The Pacha of Many Tales

by Frederick Marryat

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THE PACHA OF MANY TALES

by

CAPTAIN MARRYAT

List of Tales

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Prefatory Note

The Pacha of Many Tales, as indeed its title suggests, is constructed in direct imitation of the Arabian Nights. A Pacha of olden days, enchanted by the stories of Schezehezerade, becomes emulous of the great Haroun, and determines to procure his own stock of entertainment. By the assistance of a wily barber-vizier he succeeds in the attempt, and listens with greedy credulity to the marvellous histories herein set forth.

On one occasion an English sailor is dragged into the august presence, and demands, with all the dogged independence of his race, the reasons for such treatment.

"You must tell lies, and you will have gold," replies the vizier.

"Tell lies," says Jack Tar, "that is, spin yarns. Well, I can do that."

The volume before us could not be more suggestively described. It is a collection of admirable short stories of intrigue and adventure, traveller's wonders narrated with a perfect air of good faith and no regard for truth or probability. All the countries on the globe, and many existing only in the imagination, are called into requisition to produce a brilliant phantasmagoria of manners and customs. The stories move rapidly and defy criticism by the very occasion of their being, invented to amuse and astonish a jaded autocrat.

Hence we feel no shock in reading of an island where the commonest utensils are made of gold, a nursery of whales, five months in the interior of an iceberg, or a journey among the clouds during a thunderstorm. The demand for brevity

strengthens Marryat's style, and saves him from padding. He is very happy in contriving expediences, and evinces considerable wit in the conception, for instance, of Yussuf the water-carrier. Some of the stories, again, are really dramatic, and the "Second Voyage of Huckaback" (p. 126) reaches a height of weird horror that recalls, without paling before the thought, certain passages in The Ancient Mariner.

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The Pacha of Many Tales was first published in The Metropolitan Magazine, 1831-1835. During its appearance Marryat printed in the same magazine (in 1833) a drama, The Monk of Seville, of which the plot is almost exactly identical with The Story of the Monk (p. 44). "Port Royal Tom," the shark, and his Government pension, also appear in Jacob Faithful, Chap. XXV.

The Pacha of Many Tales is here printed, with a few corrections, from the second edition in 3 vols. A.K. Newman & Co., 1844.

R.B.J

Chapter I

Every one acquainted with the manners and customs of the East must be aware, that there is no situation of eminence more unstable, or more dangerous to its possessor, than that of a pacha. Nothing, perhaps, affords us more convincing proof of the risk which men will incur, to obtain a temporary authority over their fellow-creatures, than the avidity with which this office is accepted from the sultan; who, within the memory of the new occupant, has consigned scores of his predecessors to the bowstring. It would almost appear, as if the despot but elevated a head from the crowd, that he might obtain a more fair and uninterrupted sweep for his scimitar, when he cut it off; only exceeded in his peculiar taste by the king of Dahomy, who is said to ornament the steps of his palace with heads, fresh severed, each returning sun, as we renew the decoration of our apartments from our gay parterres. I make

these observations, that I may not be accused of a disregard to chronology, in not precisely stating the year, or rather the months, during which flourished one of a race, who, like the flowers of the Cistus, one morning in all their splendour, on the next, are strewed lifeless on the ground to make room for their successors. Speaking of such ephemeral creations, it will be quite sufficient to say, "There was a Pacha."

Would you inquire by what means he was raised to the distinction? It is an idle question. In this world, preeminence over your fellow-creatures can only be obtained, by leaving others far behind in the career of virtue or of vice. In compliance with the dispositions of those who rule, faithful service in the one path or the other will shower honour upon the subject, and by the breath of kings he becomes ennobled to look down upon his former equals.

And as the world spins round, the why is of little moment. The honours are bequeathed, but not the good, or the evil deeds, or the talents by which they were obtained. In the latter, we have but a life interest, for the entail is cut off by death. Aristocracy in all its varieties is as necessary, for the well binding of society, as the divers grades between the general and the common soldier are essential in the field. Never then inquire, why this or that man has been raised above his fellows; but, each night as you retire to bed, thank Heaven that you are not a King.

And if I may digress, there is one badge of honour in our country, which I never contemplate without serious reflection rising in my mind. It is the bloody hand in the dexter chief of a baronet,—now often worn, I grant, by those who, perhaps, during their whole lives have never raised their hands in anger. But my thoughts have returned to days of yore—the iron days of ironed men, when it was the symbol of faithful service in the field—when it really was bestowed upon the "hand embrued in blood;" and I have meditated, whether that hand, displayed with exultation in this world, may not be held up trembling in the next—in judgment against itself.

And I, whose memory stepping from one legal murder to another, can walk

dry-footed over the broad space of five-and-twenty years of time,—but the "damned spots" won't come out—so I'll put my hands in my pockets and walk on.

