you at home, was about to have gone to wait on the prince of Persia, but did not dare to attempt so great a journey. I have left the two purses with a particular friend of mine, and, if you have patience, I shall go and fetch them immediately.

The confident returned quickly to the jeweller in the mosque, where she had left him. She gave him the two purses, and bid him accept them for her lady's sake. They are more than necessary, said the jeweller; and I can never be enough thankful for so great a present from so good and generous a lady: but I beseech you to acquaint her, on my behalf, that I shall preserve an eternal remembrance of her bounties. He then agreed with the confident, that she should find him at the place where she had first seen him whenever she had occasion to impart any commands from Schemselnihar, or to know any thing of the prince of Persia.

The jeweller returned home very well satisfied, not only that he had got wherewithal plentifully to make up his losses, but also to think that no person in Bagdad could possibly come to know of the prince and Schemselnihar being in his other house when it was robbed. It is true, he had acquainted the thieves with it, but their secrecy he thought might very well be depended on, as he imagined they had not sufficient converse with the world to give him any disturbance. He therefore hugged himself in his good fortune, paid his debts, and furnished both his houses to a nicety. Thus he forgot all his past danger, and next morning set out to wait on the prince of Persia.

The prince's domestics told the jeweller, on his arrival, that he came in very good time to make their lord speak, for they had not been able to get a word out of him ever since he was there. They introduced him softly into his chamber, where he found him in such a condition as raised his pity. He was lying in bed, with his eye-lids shut; but when the jeweller saluted him, and exhorted him to take courage, he faintly opened his eyes, and regarded him with such an aspect, as sufficiently declared the greatness of his affliction. He, however, took and grasped him by the hand, to testify his friendship, telling him, in a faint and weak tone, that he was extremely obliged to him for coming so far to seek one so exceedingly unhappy and miserable.

My lord, replied the jeweller, mention not, I beseech you, any obligations you owe to me; I could wish, with all my soul, that the good offices I have endeavoured to do you had had a better effect. But, at present, let us discourse only of your health,

which I fear you greatly injure by unreasonably abstaining from proper nourishment.

The prince's servants, hearing the jeweller say this, took occasion to let him know that it was with the greatest difficulty they had prevailed on him to take even the smallest morsel and that for some time he had taken nothing. This obliged the jeweller to beg the prince to let his servants bring him something to eat, which favour he obtained with much intercession.

After the prince had eaten more largely than he had hitherto, at the persuasion of the jeweller, he commanded the servants to quit the room, and leave him alone with his friend. When the room was clear, he said, In conjunction with my misfortune which distracts me, I have been exceedingly concerned to think of what you have suffered on my account; and as it is but reasonable that I should make you a recompence, I shall be sure to take the first opportunity; at present, however, begging only your pardon a thousand times, I must conjure you to tell me whether you have learnt any thing of Schemselnihar since I had the misfortune to be parted from her.

Here the jeweller, upon the confident's information, related to him all that he knew of Schemselnihar's arrival at her hotel, her state of health from the time he had left her, and how she had sent her confident to him to inquire after his highness's welfare.

To all this the prince replied with sighs and tears only; then he made an effort to get up, and, being assisted by the jeweller, made shift to rise. Being upon his legs, he called his servants, and made them open his wardrobe, whither he went in person, and having caused several bundles of rich goods and plate to be packed up, ordered them to be carried to the jeweller's house.

The jeweller would fain have withstood this kind offer; but although he represented that Schemselnihar had already made him more than sufficient amends for what he had lost, the prince would be obeyed. The jeweller thought himself obliged to make every possible acknowledgment, and protested how much he was confounded at his highness's liberality. He would then have taken his leave, but the prince would not let him; so they passed in discourse the greater part of the night.

Next morning the jeweller waited again on the prince before he went away, but he would not let him stir; he must first sit down, and hear what he had to say. You know, said he, there is an end proposed in all things. Now, the end the lover proposes, is to enjoy the beloved object in spite of all opposition. If he loses that hope, he must not think to live. You also know that this is my hard case; for when I had been twice at the very point of fulfilling my desires, I was all of a sudden torn from her I loved in the most cruel manner imaginable: I had then no more to do, but to think of death; and I had certainly proved my own executioner, did not our holy laws forbid us to commit suicide. But there is no need of such violent means; death will soon do its own work by a sure though gentle method; I find myself in a manner gone, and that I have not long to wait the welcome blow.

Here he was silent, and vented the rest of his passion only in groans, sighs, and tears, which came from him in great abundance.

The jeweller, who knew no better way of turning him from despair than by bringing Schemselnihar into his mind, and giving him some hopes of enjoying her, told him, he feared the confident might be come from her lady, and therefore did not think it proper to stay any longer from home. I will let you go, said the prince; but conjure you, that if you see her, you recommend to her to assure Schemselnihar, that if I die, as I expect to do every minute, I will love her to the last moment, and bless her with my last breath.

The jeweller returned home in expectation of seeing the confident, who came some few hours after, but all in tears, and in great affliction. He asked, with great earnestness, what was the matter; she answered, that Schemselnihar, the prince, herself, and he, were all ruined. He demanded how. Hear the sad news, said she, as it was told me just upon my entering our hotel, after I had left you.

Schemselnihar had, it seems, for some fault, chastised one of the slaves you saw with her in your other house; the slave, enraged at the ill treatment, ran presently, and, finding the gate open, went forth; so that we have just reason to believe she has discovered all to an eunuch of the guard, who gave her protection, as we have since heard.

This is not all. The other slave, her companion, is fled too, and has taken refuge in the caliph's palace, so that we may well fear she has acted her part in a discovery; for, just as I came away, the caliph had sent twenty of his eunuchs for Schemselnihar, who carried her to the palace. I just found means to come and tell you this, yet I fear no good will come of it; but, above all, I recommend it to you as a secret.

The confident added, that it was expedient he should go and acquaint the prince with the whole affair, that he might be ready on all occasions, and contribute what he was able to the common cause; upon which she departed in great haste, without speaking a word more, or waiting for an answer.

What answer, however, could the jeweller have made, in the deplorable condition he was placed? He stood still as if thunderstruck, and had not a word to say. He was, however, sensible that the affair required expedition, and therefore went immediately to give the prince an account of it. He addressed himself to him with an air that sufficiently showed the bad news he brought. Prince, said he to him, arm yourself with courage and patience, and prepare to receive the most terrible assault ever yet made on your nature. Tell me, in few words, said the prince, what it is I must prepare to receive; for if it be death only, I am ready and willing to undergo it.

Then the jeweller told him all that he had learned from the confident. You see, continued he, that your destruction is inevitable, if you delay. Rise, save yourself by flight, for the time is precious. You, of all men, must not expose yourself to the anger of the caliph, and should much less confess any thing

in the midst of torments.

At these words the prince was almost ready to expire with grief, affliction, and fear; he recovered, however, and demanded of the jeweller what resolution he would advise him to take in this unhappy conjuncture. The jeweller told him he thought nothing more proper than that he should immediately take horse, and haste away towards Anbar, [Footnote: Anbar is a city on the Tigris, twenty leagues below Bagdad.] that he might get thither with all convenient speed. Take what servants and horses you think necessary, continued he, and suffer me to escape with you.

The prince, seeing nothing more advisable, immediately gave orders for such an equipage as would be least troublesome; so having put some money and jewels in his pocket, and taking leave of his mother, he departed in company with the jeweller, and with such servants as he had chosen. They travelled all that day and the day following without stopping, till at length, about the dusk of the evening, their horses and selves being greatly fatigued, they alighted at an inn to refresh themselves.

They had hardly sat down, before they found themselves surrounded and assaulted by a gang of thieves. They defended their lives for some time courageously; but, at length, the prince's servants being all killed, both he and the jeweller were obliged to yield at discretion. The thieves, however, spared their lives; but, after they had seized their horses and baggage, they took away their clothes, and left them naked.

In this condition, and after the thieves had left them, the prince said to the jeweller, What is to be done, my friend, in this conjuncture? Had I not better, think you, have tarried in Bagdad, and undergone any fate, rather than have been reduced to this extremity? My lord, replied the jeweller, it is the decree of Heaven that we should thus suffer. It has pleased God to add affliction to affliction, and we must not murmur at it, but receive his chastisements with submission. Let us stay no longer here, but go and look out for some place where we may be concealed and relieved.

No, let me rather die, said the prince; for what signifies it whether I die here or elsewhere? for die I know I must very shortly. It may be, this very minute that we are talking, Schemselnihar is no more! And why should I endeavour to live after she is dead? The jeweller at length prevailed on him to go; but they had not gone far before they came to a mosque, which, being open, they entered, and passed there the remainder of the night.

At day-break a single man came into the mosque to his devotion. When he had ended his prayer, and was turning to go out, he perceived the prince and the jeweller, who were sitting in a corner to conceal themselves. He went up to them; and, saluting them with a great deal of civility, said, By what I perceive, gentlemen, you seem to be strangers.

The jeweller answered, You are not deceived, sir. We have been robbed to-night in coming from Bagdad, and retired hither for shelter. If you can relieve us in our necessities, we shall be

very much obliged to you, for we know nobody here to whom to apply to. The man answered, If you think fit to come to my house, I shall do what I can for you.

Upon this obliging offer, the jeweller turned to the prince, and said in his ear, This man, as far as I can perceive, sir, does not know us; therefore we had better go with him, than stay here to be exposed to the sight of somebody that may. Do as you please, said the prince; I am willing to be guided by your discretion.

The man, observing the prince and jeweller consulting together, thought they made some difficulty to accept his proposition; wherefore he demanded of them if they were resolved what to do. The jeweller answered, We are ready to follow you whither you please; all that we make a difficulty about is to appear thus naked.

Let not that trouble you, said the man; we shall find wherewithal to clothe you, I warrant you. They were no sooner got to the house, than he brought forth a very handsome suit for each of them. Next, as he thought they must be very hungry, and have a mind to go to bed, he had several plates of meat brought out to them by a slave; but they ate little, particularly the prince, who was so dejected and dispirited, as gave the jeweller cause to fear he would die. They went to bed, and their host left them to their repose; but they had no sooner lain down, than the jeweller was forced to call him again to assist at the death of the prince. He breathed short, and with difficulty; which gave him reason to fear he had but a few minutes to live. Coming near him, the prince said, It is done; and I am glad you are by, to be witness of my last words. I quit this life with a great deal of satisfaction; but I need not tell you the reason, for you know it too well already. All the regret I have is, that I cannot die in the arms of my dearest mother, who has always loved me with a tenderness not to be expressed, and for whom I had a reciprocal affection. She will undoubtedly be not a little grieved that she could not close my eyes, and bury me with her own hands. But let her know how much I was concerned at this; and desire her, in my name, to have my corpse transported to Bagdad, that she may have an opportunity to bedew my tomb with her tears, and assist my departed soul with her prayers. He then took notice of the master of the house, thanked him for the several favours he had received from him, and desired him to let his body be deposited with him till such time as it should be carried away to Bagdad. Having said this, he turned aside and expired.

The day after the prince's death, the jeweller took the opportunity of a numerous caravan that was going to Bagdad, and arrived there some time after in safety. He first went home to change his clothes, and then hastened to the prince's palace, where every body was surprised that their lord was not come with him. He desired them to acquaint the prince's mother that he must speak to her immediately; and it was not long before he was introduced to her. She was seated in a hall, with several of her women about her. Madam, said he to her, with an air that sufficiently denoted his ill news, God preserve your highness, and shower down the choicest of his blessings upon you! You cannot be ignorant that it is he alone who disposes of us all at

his pleasure.

The princess would not give him leave to go on, but cried out, Alas, you bring me the deplorable news of my son's death! At which words she and her women set up such a hideous outcry, as soon brought fresh tears into the jeweller's eyes. She thus tormented and grieved herself a long while before the unfortunate messenger was allowed to go on. At length, however, she gave a truce to her sighs and groans, and begged of him to continue the fatal relation, without concealing from her the least circumstance. He did as she commanded; and, when he had done, she further demanded of him, if her son the prince had not given him in charge something more particular. He assured her his last words were, that it was the greatest concern to him that he must die so far distant from his dear mother, and that he earnestly entreated she would be pleased to have his corpse transported to Bagdad. Accordingly, next morning at day-break, the princess set out, with her women and great part of her slaves, to bring her son's body to her own palace.

The jeweller, having taken leave of her, returned home very sad and melancholy, to think he had lost so good a friend, and so accomplished a prince, in the flower of his age.

As he came near his house, dejected and musing, on a sudden lifting up his eyes, he saw a woman in mourning and tears standing before him. He presently knew her to be the confident, who had stood there grieving for some time that she could not see him. At the sight of her, his tears began to flow afresh, but he said nothing to her; and, going into his own house, she followed him.

They sat down, when the jeweller, beginning the dismal discourse, asked the confident, with a deep sigh, if she had heard nothing of the death of the prince of Persia, or if it was on his account that she grieved? Alas! answered she; what! is that charming prince then, dead? He has not lived long after his dear Schemselnihar. Beauteous souls! continued she, in whatsoever place ye now are, ye ought to be pleased that your loves will no more be interrupted. Your bodies were before an obstacle to your wishes; but now, being delivered from them, you may unite as closely as you please.

The jeweller, who had heard nothing of Schemselnihar's death, and had not observed that the confident was in mourning, through the excessive grief that blinded him, was now afflicted anew. Is Schemselnihar then dead? cried he, in great astonishment. She is dead, replied the confident, weeping afresh; and it is for her that I wear these weeds. The circumstances of her death are extraordinary, continued she; therefore it is but requisite you should know them; but, before I give you an account of them, I beg you to let me know those of the prince of Persia, whom, in conjunction with my dearest friend and mistress, I shall lament as long as I live.