Conscience, fortunately or unfortunately, I hardly can tell which, permits us to form political and religious creeds, most suited to disguise or palliate our sins. Mine is a military conscience, and I agree with Bates and Williams, who flourished in the time of Henry V., that it is "all upon the King:" that is to say, it was all upon the king; and now our constitution has become so incomparably perfect, that "the king can do no wrong;" and he has no difficulty in finding ministers, who voluntarily impignorating themselves for all his actions in this world, will, in all probability, not escape from the clutches of the great Pawnbroker in the next—from which facts I draw the following conclusions:—

1st. That his Majesty (God bless him!) will go to heaven.

2ndly. That his Majesty's ministers will all go to the devil.

3rdly. That I shall go———on with my story.

As, however, a knowledge of the previous history of our pacha will be necessary to the development of our story, the reader will in this instance be indulged. He had been brought up to the profession of a barber; but, possessing great personal courage, he headed a popular commotion in favour of his predecessor, and was rewarded by a post of some importance in the army. Successful in detached service, while his general was unfortunate in the field, he was instructed to take off the head of his commander, and head the troops in his stead; both of which services he performed with equal skill and celerity. Success attended him, and the pacha, his predecessor, having in his opinion, as well as in that of the sultan, remained an unusual time in office, by an accusation enforced by a thousand purses of gold, he was enabled to produce a bowstring for his benefactor; and the sultan's "firman" appointed him to the vacant pachalik. His qualifications for office were all superlative: he was very short, very corpulent, very illiterate, very irascible, and very

stupid.

On the morning after his investment, he was under the hands of his barber, a shrewd intelligent Greek, Mustapha by name. Barbers are privileged persons for many reasons: running from one employer to another to obtain their livelihood, they also obtain matter for conversation, which, impertinent as it may sometimes be, serves to beguile the tedium of an operation which precludes the use of any organ except the ear. Moreover, we are inclined to be on good terms with a man, who has it in his power to cut our throats whenever he pleases—to wind up, the personal liberties arising from his profession, render all others trifling; for the man who takes his sovereign by the nose, cannot well after that be denied the liberty of speech.

Mustapha was a Greek by birth, and inherited all the intelligence and adroitness of his race. He had been brought up to his profession when a slave; but at the age of nineteen, he accompanied his master on board of a merchant vessel bound to Scio; this vessel was taken by a pirate, and Demetrius (for such was his real name) joined this band of miscreants, and very faithfully served his apprenticeship to cutting throats, until the vessel was captured by an English frigate. Being an active, intelligent person, he was, at his own request, allowed to remain on board as one of the ship's company, assisted in several actions, and after three years went to England, where the ship was paid off. For some time, Demetrius tried to make his fortune, but without success, and it was not until he was reduced to nearly his last shilling, that he commenced the trade of hawking rhubarb about in a box: which speculation turned so profitable, that he was enabled in a short time to take his passage in a vessel bound to Smyrna, his own country. This vessel was captured by a French privateer; he was landed, and, not being considered as a prisoner, allowed to act as he thought proper. In a short time he obtained the situation of valet and barber to a "millionaire," whom he contrived to rob of a few hundred Napoleons, and with them to make his escape to his own country. Demetrius had now some knowledge of the world, and he felt it necessary that he should become a True

Believer, as there would be more chance of his advancement in a Turkish country. He dismissed the patriarch to the devil, and took up the turban and Mahomet; then quitting the scene of his apostasy, recommenced his profession of barber in the territory of the pacha; whose good-will he had obtained previous to the latter's advancement to the pachalik.

"Mustapha," observed the pacha, "thou knowest that I have taken off the heads of all those who left their slippers at the door of the late pacha."

"Allah Kebur! God is most powerful! So perish the enemies of your sublime highness. Were they not the sons of Shitan?" replied Mustapha.

"Very true; but, Mustapha, the consequence is that I am in want of a vizier; and whom do I know equal to that office?"

"While your sublime highness is pacha, is not a child equal to the office? Who stumbles, when guided by unerring wisdom?"

"I know that very well," replied the pacha; "but if I am always to direct him, I might as well be vizier myself; besides, I shall have no one to blame, if affairs go wrong with the Sultan. Inshallah! please the Lord, the vizier's head may sometimes save my own."

"Are we not as dogs before you?" replied Mustapha: "happy the man, who, by offering his own head may preserve that of your sublime highness! It ought to be the proudest day of his life."

"At all events it would be the last," rejoined the pacha.

"May it please your sublime highness," observed Mustapha, after a pause, "if your slave may be so honoured as to speak in your presence, a vizier should be a person of great tact; he should be able to draw the line as nicely as I do when I shave your sublime head, leaving not a vestige of the hair, yet entering not upon the skin."

"Very true, Mustapha."

"He should have a sharp eye for the disaffected to the government, selecting them and removing them from among the crowd, as I do the few white hairs which presume to make their appearance in your sublime and magnificent beard."

"Very true, Mustapha."

"He should carefully remove all impurities from the state, as I have this morning from your sublime ears."

"Very true, Mustapha."

"He should be well acquainted with the secret springs of action, as I have proved myself to be in the shampooing which your sublime highness has just received."

"Very true, Mustapha."

"Moreover, he should be ever grateful to your highness for the distinguished honour conferred upon him."

"All that you say is very true, Mustapha, but where am I to meet with such a man?"

"This world is convenient in some points," continued Mustapha; "if you want either a fool or a knave, you have not far to go to find them; but it is no easy task to select the person you require. I know but one."

"And who is he?"

"One whose head is but as your footstool," answered the barber, prostrating himself,—"your sublime highness's most devoted slave, Mustapha."

"Holy Prophet! Then you mean yourself!—Well, now I think of it, if one barber can become a pacha, I do not see why another would not make a vizier. But then what am I to do for a barber? No, no, Mustapha; a good vizier is easy to be found, but a good barber, you know as well as I do, requires some talent."

"Your slave is aware of that," replied Mustapha, "but he has travelled in other countries, where it is no uncommon circumstance for men to hold more than one office under government; sometimes much more incompatible than those of barber

and vizier, which are indeed closely connected. The affairs of most nations are settled by the potentates during their toilet. While I am shaving the head of your sublime highness, I can receive your commands to take off the heads of others; and you can have your person and your state both put in order at the same moment."

"Very true, Mustapha; then, on condition that you continue your office of barber, I have no objection to throw that of vizier into the bargain."

Mustapha again prostrated himself, with his tweezers in his hand. He then rose, and continued his office.

"You can write, Mustapha," observed the pacha, after a short silence.

"Min Allah! God forbid that I should acknowledge it, or I should consider myself as unfit to assume the office in which your sublime highness has invested me."

"Although unnecessary for me, I thought it might be requisite for a vizier," observed the pacha.

"Reading may be necessary, I will allow," replied Mustapha; "but I trust I can soon prove to your highness that writing is as dangerous as it is useless. More men have been ruined by that unfortunate acquirement, than by any other; and dangerous as it is to all, it is still more dangerous to men in high power. For instance, your sublime highness sends a message in writing, which is ill-received, and it is produced against you; but had it been a verbal message, you could deny it, and bastinado to death the Tartar who carried it, as a proof of your sincerity.

"Very true, Mustapha."

"The grandfather of your slave," continued the barber-vizier, "held the situation of receiver-general at the custom-house; and he was always in a fury when he was obliged to take up the pen. It was his creed, that no government could prosper when writing was in general use. 'Observe, Mustapha,' said he to me one day, 'here is the curse of writing,—for all the money which is paid in, I am obliged to give a receipt. What is the consequence? that government loses many thousand sequins every year;

for when I apply to them for a second payment, they produce their receipt. Now if it had not been for this cursed invention of writing, Inshallah! they should have paid twice, if not thrice over. Remember, Mustapha,' continued he, 'that reading and writing only clog the wheels of government.'"

"Very true, Mustapha," observed the pacha, "then we will have no writing."

"Yes, your sublime highness, every thing in writing from others, but nothing in writing from ourselves. I have a young Greek slave, who can be employed in these matters. He reads well. I have lately employed him in reading to me the stories of 'Thousand and one Nights.'"

"Stories," cried the pacha; "what are they about? I never heard of them; I'm very fond of stories."

"If it would pleasure your sublime highness to hear these stories read, the slave will wait your commands," replied the vizier.

"Bring him this evening, Mustapha; we will smoke a pipe, and listen to them; I'm very fond of stories—they always send me to sleep."

The business of the day was transacted with admirable precision and despatch by the two quondam barbers, who proved how easy it is to govern, where there are not "three estates" to confuse people. They sat in the divan as highwaymen loiter on the road, and it was "Your money or your life" to all who made their appearance.

At the usual hour the court broke up, the guards retired, the money was carried to the treasury, the executioner wiped his sword, and the lives of the pacha's subjects were considered to be in a state of comparative security, until the affairs of the country were again brought under their cognizance on the ensuing day.

In obedience to the wish expressed by the pacha, Mustapha made his appearance in the afternoon with the young Greek slave. The new vizier having taken a seat upon a cushion at the feet of the pacha, the pipes were lighted, and the slave was directed to proceed.

The Greek had arrived to the end of the First Night, in which Schezehezerade commences her story, and the Sultan, who was anxious to hear the termination of it, defers her execution to the following day.

"Stop," cried the pacha, taking the pipe from his lips; "how long before the break of day did that girl call her sister?"

"About half an hour, your sublime highness."

"Wallah! is that all she could tell of her story in half an hour?—There's not a woman in my harem who would not say as much in five minutes."

The pacha was so amused with the stories, that he never once felt inclined to sleep; on the contrary, the Greek slave was compelled to read every afternoon, until his legs were so tired that he could hardly stand, and his tongue almost refused its office; consequently, they were soon finished; and Mustapha not being able to procure any more, they were read a second time. After which the pacha, who felt the loss of his evening's amusement, became first puzzled how to pass away his time; then he changed to hypochondriacism, and finally became so irritable, that even Mustapha himself, at times, approached him with some degree of awe.