The jeweller then gave the confident the satisfaction she desired; and, after he had told her all, even to the departure of the prince's mother to bring her son's body to Bagdad, she began, and said, You have not forgotten, I suppose, that I told you the

caliph had sent for Schemselnihar to his palace; and it is true, as we had all the reason in the world to believe, he had been informed of the amour between her and the prince by the two slaves, whom he had examined apart. Now, you will be apt to imagine he must of necessity be exceedingly enraged at Schemselnihar, and discover many tokens of jealousy and revenge against the prince; but I must tell you he had neither one nor the other, and lamented only his dear mistress forsaking him, which he in some measure attributed to himself, in giving her so much freedom to walk about the city without his eunuchs. This was all the resentment he showed, as you will find by his carriage towards her.

He received her with an open countenance; and when he observed the sadness she was under, which nevertheless did not lessen her beauty, with a goodness peculiar to himself, he said, Schemselnihar, I cannot bear your appearing thus before me with an air of affliction. You must be sensible how much I have always loved you by the continual demonstrations I have given you; and I can never change my mind, for even now I love you more than ever. You have enemies, Schemselnihar, proceeded he; and those enemies have done you all the wrong they can. For this purpose they have filled my ears with stories against you, which have not made the least impression upon me. Shake off, then, this melancholy, continued he, and prepare to entertain your lord this night after your accustomed manner. He said many other obliging things to her, and then desired her to step into a magnificent apartment, and stay for him.

The afflicted Schemselnihar was very sensible of the kindness the caliph had for her; but the more she thought herself obliged to him, the more she was concerned that she was so far off from the prince, without whom she could not live, and yet was afraid she should never see him more.

This interview between the caliph and Schemselnihar, continued the confident, was whilst I came to speak with you; and I learned the particulars of it from my companions, who were present. But I had no sooner left you, proceeded she, than I went to my dear mistress again, and was an eye-witness to what happened afterwards. I found her in the apartment I told you of; and, as she thought I came from you, she came to me, and whispering in my ear, said, I am much obliged to you for the service you have been doing me, but fear it will be the last. I took no notice of her words, and she said no more to me; but if I had a mind to say any thing to comfort her, I was in a place by no means proper for disclosing my thoughts.

The caliph was introduced at night with the sound of instruments upon which our women played, and the collation was immediately served up. He took his mistress by the hand, and made her sit down with him on the sofa; which she did with such regret, that she expired some few minutes after. In short, she was hardly sat down, when she fell backwards; which the caliph believed to be only a swoon, and so we all thought; but when we endeavoured to bring her to herself, we found she was quite gone, which you may imagine not a little afflicted us.

The caliph did her the honour to weep over her, not being able to

refrain from tears, and, before he left the room, ordered all the musical instruments to be broken, which was immediately executed. For my part, I staid with her corpse all night, and next morning bathed it with my tears, and dressed it for the funeral. The caliph had her interred soon after in a magnificent tomb he had erected for her in her lifetime, in a place she had desired to be buried in. Now, since you tell me, said she, the prince of Persia's body is to be brought to Bagdad, I will use my best endeavours that he shall be interred in the same tomb, which may be at least some satisfaction to two such faithful lovers.

The jeweller was somewhat surprised at this resolution of the confident's, and said, Certainly you do not consider that this enterprise is in a manner impossible, for the caliph will never suffer it. Do not you be concerned at that, replied she; for you will undoubtedly be of another opinion after I have told you that the caliph has given liberty to all her slaves in general, with a considerable pension to each for their subsistence; and as to me in particular, has honoured me with the charge of my mistress's tomb, and allotted me an annual income for my maintenance. Moreover, you must think that the caliph, who was not ignorant of the amour between Schemselnihar and the prince, as I have already told you, will not be a whit concerned if now, after her death, he be buried with her. To all this the jeweller had not a word to say, yet earnestly entreated the confident to conduct him to her mistress's tomb, that he might say his prayers over her. When he came in sight of it, he was not a little surprised to find a vast number of people of both sexes, who were come thither from all parts of Bagdad. As he could not come near the tomb, he said his prayers at a distance; and then going to the confident, who waited hard by, he said to her, I am altogether of a contrary opinion to what I was just now; for now I am so far from thinking that what you proposed cannot be put in execution, that you and I need only tell abroad what we know of the amour of this unfortunate couple, and how the prince died much about the same time with his mistress, and is now bringing up to be buried; the people will bring the thing about, and not suffer that two such faithful lovers should be separated when dead, whom nothing could divide in affection whilst they lived. As he said, so it came to pass; for as soon as it came to be known that the corpse was within a day's journey of the city, the inhabitants almost of all sorts went forth, met it above twenty miles off, and marched before it, till it came to the city gate; where the confident, waiting for that purpose, presented herself before the prince's mother, and begged her, in the name of the whole city, that she would be pleased to consent that the bodies of the two lovers, who had but one heart whilst they lived, especially during their amour, might be buried in the same tomb now they were dead. The princess immediately consented; and the corpse of the prince, instead of being deposited in his own burying-place, was laid by Schemselnihar's side, after it had been carried in procession at the head of an infinite number of people, of all conditions and degrees: nay, from that very time, all the inhabitants of Bagdad, and even strangers, from such parts of the world as honoured the Mahometan religion, have had a mighty veneration for that tomb, and paid their devotion at it as often as opportunity would give them leave.

This, sir, said Scheherazade, who now perceived the day begin to

approach, is what I had to relate to your majesty concerning the amour of the fair Schemselnihar, mistress to the caliph Haroun Alraschid, and the worthy Ali Ebn Becar, prince of Persia.

When Dinarzade observed that her sister the sultanness had done speaking, she thanked her in the most obliging manner for her entertainment in a history so exceedingly agreeable.

If the sultan will be pleased to let me live till to-morrow, said Scheherazade, I will also relate that of prince Camaralzaman [Footnote: This word, in Arabic, signifies the Moon of the Time, or the Moon of the Age.], which you will find yet more agreeable. Here she stopped; and the sultan, who could not yet resolve on her death, permitted her to go on next night in the following manner.

THE STORY OF THE AMOURS OF
CAMARALZAMAN, PRINCE OF THE ISLES OF THE
CHILDREN OF KHALEDAN; AND OF BADOURA,
PRINCESS OF CHINA.

About twenty days sail on the coast of Persia, there are islands in the main ocean, called the islands of the Children of Khaledan; these islands are divided into four great provinces, which have all of them very flourishing and populous cities, and which make together a most potent kingdom. It is governed by a king named Schahzaman [Footnote: That is to say, in Persic, King of the Time, or King of the Age.], who has four lawful wives, all daughters of kings, and sixty concubines.

Schahzaman thought himself the most happy monarch of the world, as well on account of his peaceful as prosperous reign. One thing only disturbed his happiness, which was, that he was pretty old, and had no children, though he had so many wives. He knew not what to attribute this barrenness to; and what increased his affliction was, that he was likely to leave his kingdom without a successor. He dissembled his discontent a long while; and, what was yet more uneasy to him, he was constrained to dissemble. At length, however, he broke silence; and one day, after he had complained bitterly of his misfortune to his grand vizier, he demanded of him if he knew any remedy for it.

That wise minister replied, If what your majesty requires of me had depended on the ordinary methods of human wisdom, you had soon had an answer to your satisfaction; but, as my experience and knowledge are not sufficient to content you, I must advise you to have recourse to the Divine Power alone, who, in the midst of our prosperities, which often tempt us to forget him, is pleased so to limit our discernment, that we may apply only to his omniscience for what we have occasion to know. Your majesty has subjects, proceeded he, who make a profession of loving and honouring God, and suffering great hardships for his sake; to them I would advise you to have recourse, and engage them by alms

to join their prayers with yours; it may be, some among them may be so just and agreeable to God as to obtain what they pray for.

King Schahzaman approved of this advice very much, and thanked his vizier for it: he immediately caused rich alms to be given to every monastery in his dominions; and having sent for the superiors, declared to them his intention, and desired them to acquaint their monks with it.

The king, in short, obtained of Heaven what he requested; for in nine months time he had a son born of one of his wives. In return for this favour, he sent new alms to the religious houses; and the prince's birth-day was celebrated throughout his dominions for a week together. The prince was brought to him as soon as born; and he found him so beautiful, that he gave him the name of Camaralzaman; that is, the Moon of the Age.

He was educated with all the care imaginable; and when he came to be old enough, his father appointed him a governor and able preceptors. These distinguished persons found him capable of receiving all the instructions that were proper to be given him, as well in relation to morals, as to other knowledge a prince ought to have. When he came to be somewhat older, he learned all his exercises; of which he acquitted himself with so much grace and wonderful address, that he charmed all who saw him, and particularly the sultan his father.

Having attained the age of fifteen years, the sultan, who loved him tenderly, thought of resigning his throne to him, and acquainted his grand vizier with his intentions. I am afraid, said he, lest my son should lose those advantages in youth which nature and education have given him; therefore, since I am somewhat advanced in age, and fit for a retreat, I have had thoughts of resigning the government to him, and passing the remainder of my days in the satisfaction of seeing him reign. I have undergone the fatigue of a crown a long while, and think it is now proper for me to retire.

The grand vizier would not offer all the reasons he could have brought to dissuade the sultan from such a proceeding; on the contrary, he agreed with him in some measure. Sir, replied he, the prince is yet but young; and it would not, in my humble opinion, be wholly advisable to burden him with the weight of a crown so soon. Your majesty fears, with a great deal of reason, that his youth may be corrupted; but then, to remedy that, does not your majesty likewise think it would be proper to marry him, marriage being what would keep him within bounds, and confine his inclinations? Moreover, your majesty might then admit him of your council, where he would learn by degrees the art of reigning, and consequently be fit to receive your power, whenever you shall think proper to bestow it on him.

Schahzaman found this advice of his prime minister highly reasonable, and therefore summoned the prince to appear before him, dismissing the grand vizier at the same time.

The prince, who had been accustomed to see his father only at certain times, was a little startled at this irregular summons; therefore, when he came before him, he saluted him with great

respect, and afterwards stood still, with his eyes fixed on the ground.

The sultan, perceiving his surprise, said to him in a mild way, Do you know, son, for what reason I have sent for you hither? No, may it please your majesty, answered the prince, modestly: God alone knows how to penetrate hearts. I should be glad to know of your majesty for what reason? Why, I sent for you, said the sultan, to let you know that I design to marry you: what do you think of it?

Prince Camaralzaman heard this with great uneasiness; it quite surprised him; he was all in a sweat, and knew not what answer to make. After a few moments, however, he replied, Sir, I beseech your majesty to pardon me, if I seem surprised at the declaration you have made. I did not expect any such proposal to one so young as I am; and besides, I know not whether I could ever prevail on myself to marry, not only on account of the trouble wives bring a man, and which I am very sensible of, though unmarried, but also by reason of their many impostures, wickednesses, and treacheries, which I have read of in authors. It may be, I may not be always of the same mind; yet I cannot but think I ought to have time to conclude on what your majesty requires of me.

Prince Camaralzaman's answer extremely afflicted his father; he was not a little grieved to see what an aversion he had to marriage, yet would not call his obedience in question, nor make use of his paternal authority: he contented himself with telling him that he would not force his inclinations, and gave him time to consider of what he had proposed to him; yet wished him to remember, that, as a prince designed to govern a great kingdom, he ought to take some care to leave behind him a successor.

Schahzaman said no more to the prince: he admitted him into his council, and gave him all the reason to be satisfied that could be desired. About a year after, he took him aside, and said to him, Well, son, have you thoroughly considered of what I proposed to you last year about marrying? Will you still refuse me the satisfaction I desire, and let me die without seeing myself revive in your posterity?

The prince seemed less astonished than before; he now briskly answered his father as follows: Sir, I have not neglected to consider of what you proposed, and, upon the whole matter, I am resolved to continue in the state I am, without concerning myself with marriage, In short, sir, the many evils I have read that women have caused in the world, and the continual mischiefs I still hear and observe they do, have been the occasion of my resolution to have nothing to do with them; so that, sir, I hope your majesty will pardon me if I acquaint you, that it will be to no purpose to solicit me any further about that affair. This said, and making a low reverence, he went out briskly, without staying to hear what the sultan would answer.

Now, any monarch but Schahzaman would have been in a violent passion at such deportment of a son; but he took little notice of it, resolving to use all gentle methods before he proceeded to force. He communicated this new cause of discontent to his prime minister. I have followed your advice, said he, but Camaralzaman

is further off than ever from complying with my desires. He delivered his resolution in such arrogant terms, that I had all the occasion in the world for my reason and moderation to keep me from being in a passion. Fathers who desire favours of their children, which they nevertheless can command, have themselves alone to blame if they are disobeyed. But tell me, I beseech you, how I shall reclaim this hardy young prince, who proves so rebellious to my pleasure.

Sir, answered the grand vizier, patience brings many things about which before seemed impracticable; but it may be that this affair is of a nature not likely to succeed in that way. However, in my judgment, your majesty would do well to give the prince another year to consider of the matter; and if, when this is expired, he still continues averse to your proposal, then your majesty may propose it to him in full council, as a thing that is highly necessary for the common good; it is not likely that he will refuse to comply with it before so grave an assembly, and on so necessary an account, whatever he has done before.

The sultan, who passionately desired to see his son married, thought this long delay an age; however, though with much difficulty, he at length yielded to his grand vizier's reasons, which he could no way disapprove.