"I have been thinking," observed the pacha, one morning, when under the hands of Mustapha, in his original capacity, "that it would be as easy for me to have stories told me, as the caliph in the Arabian Nights."

"I wonder not that your highness should desire it. Those stories are as the opium to Theriarkis, filling the soul with visions of delight at the moment, but leaving it palsied from over-excitement, when their effect has passed away. How does your sublime highness propose to obtain your end; and in what manner can your slave assist to produce your wishes?"

"I shall manage it without assistance; come this evening and you shall see, Mustapha."

Mustapha made his appearance in the afternoon, and the pacha smoked his pipe for

some time, and appeared as if communing with himself; he then laid it down, and clapping his hands, desired one of the slaves to inform his favourite lady, Zeinab, that he desired her presence.

Zeinab entered with her veil down. "Your slave attends the pleasure of her lord."

"Zeinab," said the pacha, "do you love me?"

"Do not I worship the dust that my lord treads on?"

"Very true—then I have a favour to request—observe, Zeinab—it is my wish that"—(here the pacha took a few whiffs from his pipe—) "The fact is—I wish you to dishonour my harem as soon as possible."

"Wallah sel Nebi!!—by Allah and the Prophet! your highness is in a merry humour this evening," replied Zeinab, turning round to quit the apartment.

"On the contrary, I am in a serious humour; I mean what I have said; and I expect that you will comply with my wishes."

"Is my lord mad? or has he indulged too freely in the juice of the grape forbidden by our prophet? Allah Kebur! God is most powerful—The Hakim must be sent for."

"Will you do as I order you?" said the pacha, angrily.

"Does my lord send for his slave to insult her! My blood is as water, at the dreadful thought!—Dishonour the harem!—Min Allah! God forbid!—Would not the eunuch be ready and the sack?"

"Yes, they would, I acknowledge; but still it must be done."

"It shall not be done," replied the lady:—"Has my lord been visited by heaven? or is he possessed by the Shitan?"—And the lady burst into tears of rage and vexation as she quitted the apartment.

"There's obstinacy for you—women are nothing but opposition. If you wish them to be faithful, they try day and night to deceive you; give them their desires and tell them to be false, they will refuse. All was arranged so well, I should have cut off all

their heads, and had a fresh wife every night until I found one who could tell stories; then I should have rose up and deferred her execution to the following day."

Mustapha, who had been laughing in his sleeve at the strange idea of the pacha, was nevertheless not a little alarmed. He perceived that the mania had such complete possession, that, unless appeased, the results might prove unpleasant even to himself. It occurred to him, that a course might be pursued to gratify the pacha's wishes, without proceeding to such violent measures. Waiting a little while until the colour, which had suffused the pacha's face from anger and disappointment, had subsided, he addressed him:

"The plan of your sublime highness was such as was to be expected from the immensity of your wisdom; but hath not the prophet warned us, that the wisest of men are too often thwarted by the folly and obstinacy of the other sex. May your slave venture to observe, that many very fine stories were obtained by the caliph Haroun, and his vizier Mesrour, as they walked through the city in disguise. In all probability a similar result might be produced, if your highness were to take the same step, accompanied by the lowest of your slaves, Mustapha."

"Very true," replied the pacha, delighted at the prospect, "prepare two disguises, and we will set off in less than an hour—Inshallah, please the Lord, we have at last hit upon the right path."

Mustapha, who was glad to direct the ideas of the pacha into a more harmless channel, procured the dresses of two merchants, (for such, he observed, were the usual habiliments put on by the caliph and his vizier in the Arabian Nights), and he was aware that his master's vanity would be gratified at the idea of imitating so celebrated a personage.

It was dusk when they set off upon their adventures. Mustapha directed some slaves well armed to follow at a distance, in case their assistance might be required. The strict orders which had been issued on the accession of the new pacha (to prevent

any riot or popular commotion), which were enforced by constant rounds of the soldiers on guard, occasioned the streets to be quite deserted.

For some time the pacha and Mustapha walked up one street and down another, without meeting with anything or any body that could administer to their wishes. The former, who had not lately been accustomed to pedestrian exercise, began to puff and show symptoms of weariness and disappointment, when at the corner of a street they fell in with two men, who were seated in conversation; and as they approached softly, one of them said to the other, "I tell you, Coja, that happy is the man who can always command a hard crust like this, which is now wearing away my teeth."

"I must know the reason of that remark," said the pacha; "Mesrour (Mustapha, I mean), you will bring that man to me to-morrow, after the divan is closed."

Mustapha bowed in acquiescence, and directing the slaves who were in attendance to take the man into custody, followed the pacha, who, fatigued with his unusual excursion, and satisfied with the prospect of success, now directed his steps to the palace and retired to bed. Zeinab, who had lain awake until her eyes could remain open no longer, with the intention of reading him a lecture upon decency and sobriety, had at last fallen asleep, and the tired pacha was therefore permitted to do the same.

When Mustapha arrived at his own abode, he desired that the person who had been detained should be brought to him.