After the grand vizier was gone, sultan Schahzaman went to the apartment of the mother of prince Camaralzaman, to whom he had often discovered what an ardent desire he had to marry the prince. When he had told her, with tears in his eyes, how his son had refused to comply a second time, and that nevertheless, through the advice of his grand vizer, he was induced to wait yet a longer time for his compliance, he said, Madam, I know he will hearken more to you than me, therefore I desire you would take your time to speak to him seriously of the matter, and to let him know that, if he persists much longer in his obstinacy, he will oblige me to have recourse to extremities that may not be pleasing to him, and which may give him cause to repent of having disobeyed me.

Fatima, for so was the lady called, acquainted the prince, the first time she saw him, that she had been informed of his second refusal to be married, and how much chagrin he had occasioned his father on that account. Madam, said the prince, I beseech you not to renew my grief upon that head; for, if you do, I have reason to fear, in the disquiet I am under, that something may escape me which may not altogether correspond with the respect I owe you. Fatima knew, by this answer, that it was not then a proper time to speak to him; therefore deferred what she had to say till another opportunity.

Some considerable time after, Fatima thought she had met with a more favourable occasion, which gave her hopes of being heard upon the subject; she therefore accosted him with all the eagerness imaginable: Son, said she, I beg of you, if it be not very irksome to you, to tell me what reason you have for your so great aversion to marriage? If you have no other than the badness and wickedness of some women, there can be nothing less reasonable, or more weak. I will not undertake the defence of those who are bad, there are a great number of them undoubtedly;

but it would be the greatest injustice imaginable to condemn all the sex for their sakes. Alas, son! you have met with a great many bad women in your books, who have occasioned great disorders, and I will not excuse them; but you do not consider how many monarchs, sultans, and other princes, there have been in the world, whose tyrannies, barbarities, and cruelties, astonished those who read of them, and which I have myself. Now, for one woman who is thus wicked, you will meet with a thousand of these tyrants and barbarians; and what torment, do you think, must a good woman undergo, for such there are, who is united to one of these wretches?

Madam, replied Camaralzaman, I doubt not but there is a great number of wise, virtuous, good, affable, and generous women, in the world; and would to God they all resembled you! But what pierces me, is the doubtful choice a man is obliged to make; and oftentimes one has not even that liberty.

Let us suppose, then, Madam, continued he, that I had a mind to marry, as the sultan my father so earnestly desires I should; what wife, think you, would he be likely to provide for me? Probably a princess, whom he would demand of some neighbouring prince, and who would think it an honour done him to send her to him. Fair or ugly, good or ill-humoured, she must be accepted; nay, suppose no other princess excelled her in beauty, yet who can be certain that her temper would be of equal goodness; that she would be affable, complaisant, entertaining, obliging, and the like; that her discourse would generally run on solid matters, and not on trifles, such as dress, adjustments, ornaments, and the like fooleries, which would disgust any man of sense? In a word, that she would not be haughty, proud, arrogant, impertinent, scornful, and waste a man's estate in frivolous expences, such as gaudy clothes, unnecessary jewels, toys, and the like long train of magnificent follies.

Thus you see, madam, continued he, how many reasons a man may have to be disgusted at marriage. Well, but to go further: let this princess be ever so perfect, accomplished, and irreproachable, I have yet a great many more reasons not to desist from my sentiment, or depart from my resolution.

What, son, replied Fatima; have you then more reasons than those you have already advanced? I do not doubt but that I shall find wherewithal to answer them, and stop your mouth with a word. Very well, madam, replied the prince; and perhaps I may find wherewithal to reply to your answer.

I mean, son, said Fatima, that it is easy for a prince, who has had the misfortune to marry such a wife as you describe, to get rid of her, and take such care that she may not prejudice his estate. Ah, but, madam, replied the prince, you do not consider what a mortification it would be to a person of so great quality to be obliged to come to an extremity of that nature. Would it not have been better, think you, and much more for his honour and quiet, that he had never run such a risk?

But, son, said Fatima once more, after the manner you understand things, I apprehend you have a mind to be the last king of your race, who have nevertheless reigned so long and gloriously in the

isles of the Children of Khaledan.

Madam, replied the prince, for my part I do not desire to survive the king my father; and if I should die before him, it would be no great matter of wonder, since so many children have died before their parents. But as for my leaving no successor, I am of opinion it is much better to be the last of one's race, than father to a bad prince, or husband to a bad wife.

From that time Fatima had frequent conferences with her son the prince on the same subject, and omitted no opportunity or argument to endeavour rooting out his aversion to the fair sex; but he eluded all her reasonings by such as she could not well answer, and continued in the same mind.

The year expired, and, to the great regret of the sultan, prince Camaralzaman gave not the least proof of having changed his sentiments; so that one day, when there was a great council held, the prime vizier and other viziers, the principal officers of the crown, and the generals of the army, being present, the sultan spoke thus to the prince: Son, it is now a long while since I have earnestly desired to see you married; and I imagined you would have had more complaisance for a father, who required nothing unreasonable of you, than to oppose him so long. But, after so great resistance on your part, which has almost worn out my patience, I have thought fit to propose the same thing once more to you in presence of my council. Now I would have you to consider, that the favour I desire is not only to oblige me, but to comply with the earnest request of the estates of my dominions, who, for the common good of us all, in conjunction with me, require it of you. Declare then, before these lords present, whether you will marry or not; that, according to your answer, I may proceed, and take those measures which I ought.

The prince answered with so little temper, or rather with so much heat, that the sultan, enraged to see himself affronted in full council, cried out, How, unnatural son! have you the insolence to talk thus to your father and sultan? Ho! guards, take him away! At these words he was seized by the eunuchs, and carried to an old tower that had been uninhabited a long while; where he was shut up, with only a bed, a few moveables, some books, and one slave only to attend him.

Camaralzaman, thus deprived of liberty, was nevertheless pleased that he had the freedom to converse with books, which made him look on his confinement with some indifference. In the evening he bathed, and said his prayers; and, after having read some chapters in the alcoran with the same tranquillity of mind as if he had been in the sultan's palace, undressed himself, and went to bed, leaving his lamp burning by him all the while he slept.

In this tower was a well, which served for a retreat to a certain fairy named Maimoune, daughter of Damriel, king or head of a legion of genii. It was about midnight when this Maimoune came forth silently, to wander about the world after her wonted custom. She was surprised to see a light in prince Camaralzaman's chamber. She entered it; and, without stopping at the slave who lay at the door, approached the bed, whose magnificence, though very great, she did not so much wonder at, as that there should

be a man in it.

Prince Camaralzaman had but half covered his face with the bed-clothes, by which Maimoune could perceive that he was the finest young man she had seen in all her rambles through the world. What beauty, or rather what prodigy of beauty, said she within herself, will this youth appear, when his so well formed eye-lids shall be open? What crime can he have committed, to deserve this rigorous treatment?

She could not forbear admiring the prince, till at length, having kissed him gently on both cheeks, and in the middle of the forehead, without waking him, she laid the bed-clothes in the order they were in before, and took her flight into the air. As she mounted to the middle region, she heard a great clapping of wings, which induced her to fly towards that side; and, when she approached, she saw the genius that made the noise, but he was one of those who are rebellious to God. As for Maimoune, she belonged to that class whom the great Solomon forced to conform.

This genius, whose name was Danhasch, the son of Schamhourasch, knew Maimoune; but did not dare to take notice of her, being sensible how much power she had over him, by her submission to the Almighty. He would have avoided her, but she was so near him, that he must either fight or yield.

Brave Maimoune, said Danhasch, in the tone of a suppliant, swear to me, in the name of the Great Power, that you will not hurt me; and I swear also, on my part, not to do you any harm?

Cursed genius! replied Maimoune, what hurt canst thou do me? I fear thee not; but as thou hast desired this favour of me, I swear not to do thee any harm. Tell me, then, wandering spirit, whence thou comest, what thou hast seen, and what mischief thou hast done this night? Fair lady, answered Danhasch, you meet me in a good time to hear something that is very wonderful.

THE HISTORY OF THE PRINCESS OF CHINA.

I AM come from the utmost limits of China, which look on the last islands of this hemisphere. But, charming Maimoune, said Danhasch, who trembled at the sight of this fairy, insomuch that he could hardly speak, promise me at least that you will forgive me, and let me go on in my way, after I have satisfied your demands.

Go on, go on, cursed spirit! replied Maimoune, go on, and fear nothing. Dost thou think I am as perfidious an elf as thyself, and that I am capable of breaking the serious oath I have made? No, you may depend on my promise: but be sure you tell nothing but what is true, or I shall clip your wings, and treat you as you deserve.

Danhasch, a little heartened at the words of Maimoune, said, My dear lady, I will tell you nothing but what is true, if you will have but the goodness to hear me. You must know, then, the country of China, from whence I come, is one of the largest and most powerful kingdoms of the earth, on which depend the utmost islands of this hemisphere, as I have already said. The king of this country is at present Gaiour, who has a daughter the finest woman that ever the sun saw. Neither you nor I, nor your class nor mine, nor all mankind together, have expressions lively enough to give a sufficient description of this bright lady. Her hair is brown, and of so great a length, that it reaches far below her feet. Her forehead is as smooth as the best polished mirror, and of admirable symmetry. Her eyes are black, sparkling, and full of fire. Her nose is neither too long nor too short, her mouth is small, and her lips are like vermilion. Her teeth are like two rows of pearls, and surpass every thing in whiteness. When she moves her tongue, she forms a sweet and most agreeable voice, and expresses herself in such proper terms as sufficiently indicate the vavacity of her wit. The whitest marble or alabaster is not fairer than her neck. In a word, by this perfect sketch, you may guess there is no beauty like her in the world.

Any one that did not know the king, father of this incomparable princess, would be apt to imagine, from the great respect and kindness he shows her, that he was in love with his daughter. Never did a lover do more for a mistress the most endearing, than he has been seen to do for her. In a word, jealousy never was more watchful over one than he is over her; and that her retreat, on which he has resolved, may not seem irksome, he has built seven palaces for her, the most magnificent and uncommon that ever were known.

The first palace is of rock crystal, the second of brass, the third of fine steel, the fourth of another sort of brass more valuable than the foregoing, the fifth of touchstone, the sixth of silver, and the seventh of massy gold. He has furnished these palaces most sumptuously, and after a most unheard-of manner, with materials not unlike those they are built of. He has filled the gardens with parterres of glass and flowers, intermixed with all manner of water-works, such as jets-d'eau, canals, cascades, and the like; the eye is lost in prospect of large groves and trees where the sun never enters. King Gaiour, in short, has made it appear that his paternal love exceeds that of any other kind whatever.

Now, on the fame of the beauty of this incomparable princess, the most powerful neighbouring kings sent ambassadors to request her in marriage. The king of China received them all in the most obliging manner; but as he resolved not to marry his daughter without her consent, so as she did not like any of them, they returned after receiving great honours and civilities.

Sir, said the princess to the king her father, you have a mind to marry me, and think to oblige me by it; but where shall I find such stately palaces and delicious gardens as I have with your majesty? Under your good pleasure I am unconstrained in all things, and receive the same honours that are paid to your own person. These are advantages I cannot expect to find any where else; men ever love to be masters; and I do not care to be

commanded by a husband.

After divers embassies on the same occasion, there came one from a more rich and potent king than any that had been hitherto sent. The king of China recommended this prince to his daughter, as a husband both advantageous and proper for her: yet she refused him for the same reasons as before, and begged her father to dispense with her on that account. He pressed her to hearken to him; but, instead of complying, she lost all respect and duty that was due to him. Sir, said she, in a great rage, trouble me no more with any talk of marriage, unless you would have me bury this poniard in my bosom, to rid myself from your importunities!

The king, being much enraged at this, said in a great passion, Daughter, you are mad, and I must use you as such. In a word, he shut her up in a certain apartment of one of the seven palaces, allowing only ten old women to wait upon her, to keep her company, the chief of whom had been her nurse. And that the kings his neighbours, who had sent embassies to him on this account, might not think any more of her, he despatched envoys to them severally, to let them know how averse his daughter was to marriage; and as he did not doubt but she was really mad, he charged them to make it known in every court, that if there were any physician who would undertake to come and cure her, he should, if he succeeded, have her for his pains.

Fair Maimoune, said Danhasch, all is true that I have told you; and I, for my part, have not failed to go every day regularly to contemplate this incomparable beauty, whom I would be very far from doing any harm to, notwithstanding my natural propensity to mischief. I would have you go to see her, continued he; I will assure you it would be worth your while, and doubt not but you will think yourself obliged to me for the sight, when you find I am no liar: I am ready to wait on you as a guide, and you may command me as soon as you please.

Instead of answering Danhasch, Maimoune burst into a violent laughter, which lasted some time; and Danhasch, not knowing what might be the occasion of it, was not a little astonished. When Maimoune ceased laughing, she cried, Good, good, very good; you would have me then believe all that you have told me: I thought you designed to entertain me with something surprising and extraordinary, and you have been talking all this while like a driveller! Ah! fie, fie! What would you say, if you had seen the fine prince whom I am just come from, and whom I love with a passion equal to his desert? I am confident you will soon give up the bell, and not pretend to compare your choice with mine.

Agreeable Maimoune, replied Danhasch, may I presume to ask you what this prince is called? Know, answered Maimoune, an accident has happened to him much like that of your princess. The king his father would have married him against his will; but, after many importunities, he frankly told the old gentleman he would have nothing to do with a wife. This occasioned him to be put in a prison in an old tower, which I make my residence, and from whence I came but just now from admiring him.