"My good man," said the vizier, "you made an observation this evening which was overheard by his highness the pacha, who wishes to be acquainted with your reasons for stating 'that happy was the man who could at all times command a hard crust, like that which was wearing away your teeth.'"

The man fell down on his knees in trepidation. "I do declare to your highness, by the camel of the Holy Prophet," said he, in a faltering voice, "that I neither meant

treason, nor disaffection to the government."

"Slave! I am not quite sure of that," replied Mustapha, with a stern look, in hopes of frightening the man into a compliance with his wishes—"there was something very enigmatical in those words. Your 'hard crust' may mean his sublime highness the pacha; 'wearing away your teeth' may imply exactions from the government; and as you affirmed that he was happy who could command the hard crust—why it is as much as to say that you would be very glad to create a rebellion."

"Holy Prophet! May the soul of your slave never enter the first heaven," replied the man, "if he meant anything more than what he said; and if your highness had been as often without a mouthful of bread as your slave has been, you would agree with him in the justice of the remark."

"It is of little consequence whether I agree with you or not," replied the vizier; "I have only to tell you that his sublime highness the pacha will not be satisfied, unless you explain away the remark, by relating to him some story connected with the observation."

"Min Allah! God forbid that your slave should tell a story to deceive his highness."

"The Lord have mercy upon you if you do not," replied the vizier; "but, to be brief, if you can invent a good and interesting story, you will remove the suspicions of the pacha, and probably be rewarded with a few pieces of gold; if you cannot, you must prepare for the bastinado, if not for death. You will not be required to appear in the sublime presence before to-morrow afternoon, and will therefore have plenty of time to invent one."

"Will your highness permit your slave to go home and consult his wife? Women have a great talent for storytelling. With her assistance he may be able to comply with your injunctions."

"No," replied Mustapha, "you must remain in custody; but, as on this occasion she may be of the greatest assistance to you, you may send for her. They have indeed a

talent! As the young crocodile, from instinct, runs into the Nile as soon as it bursts its shell, so does woman, from her nature, plunge into deceit, before even her tongue can give utterance to the lies which her fertile imagination has already conceived."

And with this handsome compliment to the sex, Mustapha gave his final orders and retired.

Whether the unfortunate man, thus accused of treason, derived any benefit from being permitted to "retain counsel," will be shown by the following story, which he told to the pacha when summoned on the ensuing day.

STORY OF THE CAMEL-DRIVER.

That your highness should wish for an explanation of the very doubtful language which you overheard last night, I am not surprised; but I trust you will acknowledge, when I have finished my narrative, that I was fully justified in the expressions which I made use of. I am by birth (as my dress denotes) a Fellah of this country, but I was not always so poor as I am now. My father was the possessor of many camels, which he let out for hire to the merchants of the different caravans which annually leave this city. When he died, I came into possession of his property, and the good-will of those whom he had most faithfully served. The consequence was, that I had full employ, my camels were always engaged, and, as I invariably accompanied them that they might not be ill-treated, I have several times been to Mecca, as this ragged green turban will testify. My life was one of alternate difficulty and enjoyment. I returned to my wife and children with delight after my journeys of suffering and privation, and fully appreciated the value of my home from the short time that my occupation would permit me to remain there. I worked hard and became rich.

It was during a painful march through the Desert with one of the caravans, that a favourite she-camel foaled. At first it was my intention to leave the young one to its fate, as my camels had already suffered much; but, on examination, the creature showed such strength and symmetry that I resolved to bring it up. I therefore divided

half of one of the loads between the other camels, and tied the foal upon the one which I had partly relieved for the purpose. We arrived safely at Cairo; and, as the little animal grew up, I had more than ever reason to be satisfied that I had saved its life. All good judges considered it a prodigy of beauty and strength, and prophesied that it would some day be selected as the holy camel, to carry the Koran in the pilgrimage to Mecca. And so it did happen about five years afterwards, during which interval I accompanied the caravans as before, and each year added to my wealth.

My camel had by this time arrived to his full perfection; he stood nearly three feet higher than any other; and, when the caravan was preparing, I led him to the sheiks, and offered him as a candidate for the honour. They would have accepted him immediately, had it not been for a Maribout, who, for some reason or another, desired them not to employ him, asserting that the caravan would be unlucky if my camel was the bearer of the holy Koran.

As this man was considered to be a prophet, the sheiks were afraid, and would not give a decided answer. Irritated at the Maribout's interference, I reviled him; he raised a hue and cry against me; and, being joined by the populace, I was nearly killed. As I hastened away, the wretch threw some sand after me, crying out, "Thus shall the caravan perish from the judgment of heaven, if that cursed camel is permitted to carry the holy word of the prophet." The consequence was, that an inferior camel was selected, and I was disappointed. But on the ensuing year the Maribout was not at Cairo; and, as there was no animal equal to mine in beauty, it was chosen by the sheiks without a dissentient voice.

I hastened home to my wife, overjoyed with my good fortune, which I hoped would bring a blessing upon my house. She was equally delighted, and my beautiful camel seemed also to be aware of the honour to which he was destined, as he repaid our caresses, curving and twisting his long neck, and laying his head upon our shoulders.