I will not absolutely contradict you, my pretty lady, replied Danhasch; but you must give me leave to be of opinion, till I

have seen the prince, that no mortal upon earth can equal the beauty of my princess. Hold thy tongue, cursed spirit! replied Maimoune: I tell thee, once more, that can never be. I will not contend with you, said Danhasch; but the way to be convinced, is to accept of the proffer I make you to go and see my princess, and after that I will go with you to your prince.

There is no need of taking so much pains, replied Maimoune; there is another way to satisfy us both; and that is, for you to bring your princess, and place her at my prince's bed-side: by this means it will be easy for us to compare them together, and to see which is the most handsome.

Danhasch consented to what Maimoune had proposed, and was resolved to set out immediately for China upon that errand: but Maimoune, drawing him aside, told him, she must first show him the place whither he was to bring the princess. They flew together to the tower; and when Maimoune had shown him the place, she cried, Go now, fetch your princess: do it quickly, and you shall find me here.

Danhasch left Maimoune, and flew towards China, whence he soon returned with incredible speed, bringing the fair princess along with him asleep. Maimoune introduced him into the chamber of prince Camaralzaman, and they placed the princess by the prince's side.

When the prince and princess were thus laid together, all the while asleep, there rose a great contest between the genius and the fairy about the preference of beauty. They were some time admiring and comparing them; but at length Danhasch broke silence, and said to Maimoune, You see, and I have already told you, my princess was handsomer than your prince; now, I hope, you are convinced of it.

How! convinced of it! replied Maimoune; I am not convinced of it: and you must be blind, if you cannot see that my prince has the better of the comparison. The princess is fair, I do not deny it; but if you compare them together without prejudice, you will quickly see the difference.

Though I should compare them ever so often, said Danhasch, I could never change my opinion. I saw what I now see at first sight, and time will not be able to make me see more; however, this shall not hinder my yielding to you, charming Maimoune, if you desire it; but I would have you yield to me as a favour! I scorn it, said Maimoune; and I would not receive a favour at such a wicked genius' hands: I refer the matter to an arbitrator; and if you will not consent, I shall get the better by your refusal.

Danhasch, who had ever a great deal of complaisance for Maimoune, immediately consented, which he had no sooner done, but Maimoune stamping with her foot, the earth opened, and out came a hideous, hump-backed, blind, and lame genius, with six horns on his head, and claws on his hands and feet. As soon as he was come out, and the earth had closed up, he, perceiving Maimoune, cast himself at her feet, and then, rising upon one knee, asked what she would please to have with him.

Rise, Cascheasch, said Maimoune; I caused you to come hither to determine a difference between me and that cursed Danhasch there. Look on that bed, and tell me, without partiality, which is the handsomest of those two who lie there asleep, the young man or the young lady.

Cascheasch looked on the prince and princess with great attention, admiration, and surprise; and after he had considered them a good while, without being able to determine which was the handsomest, he turned to Maimoune, and said, Madam, I must needs confess I should deceive you, and betray myself, if I pretended to say one was a whit handsomer than the other: the more I examine them, the more it seems to me each possesses, in a sovereign degree, the beauty which is betwixt them; and if one has not the least defect, how can the other have any advantage? But if either has any thing amiss, it will be better discovered when they are awake, than now they are asleep. Let them then be awaked one after another; and that person who shall express most love for the other by ardour, eagerness, and passion, shall be deemed to have least beauty.

This proposal of Cascheasch's pleased equally both Maimoune and Danhasch. Maimoune then changed herself into a flea, and leaped on the prince's neck, where she stung him so smartly, that he awoke, and put up his hand to the place; but Maimoune skipped away as soon as she had done, and resumed her pristine form; which, like those of the two genii, was invisible, the better to observe what he would do.

In drawing back his hand, the prince chanced to let it fall on that of the princess of China. He opened his eyes, and was exceedingly surprised to find a lady lying by him; nay, a lady of the greatest beauty. He raised his head, and leaned on his elbow, the better to consider her. Her blooming youth, and incomparable beauty, fired him in a moment; of which flame he had never yet been sensible, and from which he had even hitherto guarded himself with the greatest application.

Love seized on his heart in the most lively manner, insomuch that he could not help crying out, What beauty is this! what charms! O my heart! O my soul! In saying which, he kissed her forehead, both her cheeks, and her mouth, with so little caution, that she had certainly been awaked by it, had not she slept sounder than usual through the enchantment of Danhasch.

How, my pretty lady! said the prince, do you not awake at these testimonies of love given you by prince Camaralzaman? Whosoever you are, I would have you to know he is not unworthy of your affection. He was going to awake her at that instant, but refrained himself all of a sudden. Is not this she, said he, whom the sultan my father would have had me marry? He was in the wrong not to let me see her sooner. Had he done so, I should not have offended him by my disobedience, nor would he have had occasion to use me as he has done.

The prince began to repent sincerely of the fault he had committed, and was once more upon the point of awaking the princess of China. It may be, said he within himself, the sultan my father has a mind to surprise me, and has sent this young lady

to try if I had really that aversion to marriage which I pretended. Who knows but, having thus laid her in my way, he is hid behind the hangings, to take an opportunity to appear, and make me ashamed of my dissimulation? This second crime would be yet much greater than the first. Upon the whole matter, I will content myself with this ring, which will at any time create in me a remembrance of this dear lady.

He then gently drew off a fine ring the princess had on her finger, and immediately put on one of his own in its place. After this he turned his back, and was not long before he fell into a profounder sleep than before, through the enchantment of the genii.

As soon as prince Camaralzaman was sound asleep, Danhasch transformed himself into a flea likewise in his turn, and went and bit the princess so rudely on the lower lip, that she forthwith awoke, started, clapped herself upon her breech, and opening her eyes, was not a little surprised to see a man lying by her. From surprise she proceeded to admiration, and from admiration to real joy, which she conceived at finding him so beautiful and young.

What! cried she, is it you the king my father has designed me for a husband? I am, indeed, most unfortunate at not knowing it before, for then I should not have put my lord and father in a rage, nor been so long deprived of a husband, whom I cannot forbear loving with all my heart. Wake, then, wake, my dear love, proceeded she; for it does not sure become a man that is married, to sleep so soundly the first night of his nuptials.

So saying, she took prince Camaralzaman by the arm, and shook him so violently, as had been enough to have awaked the profoundest sleeper, had not Maimoune at that instant increased his sleep, and augmented his enchantment. She renewed this shaking several times, and finding it did not awake him, she cried out, What is come to thee, my dear! What jealous rival, envying thy happiness and mine, has had recourse to magic, to throw thee into this profound and insurmountable drowsiness; from whence I think thou wilt never recover? Then she snatched his hand, and kissing it eagerly, perceived he had a ring upon his finger which greatly resembled her's, and which she found to be her own. As soon as she saw that she had another on her finger instead of it, she could not comprehend how this exchange could be made; but yet she did not doubt but it was a certain token of their marriage. At length, being tired with her fruitless endeavours to awake the prince, yet well assured that he could not escape her when he awoke, she said, Since I find it is not in my power to awake thee, I will not trouble myself any further about it, but bid thee good night, and then compose myself to rest. At these words, after having given him a hearty kiss on the cheeks and lips, she turned her back, and went again to sleep.

When Maimoune saw that she could speak without fear of awaking the princess, she cried to Danhasch, Ah, cursed genius! dost thou not now see what thy contest is come to? Art thou not now convinced how much thy princess is inferior to my prince in charms? At this she turned to Cascheasch; and having thanked him for his trouble, bid him, in conjunction with Danhasch, take the

princess, and convey her back again to her bed, from whence he had taken her. Danhasch and Cascheasch did as they were commanded, and Maimoune retired to her well.

Prince Caraaralzaman, waking next morning, looked to see if the lady was by him whom he had seen the night before. When he found she was gone, he cried out, I thought indeed that this was a trick the king my father designed to play me! I am much obliged to him for the favour, yet have fairly escaped his trap. Then he awaked the slave, and bid him come and dress him, who accordingly brought him a basin of water; and washing himself, and saying his prayers, he took a book, and began to read.

After those ordinary exercises, he called the slave, and said to him, Come hither, and be careful that you do not tell me a lie. How came the lady hither who lay with me tonight, and who brought her?

My lord, answered the slave with great astonishment, I know not what lady your highness speaks of. I speak, said the prince, of her who came hither, and lay with me tonight, or rather who was brought for that purpose. My lord, replied the slave, I know of no such lady; and if there was any such, how should she come in without my knowledge, since I lay at the door?

Are you in the contrivance, then, villain? replied the prince, Slave, you lie! for there was a lady here. In saying these words, he gave him a box on the ear, pushed him along upon the ground, and then stamped upon him for some time; till at length, taking the well-rope, and tying it under his arms, he plunged him several times into the water. I will drown thee, wretch! cried he, if thou dost not speedily tell me who the lady was, and who introduced her!

The slave, half dead, said within himself, Doubtless, my lord the prince must have lost his senses through grief, and I shall not know how to escape being murdered, if I do not tell him a lie. My lord, then cried he, in an humble and supplicant tone, I beseech your highness to spare my life, and I will tell you how the matter is.

Then the prince drew the slave up, and pressed him to begin. As soon as he was out of the well, My lord, said he, trembling, your highness may perceive it is not proper for me to relate any thing to you in this condition: I beg you to give me leave to go and change my clothes, and I will satisfy you all I am able. Do it, then, quickly, said the prince; and be sure you conceal nothing; for if you do, you must expect the worst of usage.

The slave, being at liberty, went out; and having locked the door upon the prince, ran to the palace in the pickle he was in. The king was at that time in discourse with his prime vizier, to whom he had just related the agonies he had undergone that night on account of his son's disobedience.

The wise minister endeavoured to comfort his master, by telling him that he did not doubt but the prince would soon be reduced to obedience. Sir, said he, your majesty need not repent of having used your son after this rate; I dare promise it will contribute

towards reclaiming him. Have but patience to let him continue a while in prison, and no doubt the heat of youth will abate, and he will submit entirely to your pleasure.

The grand vizier had just made an end of speaking when the slave came in, and cast himself at king Schahzaman's feet. My lord, said he, I am very sorry to be the messenger of ill news to your majesty, which I know must create your fresh affliction. My lord the prince is distracted; he fancies a fine lady has lain with him all night, and has used me thus ill for questioning it. Then he proceeded to tell all the particulars of what prince Camaralzaman had said to him.

The king, who did not expect to hear any thing of this kind, said to the prime minister. Now you see how much you are mistaken in the remedy of a prison! This is very different from what hopes you give me just now. Run immediately, and see what is the matter, and come and give me a speedy account.

The grand vizier obeyed; and going into the prince's chamber, found him sitting on his bed in good temper, and with a book in his hand, which he was reading.

After mutual salutations, the vizier sat down by him, and said, My lord, I would willingly have a slave of yours punished, who has come to fright the king your father with news that has put him under great disturbance.

What news is that, replied the prince, which could give my father so great uneasiness? I have much greater cause to complain of that slave.

My lord, answered the vizier, God forbid that the news should be true which he has told your father concerning you, and which indeed myself find to be false, by the good temper I observe you in, and which I pray God to continue! It may be, replied the prince, he did not make himself well understood; but since you are come, who ought to know something of the matter, give me leave to ask you who that lady was that lay with me last night?

The grand vizier was almost struck dumb at this demand; however, he recovered himself, and said, My lord, be not surprised at the confusion I was under upon your question. Is it possible, think you, my lord, that any lady, or any other person in the world, should penetrate by night into this place without entering at the door, and walking over the belly of your slave? I beseech you, my lord, recollect yourself, and you will find this only a dream which has made this impression on you.

I give no ear to what you say, said the prince, in an angry and high tone; I must know of you absolutely what is become of the lady; and if you scruple to obey me, I am in a place where I shall soon be able to force you to tell me.

At these stern words the grand vizier began to be under greater confusion than before, and was thinking how he could in the best manner get away. He endeavoured to pacify the prince by good words; and begged of him, in the most humble manner, to tell him if he had seen this lady.

Yes, yes, answered the prince; I have seen her, and am very well satisfied that you sent her to tempt me. She played the part you had given her admirably well, for I could not get a word from her: she pretended to be asleep; but I was no sooner got into a slumber, than she rose and left me. You know all this, as well as myself; for I do not doubt but that she has gone to make her report of her dexterity.

My lord, replied the vizier, I swear to your highness, that nothing of this has been acted which you seem to reproach me with! And I vow, by the head of our great prophet, that neither your father nor myself have sent the lady you speak of, if I may believe my royal master's protestations; and sure I am, I can answer for myself. I am confident that neither of us had ever any such thought: permit me, therefore, to certify your highness once more that this must needs have been a dream.

How! do you come thus to affront and contradict me, said the prince in a great rage, and to tell me to my face that what I have told you is a dream. You are an unbelieving varlet! cried he; and at the same time took him by the beard, and loaded him with so many blows, that he was hardly able to stand under them.

The poor grand vizier endured patiently all the brunt of his lord's indignation, and could not help saying within himself, Now am I even in as bad a condition as the slave, and shall think myself happy if I can, like him, escape from any further danger. In the midst of the blows that were given him, he cried out but for a moment's audience; which the prince, after he had nearly tired himself with beating him, consented to give.

I own, my lord, said the grand vizier, dissembling, that there is something in what your highness suspects; but you cannot be ignorant under what necessity a minister is to obey his royal master's orders; yet if your highness will but be pleased to set me at liberty, will go and tell him any thing on your part that you shall think fit to command. Go, then, said the prince, and tell him from me, that, if he pleases, I will marry the lady he sent me, or rather that was brought me, last night. Do this quickly, and bring me a speedy answer. The grand vizier made a profound reverence, and went away, not thinking himself altogether safe till he had got out of the tower, and shut the door upon the prince.

He came and presented himself before the sultan Schahzaman, with a countenance that sufficiently showed he had been ill used. Well, said the king, in what condition did you find my son? Sir, answered the vizier, what the slave reported to your majesty is but too true. He then related the interview he had had with Camaralzaman; how he was in a passion upon his endeavouring to persuade him it was impossible that any lady should get in to him; how he had used him very scurvily, and by what means he made his escape.

Schahzaman was the more concerned, because he loved the prince with an exceeding tenderness, and resolved to find out the truth of this matter; he therefore proposed to go and see his son in the tower himself, accompanied by the grand vizier.

Prince Camaralzaman received the king his father in the tower with great respect. The king sat down, and made the prince his son seat himself by him, putting several questions to him, which he answered with a great deal of good sense. As they were talking, the king every now and then cast his eyes on the grand vizier, thereby intimating to him, that he did not find his son had lost his senses, but rather thought he had lost his.

The king at length spoke of the lady to his son. Son, said he, I desire you to tell me what lady that was who lay with you last night, as I have been told?

Sir, answered Camaralzaman, I beg your majesty not to give me any more disturbance on that head, but rather to oblige me so far as to let me have her in marriage: whatever aversion I may formerly have discovered for women, this young lady has charmed me to that degree, that I cannot help betraying my weakness. I am ready to receive her at your majesty's hands, with all the acknowledgments imaginable.

King Schahzaman was surprised at this answer of the prince's, so remote, as he thought, from the good sense he had found in him before; he therefore said to him, Son, you put me under the greatest consternation imaginable, by what you now say to me: I swear to you, by my crown, which is to devolve upon you after me, that I know not one word of what you mention about the lady; and if there has any such come to you, it was altogether without my knowledge or privity. But how could she get into this tower without my consent? For whatever my grand vizier told you, it was only to appease you that he said it: it must therefore be nothing but a dream; and I beg of you not to believe any thing to the contrary.

Sir, replied the prince, I should be for ever unworthy of the good-will of your majesty, if I did not give entire credit to what you are pleased to say; but I humbly beseech you, at the same time, give ear to what I shall say to you, and then to judge whether what I have the honour to tell you be a dream or not. Then prince Camaralzaman related to the king his father after what manner he had been awaked, exaggerating the beauty and charms of the lady he found by his side, the love he had for her at first sight, and the pains he took to awake her without effect. He did not conceal what had obliged him to awake, and fall asleep again, after he made the exchange of his ring with that of the lady. Showing the king the ring, he added, Sir, your majesty must needs know my ring very well, and you see I have it not on my finger, but another of a woman's instead of it. From this proof, therefore, I hope you will be pleased to be convinced that I have not lost my senses, as you have been almost made to believe.

King Schahzaman was so perfectly convinced of the truth of what his son had been telling him, that he had not a word to say, remaining astonished for some time, and not being able to utter a syllable.

The prince took advantage of this opportunity, and said further, May it please your majesty, the passion I have conceived for this

charming lady, whose precious image I bear continually on my mind, is so strong, that I cannot live unless your majesty procures me the happiness of enjoying her; which I know you can well do, as not being ignorant who she is.

Son, replied the king, after what I have just heard, and what I see by the ring on your finger, I cannot doubt but your passion is real for this lady; and would to God I knew who she was, I would make you happy from this moment. But what means have I to come at the knowledge of her? Where shall I find her, and how seek for her? How could she get in here, and by what conveyance, without my consent? Why did she come to sleep only, inflame you with her beauty, and then leave you while you was in a slumber? These things, I must confess, are past my finding out; and if Heaven is not so favourable as to give some light into them, we, I fear, must both go down to the grave together. Come, then, my son, continued he, let us go and afflict ourselves in conjunction; you for the hopes you have lost, and I for seeing you grieve, and not being in a capacity to remedy your affliction.

King Schahzaman then led his son out of the tower, and conveyed him to the palace; where he was no sooner arrived, than he fell sick, and took to his bed; which made the king shut himself up with him, and grieve so bitterly, that he was not in a condition to take any cognizance of the affairs of his kingdom.

The prime minister, who was the only person that had admittance, came one day and told him the whole court, and even the people, began to murmur at their not seeing him, and that he did not administer justice every day as he was wont to do before this accident happened, on which account he knew not what disorders it might occasion. I humbly beg your majesty, therefore, proceeded he, to take some notice of what I now represent to you. I am sensible your majesty's company is a great comfort to the prince in his condition, and that his is no less assuaging to your grief; but then you must not run the risk of letting all be lost. I should think it were proper to be proposed to your majesty, that you would be pleased to suffer yourself to be transported to a castle which you have in a little island opposite the port, where you may give audience to your subjects twice a week; and where, during that function, the prince will be so agreeably amused with the beauty, prospect, and good air of the place, that he will be likely to bear your absence with the less concern.

King Schahzaman approved of this proposal; and when the castle, where he had not resided for some time, had been new furnished; he caused himself to be transported thither with the prince; where, excepting the times that he gave audience as aforesaid, he passed all his hours on his son's pillow; sometimes endeavouring to comfort him, but oftener afflicting himself with him.

Whilst matters passed thus in the capital of King Schahzaman, the two genii, Danhasch and Cascheasch, had carried the princess of China back to the palace, where the king her father had shut her up, and laid her in her bed as before.

When she awaked next morning, and found, by looking to the right and to the left, that prince Camaralzaman was not by her, she

cried out with such a voice to her old women, as soon made them come to know what she wanted. Her nurse, who presented herself first, desired to be informed what her highness would be pleased to have, and what had happened to her that occasioned her to call out so earnestly.

Tell me, said the princess, what is become of the young man that has lain with me to-night, and whom I love with all my soul? Madam, replied the nurse, we know of no such person, and cannot pretend to understand your highness, unless you will be pleased to explain yourself.

How do you mean explain myself! quoth the princess. Why, I had a lovely and most amiable young man that slept with me last night; whom, though I caressed ever so much, I could not awake: I only ask you where he is?

Madam, answered the nurse, is it to jest and impose upon us that your highness asks these questions? I beseech your highness to be pleased to rise, and you shall be satisfied in all things that we are capable of satisfying you in. I am in earnest, then, said the princess; and I must know where this young man is. Madam, insisted the nurse, you were alone when you went to bed last night; and how any man could come to you without our knowledge, I cannot imagine; for we all lay about the door of your chamber, which was locked, and I had the key in my pocket.

At this the princess lost all patience; and, catching the nurse by the hair, and giving her two or three sound cuffs, cried, Tell me where this young man is, you old sorceress, or I will beat out your brains. The nurse struggled all she could to get from her, and at last succeeded; when she went immediately, with tears in her eyes, and her face all bloody, to complain to the queen her mother, who was not a little surprised to see the old woman in such a condition.

Madam, began the nurse, you see what a condition the princess has put me in! She would certainly have murdered me, if I had not escaped out of her hands. But for what, good nurse? replied the queen: what occasion did you give my daughter for using you so ill? I gave none, madam, answered the nurse; and so began to tell the cause of all that passion and rage in the princess. The queen was mightily surprised to hear it, and could not guess how she came to be so infatuated as to take for a reality what could be no other than a dream. Your majesty must conclude from all this, madam, continued the nurse, that my mistress the princess is out of her senses. I would beseech your majesty, therefore, to go and see her, and you will find what I say to be but too true.

The great love the queen bore the princess readily made her comply with the nurse's proposal; so they went together immediately to the princess's palace.

The queen of China sat down by her daughter's bed-side upon her arrival in her apartment, and, after informing herself about her health, began to ask what had made her so angry with her nurse as to treat her after the manner she had done, which great princesses had never condescended or attempted to do before.

Madam, replied the princess, I plainly perceive your majesty is come to mock me; but I declare I will never let you rest till you consent I shall marry the young man that lay with me last night. You must needs know where he is, and therefore I beg your majesty would let him come to me again.

Daughter, answered the queen, you surprise me; I know nothing of what you talk. Then the princess lost all manner of respect for the queen, and replied, in a great passion, The king my father and you have all along persecuted me about marrying when I had no mind to it, and, now I have a mind, you would fain oppose me; but I must tell you, madam, I will have this young man I speak of for my husband, or I will kill myself!

Here the queen endeavoured to calm the princess by soft words. Daughter, said she, you know well you was alone in this apartment; how then could any man come to you? This must be mere fancy or a dream; for--Here the princess interrupted her, and was so far from hearkening to what she said, that she flew out into such extravagances as obliged the queen to leave her, and retire, in great affliction, to inform her lord in what condition their daughter was.

The king, hearing it, had a mind likewise to be satisfied in person; and, therefore, coming to his daughter's apartment, demanded of her to say if what he had just heard was true. Sir, replied the princess, let us talk no more of that; I only beseech your majesty to grant me the favour that I may marry the young cavalier I lay with last night.

What! said the king, has any one lain with you last night? How, sir! replied the princess, without giving the king leave to go on; do you ask me if any one lay with me last night? Your majesty knows that but too well. He was the finest and best made cavalier the sun ever saw: I desire him of you for my husband by all means, sir; and I beg you will not refuse me. But that your majesty may no longer doubt whether I have seen this cavalier, whether he has lain with me, whether I have caressed him, or whether I did my utmost to awake him without succeeding, see, if you please, this ring! She then reached forth her hand, and showed the king a man's ring upon her finger. The king did not know what to make of all this; but, as he had confined her as mad, so now he began to think her more so than ever. Therefore, without saying any thing more, for fear she might do violence to herself or somebody else, had her chained, and shut up more closely than ever, allowing her only the nurse to wait on her, with a good guard at the door.

The king, being exceedingly concerned at the indisposition of his daughter, sought all possible means to get her cured. He assembled his council, and, after having acquainted them with her condition, he proffered any one of them that would undertake her cure the succession to his kingdom after his death, if successful..

The desire of enjoying a young and beautiful princess, and the hope of governing one day so powerful a kingdom as that of China, had a strange effect on an old emir, already advanced in age, who was then present in council. As he was well skilled in magic, he

offered the king to cure his daughter, and flattered himself with success. Very well, said the king; but I forgot to tell you one thing; and that is, that if you do not succeed, you shall lose your head. It would not be reasonable that you should have so great a reward, and yet run no risk on your part. And what I say to you, continued the king, I say to all others that shall come after you, to let them consider beforehand what they undertake.

The emir, however, accepted the condition, and the king led him to the princess. She covered her face as soon as she saw them come in, and cried out, Your majesty surprises me, in bringing a man along with you whom I do not know, and by whom my religion forbids me to allow myself to be seen. Daughter, replied the king, you need not be scandalized; it is only one of my emirs that is come to demand you of me in marriage. It is not, I perceive, he that you have already given me, replied the princess; and your majesty may rest assured that I will never marry any other.

Now the emir expected the princess would have said or done some extravagant thing, and was not a little disappointed when he heard her talk so calmly and rationally; for he then knew her disease was nothing but a violent love passion, which he was by no means able to cure. He therefore threw himself at his majesty's feet, and said, After what I have heard and observed, sir, it will be to no purpose for me to think of curing the princess, since I have no remedies proper for her malady; for which reason I humbly submit my life to your majesty's pleasure. The king enraged at his incapacity, and the trouble he had given him, caused him immediately to be beheaded.

Some few days after, his majesty, unwilling to have it said that he had neglected his daughter's cure, put forth a proclamation in his capital city, importing, that if any physician, astrologer, or magician, would undertake to restore the princess to her senses, he need only come, and he should be employed, provided he was willing to lose his head if he miscarried. He had the same thing published in the other principal cities and towns of his dominions, as likewise in those of the other neighbouring states.

The first that presented himself was both an astrologer and magician, whom the king caused to be conducted to the princess's prison by an eunuch. The astrologer, upon seeing his patient, drew forth, out of a bag he carried in his arm an astrolabe, a small sphere, a chafing dish several sorts of drugs proper for fumigations, a brass pot, with many other things, and desired he might have a fire lighted.

The princess demanded for what all these preparations were Madam, answered the eunuch, they are to exorcise the evil spirit that possesses you, and afterwards to shut him up in this pot, and throw him into the sea.

Foolish astrologer! replied the princess, I have no occasion for any of your preparations, but am in my perfect senses, and it is you alone who are mad. If your art can bring him I love to me, I shall be obliged to you; otherwise you may go about your business, for I have nothing to do with you. Madam, said the astrologer, if your case be so, I shall desist from all

endeavours believing that the king your father can only remedy your disaster in this particular. So putting up his trinkets again, he marched away, very much concerned that he had so easily undertaken to cure an imaginary sick person.

Coming to give an account to the king of what he had done, he would not suffer the eunuch to speak for him, but began thus himself: According to what your majesty published in your proclamation, and what you were pleased to confirm to me yourself. I thought the princess was distracted and therefore had provided all I believed necessary to restore her to her senses, pursuant to the nostrums I have; but, to my great amazement, when I beheld her, I found she had no other disease than that of love, over which my art had no power. Your majesty, then, may be pleased to consider, that you alone are the physician who can cure her, by giving her the person in marriage whom she desires.

The king, upon hearing this, was very much enraged at the astrologer, and had his head cut off upon the spot. Now, not to fatigue your majesty with long repetitions, proceeded Scheherazade to the sultan, I will acquaint you, in few words, that so many astrologers, physicians, magicians, and the like, came upon this account, that they in all amounted to about fifty; who, nevertheless, all underwent the same fate, and their heads were set upon poles on every gate of the city.