The caravan assembled: it was one of the largest which for many years had quitted Cairo, amounting in all to eighteen thousand camels. You may imagine my pride when, as the procession passed through the streets, I pointed out to my wife the splendid animal, with his bridle studded with jewels and gold, led by the holy sheiks in their green robes, carrying on his back the chest which contained the law of our prophet, looking proudly on each side of him as he walked along, accompanied by bands of music, and the loud chorus of the singing men and women.

As on the ensuing day the caravan was to form outside of the town, I returned home to my family, that I might have the last of their company, having left my other camels, who were hired by the pilgrims, in charge of an assistant who accompanied me in my journeys. The next morning I bade adieu to my wife and children; and was quitting the house, when my youngest child, who was about two years old, called to me, and begged me to return one moment, and give her a farewell caress. As I lifted her in my arms, she, as usual, put her hand into the pocket of my loose jacket to search, as I thought, for the fruit that I usually brought home for her when I returned from the bazaar; but there was none there: and having replaced her in the arms of her mother, I hastened away that I might not be too late at my post. Your highness is aware that we do not march one following another, as most caravans do, but in one straight line abreast. The necessary arrangement occupies the whole day previous to the commencement of our journey, which takes place immediately after the sun goes down. We set off that evening, and after a march of two nights, arrived at Adjeroid, where we remained three days, to procure our supplies of water from Suez, and to refresh the animals, previous to our forced march over the desert of El Tyh.

The last day of our repose, as I was smoking my pipe, with my camels kneeling down around me, I perceived a herie[1] coming from the direction of Cairo, at a very swift pace; it passed by me like a flash of lightning, but still I had sufficient time to recognise in its rider the Maribout who had prophesied evil if my camel was employed to carry the Koran on the pilgrimage of the year before.

[1] A swift dromedary.

The Maribout stopped his dromedary at the tent of the Emir Hadjy, who commanded the caravan. Anxious to know the reason of his following us, which I had a foreboding was connected with my camel, I hastened to the spot. I found him haranguing the Emir and the people who had surrounded him, denouncing woe and death to the whole caravan if my camel was not immediately destroyed, and another selected in his stead. Having for some time declaimed in such an energetic manner as to spread consternation throughout the camp, he turned his dromedary again to the west, and in a few minutes was out of sight.

The Emir was confused; murmurings and consultations were arising among the crowd. I was afraid that they would listen to the suggestions of the Maribout; and, alarmed for my camel, and the loss of the honour conferred upon him, I was guilty of a lie.

"O! Emir," said I, "listen not to that man who is mine enemy: he came to my house, he ate of my bread, and would have been guilty of the basest ingratitude by seducing the mother of my children; I drove him from my door, and thus would he revenge himself. So may it fare with me, and with the caravan, as I speak the truth."

I was believed; the injunctions of the Maribout were disregarded, and that night we proceeded on our march through the plains of El Tyh.

As your highness has never yet made a pilgrimage, you can have no conception of the country which we had to pass through: it was one vast region of sand, where the tracks of those who pass over it are obliterated by the wind,—a vast sea without water,—an expanse of desolation. We plunged into the desert; and as the enormous collection of animals, extending as far as the eye could reach, held their noiseless way, it seemed as if it were the passing by of shadows.

We met with no accident, notwithstanding the prophecies of the Maribout; and, after a fatiguing march of seven nights, arrived safely at Nakhel, where we replenished

our exhausted water-skins. Those whom I knew joked with me, when we met at the wells, at the false prophecies of my enemy. We had now three days of severe fatigue to encounter before we arrived at the castle of Akaba, and we recommenced our painful journey.

It was on the morning of the second day, about an hour after we had pitched out tents, that the fatal prophecy of the Maribout, and the judgment of Allah upon me, for the lie which I had called on him to witness, was fulfilled.

A dark cloud appeared upon the horizon; it gradually increased, changing to a bright yellow; then rose and rose until it had covered one-half of the firmament, when it suddenly burst upon us in a hurricane which carried every thing before it, cutting off mountains of sand at the base, and hurling them upon our devoted heads. The splendid tent of the Emir which first submitted to the blast, passed close to me, flying along with the velocity of the herie, while every other was either levelled to the ground or carried up into the air, and whirled about in mad gyration.

Moving pillars of sand passed over us, overthrowing and suffocating man and beast; the camels thrust their muzzles into the ground, and, profiting by their instinct, we did the same, awaiting our fate in silence and trepidation. But the simoom had not yet poured upon us all its horrors: in a few minutes nothing was to be distinguished, all was darkness, horrible darkness, rendered more horrible by the ravings of dying men, the screams of women, and the mad career of horses and other animals, which breaking their cords, trod down thousands in their endeavours to escape from the overwhelming fury of the desert storm.