THE STORY OF MARZAVAN, WITH THE SEQUEL OF THAT OF PRINCE CAMARALZAMAN.

The princess of China's nurse had a son whose name was Marzavan, and who had been foster-brother to the princess. Their friendship was so great during their childhood, that they called each other brother and sister, which even continued some time after their separation.

This Marzavan, among other studies, had from his youth been much addicted to judicial astrology, geomancy, and other secret arts, wherein he became exceedingly skilful. Not content with what he had learned from masters, he travelled; and there was hardly a person of note in any science whom he did not know, so great was his thirst after knowledge.

After several years absence in foreign parts on this account, he returned to the capital city of his native country, China; where, seeing so many heads on the gate by which he entered, he was exceedingly surprised, and, on coming to his lodging, demanded for what reason they had been placed there; but more especially informed himself of the condition of the princess his foster-sister, whom he had not forgotten. As he could not be made acquainted with one without having an account of the other, he for the present satisfied himself with what he had heard, till such time as he could learn more from his mother, the princess's nurse.

Although the nurse, mother of Marzavan, was very much employed about the princess, yet she no sooner heard her dear son was returned, but she found time to come and embrace, and stay with him a little. Having told him, with tears in her eyes, in what a sad condition the princess was, and for what reason the king her father had confined her, he desired to know of his mother, if she could not procure him the sight of her royal mistress, without the king's knowing any thing of it. After some pause, she told him she could say nothing to the matter for the present; but if he would meet her next day at the same hour, she would give him an answer.

Now the nurse, knowing that none could approach the princess but herself, without leave of the eunuch who commanded the guard at the gate, addressed herself to him, who, she believed, was ignorant of what had formerly passed at the court of China. You know, said she, I have brought up and suckled the princess, and may likewise have heard that I had a daughter whom I brought up along with her. Now this daughter has since been married; yet the princess still does her the honour to remember her, and would fain see her, but would do so without any body perceiving her coming in or out.

The nurse would have gone on, but the eunuch cried, Say no more, it is sufficient; I will do any thing to oblige the princess: go and fetch your daughter, for send or her about midnight, and the gate shall be open to you.

As soon as night came, the nurse went for her son Marzavan; and, having dressed him so artfully in women's clothes, that nobody could perceive he was a man, she took him along with her; and the eunuch, believing it was a woman, admitted them without hesitation.

The nurse, before she thought fit to present Marzavan, went to the princess, and said, Madam, this is not a woman I have brought to you; it is my son Marzavan, lately arrived from his travels; he has a great desire to kiss your hand, and I hope your highness will admit him to that honour.

What, my brother Marzavan! said the princess, with a great deal of joy. Come hither, my dear, cried she, and take off this veil; for surely it is not unreasonable that a brother and a sister should see each other without reserve.

Marzavan saluted her with profound respect, when she, without giving him leave to speak, cried out, I am rejoiced to see you returned in good health, after so many years' absence.

Madam, replied Marzavan, I am infinitely obliged to your highness for your goodness in rejoicing at my health; I no sooner landed in my native country than I inquired after yours, and heard what, to my great affliction, I am now witness of. Nevertheless, I cannot but rejoice that I am come seasonably to administer that remedy to you which so many others have attempted without success; and though I should not reap any other fruit of my long voyage, I shall think myself fully recompensed, for my great toil and hazard, by that one happiness.

Speaking these words, Marzavan drew forth a book, and other things from his pocket, which he judged necessary to be used, according to the relation he had got from his mother of the princess's distemper. The princess, seeing him make all those preparations, cried out, What! brother, are you then one of those who believe me mad? Undeceive yourself, and hearken to what I shall say to you.

The princess then began to relate to Marzavan all the particulars of her story, without omitting the least circumstance, even to the ring which was exchanged for hers, and which she showed him. I have not concealed the least matter from you, said she; yet it is true there is something that I cannot comprehend, and has given occasion for some persons to think me mad; but as for the rest, I assure you it is literally as I have related.

After the princess had done speaking, Marzavan, filled with wonder and astonishment, continued for some time with his eyes fixed on the ground, without speaking a word; but at length lifting his head, he said, If it be as your highness says, and which I do not in the least doubt, I hope to procure the satisfaction you desire; but I must first entreat your highness to arm yourself with patience till I return; for I am resolved to set out in quest of this person, and, at my return, you may expect to see the object of your love. So saying, Marzavan took leave of the princess, and set out next morning on his intended tour. He travelled from city to city, from province to province, and from island to island; and, in every place through which he passed, he could hear of nothing but the princess Badoura (the princess of China's name) and her history.

About four months after, our traveller arrived at Torf, a seaport town, both great and populous, where he no more heard of the princess Badoura, all the talk being of prince Camaralzaman, who was sick, and whose history was very similar to that of the princess. Marzavan was extremely glad to hear this, and informed himself of the place where the prince was to be found, to which he might have gone either by land or sea, or by sea only; but the last was the shortest way.

Marzavan chose the latter, and, embarking on board a merchant ship, arrived safe in sight of King Schahzaman's capital; but, on entering the port, his ship happened to strike upon a rock, when it foundered, and sunk in sight of prince Camaralzaman's castle, where the king and his grand vizier were at that time.

Marzavan could swim very well; he therefore immediately cast himself into the sea on the ship's sinking, and got safe on shore under the castle, where he was soon relieved by the grand vizier's order. After changing his clothes, and being well treated, he was introduced to the grand vizier, who had sent for him.

Marzavan being a young man of good address, and of a good air, this minister was very civil to him, especially when he heard him give such just and pertinent answers to what was asked of him: he also perceived he was learned; therefore said to him, From what I can understand, you have travelled a great way, and must needs

have acquired much knowledge: I would to God you had learned any secret for curing a certain malady, which has greatly afflicted this court for a long while!

Marzavan replied, if he knew what malady that was, he might perhaps find a remedy for it.

Then the grand vizier related to him the whole story of prince Camaralzaman from its origin, and concealed nothing of his desired birth, his education, the great inclination the king his father had to see him early married, his aversion to marriage, his disobeying his father in full council, his imprisonment, and his pretended extravagances in prison, which, he said, were afterwards changed into a violent passion for a certain unknown lady, who he pretended had exchanged a ring with him, though, for his part, he verily believed there was no such person in the world.

Marzavan gave great attention to all that the grand vizier said, and was infinitely rejoiced to find that, by means of his shipwreck, he had so fortunately met with the person he was looking after. He saw no reason to doubt but that prince Camaralzaman was the man the princess of China was in love with; therefore, without discovering any thing further to the vizier, he desired to see him, whereby, he said, he might be better able to judge of his distemper. Follow me then, said the grand vizier, and you will find the king with him, who has already desired I should introduce you to him.

The first thing that startled Marzavan, at his entrance into the prince's chamber, was to find him upon his bed languishing, and with his eyes shut. Although he saw him in that condition, and although the king his father was sitting by him, he could not help crying out, Heavens! was there ever a greater resemblance than this! He meant in their faces; for it seems the princess and prince were much alike.

These words of Marzavan excited the prince's curiosity so far, that he vouchsafed to open his eyes, and look upon him. Marzavan, who had a great deal of wit, laid hold of that opportunity, and made his compliment in verse extempore; which nevertheless he did in such a disguised manner, that neither the king nor grand vizier understood any thing of the matter. However, he represented so nicely what had happened to the princess of China, that the prince had no room to doubt but he knew the object of his love, and could give him tidings of her. This made him so joyful, that the effects of it plentifully showed themselves in his eyes and looks.

After Marzavan had finished his compliment in verse, which surprised prince Camaralzaman so agreeably, his highness took the liberty to make a sign to the king his father to quit the place where he was, and let Marzavan sit by him.

The king, overjoyed at this alteration, which gave him hopes of his son's speedy recovery, quitted his place; and taking Marzavan by the hand, led him to it, requesting him to be seated. Then his majesty demanded of him who he was, and whence he came; and upon Marzavan's answering he was a subject of China, and came from

that kingdom, the king immediately cried out, Heaven grant you may be able to withdraw my son from this profound melancholy! and I shall have eternal obligations to you, which I will do my utmost to gratify beyond what was ever done. Having said this, he left the prince to entertain himself with the stranger, while he went and rejoiced with the grand vizier on this happy meeting.

Marzavan, leaning down to the prince, spoke low in his ear thus: My lord, said he, it is high time your highness should cease to grieve. I know the lady on whose account you lament so bitterly; it is the princess Badoura, daughter of Gaiour king of China. Of this I can assure your highness, both on account of what she has told me of her adventure, and what I have learned of yours. You may also depend upon it that she has undergone no less on your account than you have done on hers. Here he began to relate all that he knew of the princess, from the fatal time of their interview after so an extraordinary a manner.

He omitted not to acquaint him how those had fared who had failed in their pretences to cure the princess of her indisposition. But your highness is the only person, added he, that can cure her effectually, and therefore it were no matter how soon you set about it. However, before you undertake so great a voyage, I would have you perfectly recovered, and then we will take such measures as are necessary.

This discourse had a marvellous effect on the prince. He found so great a benefit by it, through the hopes he conceived of speedily fulfilling his desires, that he soon recovered strength sufficient to rise, and begged leave of his father to dress before him, with such an air as gave the old king incredible satisfaction.

King Schahzaman immediately embraced Marzavan, without inquiring into the means that had wrought this wonderful effect, and soon after went out of the prince's chamber with the grand vizier, to publish this agreeable news to his people. On this occasion, he ordered public rejoicings for several days together, and moreover gave great largesses to his officers, alms to the poor, and caused the prisoners to be set at liberty throughout his kingdom. Every city resounded with joy, and every corner of his dominions felt the effect of his bounty.

Prince Camaralzaman thought he had been extremely weakened by almost continual watchings and abstinence, yet, contrary to all expectation, he soon recovered his wonted health. When he found himself in a condition to undertake the voyage, he took Marzavan aside, and said, Dear Marzavan, it is now time to perform the promise you have made. I burn with impatience to see the charming princess; and if you do not speedily give me an opportunity of putting an end to her torments and my own, by setting out on your journey, I shall soon relapse into my former condition; and then, perhaps, you may not find it so easy to cure me as you have now done. But one thing still afflicts me, continued he; and that is, the difficulty I shall meet with in getting leave from my father to go. You see he scarcely ever leaves me; therefore, if you do not assist me in that particular, I am undone.

At these words the prince fell a weeping, and would not be

comforted till Marzavan said, Let not your highness be grieved at that, for I warrant I will get you your liberty, so that nothing shall stop us. My principal design in this voyage was to deliver the princess of China, my mistress, from grief; and I should fail in my duty to her, if I did not do my best endeavour to effect it. This is, then, the means I have contrived to obtain your liberty; you have not stirred abroad for some time, therefore let the king your father understand you have a mind to take the air, and, if he pleases, to go and hunt two or three days with me. No doubt he will grant your request; which when he has done, order two good horses to be got ready in a certain place, and leave the rest to me.

Next day prince Camaralzaman did as he had been advised. He acquainted the king that he was very desirous to take the air, and, if he pleased, would go and hunt two or three days with Marzavan. The king gave his consent, but bid him be sure not to be from home above one night, since too much exercise might impair his health, and too long absence create his majesty some uneasiness. He then ordered him the best horses in his stable, and took particular care that nothing should be wanting for his diversion. When all was ready, his majesty embraced the prince, and having recommended the care of him to Marzavan, left them. Prince Camaralzaman and Marzavan were soon mounted, when, to amuse the two grooms who led the fresh horses, they made as if they would hunt, and so got as far from the city and out of the road as was possible. Night approaching, they alighted at a caravansera or inn, where they supped, and slept till about midnight; when Marzavan awakened the prince without awaking the grooms, desiring his highness to let him have his suit, and take another for himself, which was brought in his sumpter. Thus equipped, they mounted the fresh horses; and Marzavan taking one of the groom's horses by the bridle, they set off at a good round pace.

At day-break they got into a forest, where, coming to the meeting of four roads, Marzavan went aside, and desired the prince to wait for him a little: he then cut the groom's horse's throat; and, tearing the prince's suit he had on, besmeared it with blood, and threw it in the highway.

The prince demanded his reason for what he had done; he told his highness that he was sure the king his father would no sooner come to know that he was departed without the grooms, than he would suspect something, and immediately send in quest of them. Now, said Marzavan, to the end that, when they come to this place, they may stop and think you are devoured by wild beasts, I have done this; so that by this means we may have leisure to continue our journey without fear of pursuit. I must needs confess, continued Marzavan, that this is a violent way of proceeding, to alarm an old father with the death of his son, whom he loved so passionately; but then, on the other hand, the news of your welfare, which he may soon have, will in a great measure alleviate his grief, and make amends for your absence. Brave Marzavan, replied the prince, I cannot sufficiently admire your conduct, and I have all the obligations in the world to you.

The prince and Marzavan, well provided with cash for their expenses, continued their journey both by land and sea, and found

no other obstacle but the length of the way which they were forced to undergo: at length, however, they arrived at the capital of China, where Marzavan, instead of going to his lodging carried the prince to a public inn. They tarried there incognito three days to rest themselves, during which time Marzavan caused an astrologer's habit to be made for the prince. The three days being expired, they went together to the bagnio, the prince putting on his astrologer's habit; and from thence Marzavan conducted him in sight of the king of China's palace, where he left him to acquaint his mother, the princess Badoura's nurse, of his arrival, that she might give the like information to the princess her mistress.

Prince Camaralzaman, instructed by Marzavan what he was to do, and provided with all he wanted as an astrologer, came next morning to the gate of the king's palace, and cried aloud, I am an astrologer, and am come to effect a cure on the most beautiful princess Badoura, daughter of the most high and mighty monarch Gaiour king of China, on the conditions proposed by his majesty, to marry her if I succeed, or else to lose my life for my fruitless and presumptuous attempt!

Besides the guards and porters standing at the gate, this novelty drew together a great number of people about prince Camaralzaman. There had no physician, astrologer, nor magician, appeared for a long time on this account, deterred by the many tragical examples of ill success that had occurred; it was therefore thought there were either no more of these professions in the world, or at least that there were no more so mad as those who had gone before them.

The prince's good mien, noble air, and blooming youth, raised pity in every one who saw him. What do you mean, sir, said some who stood near him, to expose thus your life, which promises so much, to certain death? Cannot the heads you see on all the gates of this city deter you from such an undertaking? In the name of God, consider what you do, and abandon the rash attempt!

The prince continued firm, notwithstanding the remonstrances made to him; and, as he saw nobody come to introduce him, he repeated the same cry with so loud a voice as to make every body tremble. They all then cried, Let him alone; he is resolved to die. God have mercy upon his soul! He then proceeded to cry out a third time in the same manner, when the grand vizier came in person, and introduced him to the king of China.

As soon as the prince came into the king's presence, he bowed and kissed the floor. The king, who, of all that hitherto had exposed their lives on this occasion, had not before seen one worthy of his notice, had now a real compassion for prince Camaralzaman, on account of the danger he was about to expose himself to; and perceiving in him something which merited deference and respect, he did him the more honour, and made him seat himself near him. Young man, said he, I can hardly believe that you, at this age, can have acquired sufficient experience to enable you to cure my daughter. I will give her to you with all my heart on that account; nay, more willingly than I should have done to others who have before offered themselves; but then I declare to you, at the same time, with, a great deal of concern, that if you fail to

succeed in your attempt, notwithstanding your noble appearance, and exceedingly beautiful person, you must lose your head.

Sir, replied the prince, I have infinite obligations to your majesty for the honour you design me, though a stranger; but I desire your majesty to consider that I would not have come from so remote a country, and which perhaps may be unknown in your dominions, if I had not been certain of the cure I propose. What might not be said of my inconstancy of temper, if, after the great fatigue and dangers I have undergone on this account, I should abandon the generous enterprise in which I had engaged? Even your majesty would soon lose that respect you have done me the honour to show me, if I appeared so dastardly and mean-spirited. I beseech your majesty, therefore, no longer to delay the experiment I am certain of, but give me leave to display the utmost of my art, which I doubt not will be to your majesty's satisfaction, as well as my great happiness.

Then the king commanded the eunuch, who had the guard of the princess, to introduce prince Camaralzaman into her apartment, but, before letting him go, was so kind as to remind him once more of the hazard he underwent; yet the prince seeming resolved, the king suffered him to follow the eunuch.

When they came to a long gallery, at the end of which was the princess's apartment, the prince, through impatience once more to see the object of his vows, who had occasioned him so much grief, got before the eunuch, walking as fast as he could.

The eunuch, redoubling his pace, with much difficulty got up with him, when, taking him by the arm, he cried, Whither away so fast, sir? you cannot be admitted without me; and it I should seem that you have a great desire for death, who can. run to it so headlong! Not one of the many astrologers and magicians whom I have before introduced, made such haste as yourself to a place whither, I fear, you will but too soon come.

Friend, replied the prince, continuing his pace, and looking earnestly on the eunuch, it was because none of your astrologers or magicians was ever so sure of their art as I am: they were certain, indeed, that they should die if they did not succeed; but they had no certainty, at the same time, of their success as I have. On this account they had reason to tremble at approaching the place whither I go, and where I am sure to find my happiness. He had just spoken these words as he was at the door. The eunuch opened it, and introduced him into a great hall, whence there was an entrance into the princess's chamber, divided only by a piece of tapestry.

Prince Camaralzaman, speaking more softly to the eunuch, asked him, before he entered, whether he chose that he should cure the princess in his presence, or where he was, without going further; telling him, in the same tone, that nobody might hear him in the princess's chamber, he made him the frank offer, to show that it was not presumptuous caprice, nor the heat of youth, which put him upon the enterprise.

The eunuch was very much amazed to hear the prince talk with such assurance; he left off insulting him, and said to him seriously,

It is no matter whether you do it here or there, provided the business be done; cure her how you will, you will get immortal honour by it, not only in this court, but over all the world.

The prince replied, it will be best, then, to make the cure without seeing her, that you may be witness of my skill: though I cannot, without impatience, put off seeing a princess of her rank, who is to be my wife, yet, out of respect to you, I will deprive myself of that pleasure for a little while. Being furnished with every thing proper for an astrologer, and taking pen, ink, and paper, out of his pocket, wrote this billet to the princess.

Prince Camaralzaman to the Princess of China.

ADORABLE PRINCESS!--The love-sick prince Camaralzaman will not trouble you with the pains that he has endured ever since the fatal night when your charms deprived him of that liberty which he resolved to preserve as long as he lived: he only tells you, that he devoted his heart to you in your charming slumbers; those slumbers which hindered him from beholding the brightness of your piercing eyes, in spite of all his endeavours to oblige you to open them. He presumed to present you with his ring as a token of his passion, and, in exchange, would be proud to receive yours, which he encloses in this billet. If you will condescend to return it as a reciprocal assurance of your love, he will reckon himself the happiest of all lovers: if not, the sentence of death, which your fatal refusal brings him, will be received with the more resignation, because he dies for love of you. He waits in your anti-chamber for your answer.

When the prince had finished his billet, he made it up, and enclosed with it the ring in a little packet, without letting the eunuch see what he did. When he sealed it, he gave it to him: There, friend, said he, carry it to your mistress. If it does not cure her as soon as she reads it, and sees what is enclosed in it, I give you leave to tell every body that I am the most ignorant and impudent astrologer that ever was, is, or ever will be.

The eunuch entering the princess of China's chamber, gave her the packet he received from prince Camaralzaman. Madam, said he, the boldest astrologer that ever lived, if I am not mistaken, is arrived here, and pretends that, on reading this letter, and seeing what is in it, you will be cured: I wish he may prove neither a liar nor an impostor.

The princess Badoura took the billet, and opened it with a great deal of indifference, but, on seeing the ring, she had not patience to read it through; she rose hastily, broke the chair; which held her down with struggling, and ran and opened the door. She knew the prince the moment she saw him, and he her; they presently embraced each other with all imaginable tenderness, and, without being able to say a word for excess of joy, they looked on one another, admiring how they met again after their first interview. The princess's nurse, who ran to the door with her, made them come into her chamber, where the princess Badoura gave the prince her ring, saying, Take it, I cannot fairly keep it without restoring yours, which I will never part with: neither

yours nor mine can be in better hands.

The eunuch went immediately to the king to tell him what had happened. Sir, said he, all the astrologers and doctors who have hitherto pretended to cure the princess, were a company of fools in comparison of him who came last! He used neither schemes, conjurations, perfumes, nor any thing else; but cured her without seeing her! Then he told the king how he did it, who was agreeably surprised at the news; and going presently to the princess's chamber, embraced her; after which he took Camaralzaman's hand, and joined it to the princess's. Happy stranger, said the king, I will keep my word, and give my daughter to be your wife; though, by what I see of you, it is impossible for me to believe that you are really what you appear in this assumed character, and would have me believe.

Prince Camaralzaman thanked the king in the most humble expressions, that he might the better show his gratitude. As for my profession, said he, I must own I am not an astrologer, as your majesty very judiciously observed; I only put on the habit of one, that I might succeed more easily in my ambition to be allied to the most potent monarch in the world. I am born a prince, and the son of a king and queen; my name is Camaralzaman; my father is Schahzaman, who now reigns over the islands that are known by the name of the islands of the Children of Khaledan. He then told the adventures of his life, and the wonderful rise of his love; that the princess's was altogether as marvelous, and that both were confirmed by the exchange of two rings.

When the prince had done speaking, the king said, This history is so extraordinary, that it deserves to be known to posterity; an account of it shall be taken; and the original being deposited in my royal archives, I will spread copies of it abroad, that my own kingdom, and the kingdoms around me, may know it.

The marriage was solemnized the same day, and the rejoicings for it were universal all over the empire of China; nor was Marzavan forgotten; the king immediately gave him an honourable post in his court, and a promise to advance him higher afterwards.

Prince Camaralzaman and the princess Badoura enjoyed the fulness of their wishes in the sweets of marriage; and the king kept continual feasting for several months, to testify his joy on the occasion.

In the midst of these pleasures, prince Camaralzaman one night dreamed that he saw his father Schahzaman on death-bed, ready to give up the ghost, and heard him speak thus to his attendants: My son, whom I so tenderly loved--my son, whom I bred with so much fondness, so much care, has abandoned me, and is the cause of my death! He awoke and sighed; which wakened the princess, who asked him the reason of it.

Alas, my love! cried the prince, perhaps the very moment that I am speaking of it, my father is no more! He then acquainted her with his melancholy dream, and why that sad thought came into his head. The princess, who studied to please him in every thing, presently contrived a way to do it; and, fearing that he would take less delight in her company if he was kept from seeing his

father, went that very day to her father, whom she found alone. After kissing his hand, she thus addressed herself: Sir, I have a favour to beg of your majesty, and beseech you not to deny me; but, that you may not believe I am put upon it by the prince my husband, I assure you beforehand that he knows nothing of my asking it of you; it is, that you will give me leave to go and see the king Schahzaman, my father-in-law.

The king replied, Daughter, though I shall be very sorry to lose your company, and part with you for so long a time as a journey to a place so distant will take up, yet I cannot disapprove of your resolution; it is worthy of yourself: Go, child, I give you leave, but on condition that you stay no longer than a year in king Schahzaman's court. I hope the king will be willing to come to this agreement with me, that we, in our turn, may see him, his son, and daughter-in-law, and I my daughter and son-in-law.

The princess communicated the king of China's consent to prince Camaralzaman, who was transported to hear it, and gave her a thousand thanks for this new token of her love.

The king of Chiha commanded preparations to be made for the journey, and, when all things were ready, accompanied the prince and princess several leagues on their way. When they came to part, great was the weeping on all sides. The king embraced them, and desired the prince to be kind to his daughter, and to love her always with the same passion he then manifested towards her. So he left them to proceed on their journey, and, to divert himself, hunted all the way as he returned to his capital city.

When prince Camaralzaman and the princess Badoura had dried up their tears, and given over mourning for parting with the king of China, they comforted themselves with thinking how glad king Schahzaman would be to see them, and how they should rejoice to see him.

They travelled about a month incessantly, and at last came to a large field, planted with tall trees at convenient distances, under whose shade they went on very pleasantly. The weather being that day much hotter than ordinary, Camaralzaman thought it best to stay there during the heat, and proposed it to Badoura, who, wishing for the same thing, readily consented. They alighted in the most agreeable place of the grove; a tent was presently set up, and the princess, rising from the shade under which she sat down, entered it. The prince ordered his servants to pitch their tent also while they staid there, and gave them directions himself how to do it. The princess, being weary with the fatigues of her journey, bid one of her women untie her girdle, which they laid down by her; and, falling asleep, her attendants left her by herself.

Prince Caraaralzaman having seen all things in order, came to the tent where the princess was sleeping. He entered, and sat down without making any noise, intending to take a nap himself; but observing the princess's girdle lying by her, he took it up, and looked upon the diamonds and rubies one by one. In doing so, he saw a little purse hanging to it, tied fast with a riband; he felt it, and found there was something in it: being desirous to know what it was, he opened the purse, and took out a cornelian

engraved with unknown characters and figures. This cornelian, said the prince to himself, must have something extraordinary in it, or my princess would not be at the trouble to carry it with her; and, indeed, it was Badoura's talisman, or a scheme of her nativity drawn from the constellations of heaven, which the queen of China had given her daughter as a charm that would keep her from all harm as long as she had it about her.

The prince, to see what the talisman was, took it out to the light, the tent being dark; and, while he was holding it up in his hand, a bird darted down from the air, and snatched it away.

Your majesty may easily conceive the concern and grief of prince Camaralzaman, when he saw the bird fly away with the talisman*[Footnote: There is an adventure like this in the romance of Peter of Provence and the Fair Maguelona, which was taken from the Arabic.] . He was more troubled at it than words can express, and cursed his unseasonable curiosity, by which means he had lost a treasure that was so exceedingly precious, and so much valued by his dear princess.

The bird, having got her prize, pitched upon the ground, not far off, with the talisman in her mouth. The prince drew near it, in hopes she would drop it; but, as he approached, the bird took wing, and pitched again on the ground further off. Camaralzaman followed her; and the bird, having swallowed the talisman, took a small flight further off still. The prince, being very dexterous at a mark, thought to kill her with a stone, and still followed. The further she flew, the more eager he grew in pursuing, keeping her always in view. Thus the bird drew him along from hill to valley, and from valley to hill, all day; every step leading him out of the way from the field where he left his camp and the princess Badoura: and, instead of perching at night on a bush, where he might probably have taken her, she roosted on a high tree, safe from his pursuit. The prince vexed to the heart for taking so much pains to no purpose, thought of returning to the camp; but, alas! he thought of it too late. Whither could he go? which way return? how could he find out the untracked way of the mountains, and the untrodden paths of the vallies? Darkness spread over the heavens; and night, with the fatigues of the day's labour, would not suffer him to undertake so soon to return the way he came, were there any hopes of his finding it. Ah! said the despairing lover, if I knew which way to return, how durst I appear before my princess without her talisman? Overwhelmed with such afflicting thoughts, and tired with his pursuit of the bird, sleep came upon him, and he lay down under a tree, where he passed the night.