I had laid myself down by one of my camels, and thrusting my head under his side, awaited my death with all the horror of one who felt that the wrath of heaven was justly poured upon him. For an hour I remained in that position, and surely there can be no pains in hell greater than those which I suffered during that space of time. The burning sand forced itself into my garments, the pores of my skin were closed, I

hardly ventured to breathe the hot blast which was offered as the only means of protracted existence. At last I fetched my respiration with greater freedom, and no more heard the howling of the blast. Gradually I lifted up my head, but my eyes had lost their power, I could distinguish nothing but a yellow glare. I imagined that I was blind, and what chance could there be for a man who was blind in the desert of El Tyh? Again I laid my head down, thought of my wife and children, and abandoning myself to despair, I wept bitterly.

The tears that I shed had a resuscitating effect upon my frame. I felt revived, and again lifted up my head—I could see! I prostrated myself in humble thanksgiving to Allah, and then rose upon my feet. Yes, I could see; but what a sight was presented to my eyes! I could have closed them for ever with thankfulness. The sky was again serene, and the boundless prospect uninterrupted as before; but the thousands who accompanied me, the splendid gathering of men and beasts, where were they? Where was the Emir Hadjy and his guards? where the mamelukes, the agas, the janissaries, and the holy sheiks? the sacred camel, the singers, and musicians? the varieties of nations and tribes who had joined the caravan? All perished!! Mountains of sand marked the spots where they had been entombed, with no other monuments save here and there part of the body of a man or beast not yet covered by the desert wave. All, all were gone, save one; and that one, that guilty one, was myself, who had been permitted to exist, that he might behold the awful mischief which had been created by his presumption and his crime.

For some minutes I contemplated the scene, careless and despairing; for I imagined that I had only been permitted to outlive the whole, that my death might be even more terrible. But my wife and children rushed to my memory, and I resolved for their sakes to save, if possible, a life which had no other ties to bind it to this earth. I tore off a piece of my turban, and cleansing the sand out of my bleeding nostrils, walked over the field of death.

Between the different hillocks I found several camels, which had not been covered. Perceiving a water-skin, I rushed to it, that I might quench my raging thirst; but the contents had been dried up—not a drop remained. I found another, but I had no better success. I then determined to open one of the bodies of the camels, and obtain the water which it might still have remaining in its stomach. This I effected, and having quenched my thirst—to which even the heated element which I poured down, seemed delicious—I hastened to open the remainder of the animals before putrefaction should take place, and collect the scanty supplies in the water-skins. I procured more than half a skin of water, and then returned to my own camel, which I had lain down beside of, during the simoom. I sat on the body of the animal, and reflected upon the best method of proceeding. I knew that I was but one day's journey from the springs; but how little chance had I of reaching them! I also knew the direction which I must take. The day had nearly closed, and I resolved to make the attempt.

As the sun disappeared, I rose, and with the skin of water on my back proceeded on my hopeless journey. I walked the whole of that night, and, by break of day, I imagined that I must have made about half the progress of a caravan; I had, therefore, still a day to pass in the desert, without any protection from the consuming heat, and then another night of toil. Although I had sufficient water, I had no food. When the sun rose, I sat down upon a hillock of burning sand, to be exposed to his rays for twelve everlasting hours. Before the hour of noon arrived, my brain became heated—I nearly lost my reason. My vision was imperfect, or rather I saw what did not exist. At one time lakes of water presented themselves to my eager eyes; and so certain was I of their existence, that I rose and staggered till I was exhausted in pursuit of them. At another, I beheld trees at a distance, and could see the acacias waving in the breeze; I hastened to throw myself under their shade, and arrived at some small shrub, which had thus been magnified.

So was I tormented and deceived during the whole of that dreadful day, which still

haunts me in my dreams. At last the night closed in, and the stars as they lighted up, warned me that I might continue my journey. I drank plentifully from my water-skin, and recommenced my solitary way. I followed the track marked out by the bones of camels and horses of former caravans which had perished in the desert, and when the day dawned, I perceived the castle of Akaba at a short distance. Inspired with new life, I threw away the water-skin, redoubled my speed, and in half an hour had thrown myself down by the side of the fountain from which I had previously imbibed large draughts of the refreshing fluid. What happiness was then mine! How heavenly, to lay under the shade, breathing the cool air, listening to the warbling of the birds, and inhaling the perfume of the flowers, which luxuriated on that delightful spot! After an hour I stripped, bathed myself, and, taking another draught of water, fell into a sound sleep.