He awoke next morning before the bird had left the tree, and, as soon as he saw her on the wing, followed her again the whole day, with no better success than the former, eating nothing but herbs and fruits all the way as he went. He did the same for ten days together, pursuing the bird, and keeping her in his eye from morning till night, lying always under the tree where she roosted. On the eleventh day, the bird still flying, Camaralzaman observed that he came near a great city: the bird made towards it, flew over the walls, and the prince saw no more of her; so he despaired of ever recovering the princess of Badoura's talisman.

Camaralzaman, whose grief was beyond expression, went to the city, which was built on the sea-side, and had a fine port. He walked up and down the streets, without knowing where he was, or where to stop. At last he came to the port, in as great uncertainty as ever what he should do. Walking along the river-side, he perceived the gate of a garden open, and an old gardener at work in it. The good old man, looking up, saw he was a stranger and a Mussulman; so he asked him to come in, and shut the door after him.

Camaralzaman entered, and, as the gardener bade him shut the door, demanded of him why he was so cautious. Because, replied the old man, I see you are a stranger and a Mussulman newly arrived; and this city, being inhabited for the most part by idolaters, has a mortal aversion to us Mussulmen, and use the few of us who are here with a great deal of barbarity. I suppose you did not know this, and it is a miracle that you have escaped, considering how far you have come through them; these idolaters being very apt to fall upon the Mussulmen who are strangers, or to draw them into a snare, unless those strangers are instructed how to deal with and beware of them.

Camaralzaman thanked the honest gardener for his advice, and the security he offered him in his house. He would have said more; but the good man interrupted him, saying, Let us wave complimenting; you are weary, and want to refresh yourself. Come in; eat what we have, and lie down to rest; you are very welcome. He conducted him into his little hut, which, though small, was clean, and well defended from the injuries of the weather. He ordered the best provisions he had to be brought forth, and entertained the prince so heartily, that he was charmed with it, and at his request told him how he came there.

When he had ended his story, without hiding any part of it, he asked him which was the nearest way to his father's territories? For it is in vain, said he, to think of finding my princess where I left her, wandering, as I have been, eleven days from that place. Ah, continued he, how do I know that she is alive! and, saying this, he burst out into tears that would have melted the most cruel and obdurate. The gardener replied, that there was no possibility of his going thither by land, the ways were so difficult, and the journey so long; besides, there was no manner of convenience for his subsisting; and if there was, he must necessarily pass through many barbarous nations; that he would never reach his father's; that the quickest passage would be to go to the isle of Ebene, whence he might easily transport himself to the isles of the children of Khaledan; that there was a ship which sailed from the port where he was every year to Ebene, and he might take that opportunity of returning to those islands. The ship departed, said he, but a few nays ago, and it will be almost a year before it makes the voyage again: if you will accept of my house for your habitation so long, you will be as welcome to it as to your own.

Prince Camaralzaman was glad he had met with such an asylum in a place where he had no knowledge of any man, nor any man of him, and where nobody could think it his interest to entertain or preserve him. He accepted the offer, and lived with the gardener till the time that the ship was to sail to the isle of Ebene. He

spent his time all day in working in the garden, and all night in thinking of his dear princess Badoura, in sighs, tears, and complaints. But we must leave him a while, and return to the princess, whom we left asleep in her tent.

THE STORY OF THE PRINCESS BADOURA, AFTER HER SEPARATION FROM PRINCE CAMARALZAMAN.

The princess slept a long time, and, when she awoke, wondered that prince Camaralzaman was not with her. She called her women, and asked them if they knew where he was gone. They told her they saw him enter the tent, but did not see him go out again. While they were talking, she spied her girdle, saw it had been meddled with, and, on examination, found the little purse open, and the talisman gone. She did not doubt but Camaralzaman had taken it in order to examine it, and that he would bring it back. She waited for him impatiently till night, and could not imagine what made him stay away so long.

When it was quite dark, and she could hear nothing of him, she fell into a violent fit of grief: She cursed the talisman, and him that made it; and, had she not been restrained by duty, would have cursed her mother who gave it to her. She was the more troubled, because she could not imagine how her talisman should have caused the prince's separation from her. However, amidst all her sorrow, she retained her judgment, and came to a courageous resolution not common with persons of her sex.

She and her women only knew of the prince's being gone; for his men were then asleep, or refreshing themselves in their tents. The princess, fearing they would betray her if they had any knowledge of it, first composed her mind a little, moderated her grief, and forbade her women to say or do any thing that might make them suspect the truth. Then she undressed herself, and put on prince Camaralzaman's suit; being so like him in it, that the next day, when she came abroad, his men took her for him.

She commanded them to pack up their baggage and march forward; and when all things were ready, she ordered one of her women to go into her sedan; she herself on horseback, riding by her side.

They travelled several months by land and sea; the princess continuing the journey under the name of Camaralzaman. They took the island of Ebene in their way to the isles of the Children of Khaledan. They went to the capital of the island, where reigned a king whose name was Armanos. The persons who first landed giving out that they brought prince Camaralzaman, who was returning from a long voyage towards his own country, and was forced to put in there by a storm, the news of his arrival was presently carried to court.

King Armanos, accompanied by most of his courtiers, went immediately to wait on the prince, and met the princess, just as she had landed, going to the lodgings that had been taken for her. He received her as the son of a king who was his friend, and with whom he had always kept a fair correspondence; and carried her to his palace, where an apartment was prepared for her and all her attendants; though she would fain have excused herself, and lodged in a private house. Besides this, he was so courteous, that doing her common honours would not content him; he entertained her three days together with extraordinary magnificence and royal festivals.

The days of feasting being over, and king Armanos understanding that the princess, whom he still took for prince Camaralzaman, talked of going aboard again to proceed on her voyage, he was so charmed with the air and qualities of such an accomplished prince, as he took her, that he watched his opportunity when she was alone, and spoke in the following manner: You see, prince, that I am old, and cannot hope to live long. It is my great trouble that I have not a son to whom I may leave my crown. Heaven has only blessed me with one daughter, who cannot desire to be more happy than a prince of your virtues can make her, whose merit is equal with your birth. Instead of going home, stay and take her from my hand: with her I will give you my kingdom, and retreat myself to a quiet life, free from the business and cares of the world, having long enough had the weight of the crown upon me; and nothing could be a greater pleasure in my retirement, than to consider what a worthy successor sits on my throne, and rules my happy people.

The king of the isle of Ebene's generous offer to bestow his only daughter in marriage on the princess Badoura, who could not accept of it because she was a woman, gave her unexpected trouble, and she could not presently think of an expedient to extricate herself out of it. She thought it would not become a princess of her rank to deceive the king, and to own that she was not prince Camaralzaman, but his wife, when she had assured him she was he himself, whose part she had hitherto acted so well, that her sex was not in the least suspected. She was also afraid to refuse him; seeing him so much bent upon the conclusion of the marriage, that there was reason to apprehend his kindness would turn to aversion and hatred, if the honour he offered her was rejected, and that he might attempt something even against her life. Besides, she was not sure of finding prince Camaralzaman in the court of king Schahzaman, his father.

These considerations, added to the prospect of obtaining a kingdom for the prince her husband, in case she found him again, made her resolve to do what king Armanos would have her, to marry his daughter. So, after having stood silent some minutes, she, with blushes which the king took for a sign of modesty, answered, Sir, I am infinitely obliged to your majesty for your good opinion, for the honour you do me, and the great favour you offer, which I cannot pretend to merit, and dare not refuse.

But, sir, continued she, I cannot accept of this alliance, on any other condition, than that your majesty will assist me with your counsel, and that I do nothing without first having your approbation.

The marriage treaty being thus concluded and agreed on, the ceremony was put off till next day. In the mean time the princess Badoura gave notice to her officers, who still took her for prince Camaralzaman, what she was about to do, that they might not be surprised at it, assuring them that the princess Badoura consented to it. She talked also to her women, and charged them to keep the secret she had intrusted them with as they valued their lives.

The king of the isle of Ebene rejoiced that he had got a son-in-law so much to his satisfaction. The next morning he summoned his council, and acquainted them with his design of marrying his daughter to prince Camaralzaman, whom he introduced to them, and made him sit down by them, taking the princess Badoura for him; told them he resigned the crown to him, and required them to obey and swear fealty to him. Having said this, he descended from his throne, and the princess Badoura, by his order, mounted it. When she was placed, the lords of the court did her homage, and took an oath of allegiance. As soon as the council broke up, the new king was proclaimed through the city; several days of rejoicing were appointed, and couriers despatched all over the kingdom, to see the same ceremonies observed with the like demonstrations of joy.

At night there was an extraordinary feasting at the palace-royal; and the princess Haiatalnefous* [Footnote: This is an Arabic word, which signifies Life and Soul.], dressed like a royal bride, was led to the princess Badoura, whom every body took for a man. The wedding was solemnized with the utmost splendour; and the rites being performed, they were put to bed. In the morning the princess Badoura went to receive the compliments of the nobility in a hail of audience, where they congratulated her on her marriage and accession to the throne. In the mean while, king Armanos and the queen went to the apartment of the new queen their daughter, and asked how she had spent the night. Instead of answering them, she held down her head, and by her looks they perceived that she was not contented.

King Armanos, to comfort the princess Haiatalnefous, bid her not be troubled, as prince Camaralzaman might be in haste to go to his father's court, and had not stopped at the isle of Ebene, if it had not been in his way thither. Though we have engaged him to stay by arguments with which he ought to be well satisfied, yet it is probable he grieves to be all at once deprived of the hopes of seeing either his father or any of his family. You must wait till those first emotions of tenderness are over, and his filial love wears off by degrees; he will then carry himself towards you as a good husband ought.

The princess Badoura, under the name and character of prince Camaralzaman, not only received the congratulatory addresses of the courtiers and the nobility of the kingdom who were in and about the city, but reviewed the regular troops of her household, and entered on the administration of affairs as king with so much majesty and judgment as gained her the general applause of all who were witnesses of her conduct.

It was evening before she returned to queen Haiatalnefous's

apartment, and perceived, by the reception she met with, that the bride was not at all pleased with the wedding-night. She endeavoured to make her easy by a long discourse, in which she employed all the wit she had (and that was as much as any woman was mistress of) to persuade her she loved her entirely; she then gave her time to go to bed; and while she undressed, herself she went to her devotions; but her prayers were so long, that queen Haiatalnefous was asleep before they were ended. She then gave over, and lay down softly by the new queen, without waking her; and was as much afflicted at being obliged to act a part which did not belong to her, as in the loss of her dear Camaralzaman, for whom she ceased not to sigh. She rose as soon as it was day, before Haiatalnefous was awake; and, dressed in her royal robes as king, went to council.

King Armanos, as he did the day before, came early to visit the queen his daughter, whom he found in sighs and tears; he wanted no more to be informed of the cause of her trouble; he began to resent the contempt, as he thought, which was put upon his daughter, and could not imagine the reason of it. Daughter, said he, have patience for another night. I raised your husband to the throne, and can pull him down again; depend upon it, I will drive him thence with shame, unless he gives you the satisfaction that he ought to do. His usage of you has provoked me so much, I cannot tell to what my resentment may transport me; the affront is as much to me as to you.

It was late again before the princess Badoura came to queen Haiatalnefous: she talked to her as she had done the night before, and in the same manner went to her devotions, desiring the queen to go to bed. But Haiatalnefous would not be so served; she held her back, and obliged her to sit down again: What, said she, do you think to deal by me this night as you have done the two last? Pray tell me, what can you dislike in a princess of my youth and beauty, who not only loves but adores you, and thinks herself the happiest of all princesses in having so amiable a prince for her husband? Any body but me would revenge the slight, or rather the unpardonable affront that you have put upon me, and abandon you to your evil destiny; however, though I did not love you as well as I do, yet, out of pure good nature and humanity, which make me pity the misfortunes of persons for whom: I am no ways concerned, I could not forbear telling you that the king my father is enraged against you for your carriage towards me, and will to-morrow exert his fury in a manner I tremble to think of, if you still use me as you have hitherto done. Do not therefore throw into a despair a princess, who, notwithstanding your ill usage, cannot help loving you.

This discourse embarrassed the princess Badoura more than any thing she had yet met with; she did not doubt the truth of what Haiatalnefous had said. King Armanos's coldness the day before had given her but too much reason to see that he was highly dissatisfied with her. The only way to justify her conduct was to communicate her sex to the princess Haiatalnefous. She had foreseen she should be under a necessity of discovering it to her, yet, now she was about to make such a declaration, was afraid how she would receive it: but, considering that if Camaralzaman was alive, he must necessarily touch at the isle of Ebene in his way to King Schahzaman his father's kingdom, that

she ought to preserve herself for his sake; and as it was impossible to do it, if she did not let the princess Haiatalnefous know who and what she was, she resolved to venture, and try to get off that way.

The princess Badoura stood as one struck dumb; and Haiatalnefous, being impatient to hear what she could say, was about to speak to her again, when she stopped her by these words: Lovely and too charming princess! I own I have been in the wrong, and I condemn myself for it; but I hope you will pardon me, and keep the secret I am going to reveal to you for my justification.

She then opened her bosom, and, showing her naked breasts, proceeded thus: See, princess, if a woman, and a princess like yourself, does not deserve to be forgiven; I believe you will be so good at least, when you know my story

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