I awoke refreshed, but suffering under the cravings of hunger, which now assailed me. I had been three days without food; but hitherto I had not felt the want of it, as my more importunate thirst had overcome the sensation. Now that the greater evil had been removed, the lesser increased and became hourly more imperious. I walked out and scanned the horizon with the hopes of some caravan appearing in sight, but I watched in vain; and returned to the fountain. Two more days passed away, and no relief was at hand: my strength failed me; I felt that I was dying; and, as the fountain murmured, and the birds sang, and the cool breeze fanned my cheeks, I thought that it would have been better to have been swallowed up in the desert than to be tantalised by expiring in such a paradise. I laid myself down to die, for I could sit up no more; and as I turned round to take a last view of the running water, which had prolonged my existence, something hard pressed against my side. I thought it was a stone, and stretched out my hand to remove it, that I might be at ease in my last moments; but when I felt, there was no stone there; it was something in the pocket of my jacket. I put my hand in, unconscious what it could be; I pulled it out, and looking at it before I threw it away, found that it was a piece of hard dry bread. I

thought that it had been sent to me from heaven, and it was as pure an offering as if it had come from thence, for it was the gift of innocence and affection—it was the piece of bread which my little darling girl had received for her breakfast, and which on my departure she had thrust into my pocket, when I imagined she had been searching for fruit. I crawled to the spring, moistened it, and devoured it, with tears of gratitude to heaven, mingled with the fond yearnings of a father's heart.

It saved my life; for the next day a small caravan arrived, which was bound to Cairo. The merchants treated me with great kindness, tied me on one of the camels, and I once more embraced my family, whom I had never thought to see again. Since that I have been poor, but contented—I deserved to lose all my property for my wickedness, and I submit with resignation to the will of Allah.

And now I trust that your highness will acknowledge that I was justified in making use of the expression, that "Happy was the man who could at all times command a crust of bread!"

* * * * *

"Very true," observed the pacha; "that's not a bad story: Mustapha, give him five pieces of gold, and allow him to depart."

The camel-driver quitted the divan, prostrating himself before the pacha, and overjoyed at the fortunate termination of what had threatened so much danger. The pacha was silent for a little while, during which he puffed his pipe—when he observed:—

"Allah Kebur, God is most powerful! That man has suffered much—and what has he to show for it?—a green turban—He is a Hadjy; I never thought that we should have heard so good a story about a 'crust of bread.' His description of the simoom parched up my entrails. What think you, Mustapha, cannot a true believer go to heaven, without a visit to the tomb of the prophet?"

"The holy Koran does not say otherwise, your highness, it inculcates that all who

can, should do so, as the path will be rendered easier. Min Allah! God forbid! Has your highness ever had the time to go to Mecca, and is not your highness to go to heaven?"

"Very true, Mustapha, I never had time. In my youth I was busy shaving heads, after that, Wallah! I had enough to do, splitting them; and now am not I fully occupied in taking them off? Is it not so, Mustapha; are not these the words of truth?"

"Your highness is all wisdom. There is but one God, and Mahomet is his prophet; and when the latter said, that a visit to the holy shrine would be a passport to heaven, it was intended to employ those who were idle, not to embarrass true believers who work hard in the name of the Most High!"

"Min Allah! God forbid! the case is clear," replied the pacha, "why, if every body were to go to Mecca, what then, Mustapha?"

"Your highness—it is the opinion of your slave, if such were to take place, that all the fools would have left the country."

"Very true, Mustapha; but my mouth is parched up with the sand of that simoom—Sherbet I cannot drink, Rakee I must not, the Hakim has forbid it; what must it be then, Mustapha?"

"Hath the holy prophet forbidden wine to true believers in case of sickness; is not your highness sick; was the wine of Shiraz given by Allah to be thrown away? Allah Karim! God is most merciful; and the wine was sent that true believers might, in this world, have a foretaste of the pleasures awaiting them in the next."

"Mustapha," replied the pacha, taking his pipe out of his mouth, "by the beard of the holy prophet, your words are those of wisdom. Is a pacha to be fed on water-melons? Staffir Allah! do we believe the less, because we drink the wine? Slave, bring the pitcher. There is but one God, and Mahomet is his prophet."

"The words of the prophet, your highness, are plain: he says, 'True believers drink no wine,' which means, that his followers are not to go about the streets, drunken

like the Giaours of Franguistan, who come here in their ships. Why is wine forbidden? because it makes men drunk. If then we are not drunk, we keep within the law. Why was the law made? Laws cannot be made for all; they must therefore be made for the control of the majority—Is it not so? Who are the majority? Why the poor. If laws were made for the rich and powerful, such laws would not suit the community at large. Mashallah! there are no laws for pachas, who have only to believe that there is one God and Mahomet is his prophet. Does your slave say well?"

"Excellently well, Mustapha," replied the pacha, lifting the pitcher to his mouth for a minute, and then passing it to Mustapha.

"Allah Karim! God is most merciful! your slave must drink; is it not the pleasure of your highness? As the wine poured down the throat of your highness, pervades through your whole frame to the extremities, so does your slave participate in your bounty. Do I not sit in your sublime presence? Can the sun shine without throwing out heat; therefore if your highness drink, must not I drink? Allah Acbar! who shall presume not to follow the steps of the pacha?" So saying, Mustapha lifted up the pitcher, and, for a minute, it was glued to his lips.

"I think that story should be written down," observed the pacha, after a pause of a few moments.

"I have already given directions, your highness, and the Greek slave is now employed about it, improving the language to render it more pleasing to the ears of your sublime highness, should it be your pleasure to have it read to you on some future day."

"That is right, Mustapha, if I recollect well, the Caliph Haroun used to command them to be written in letters of gold, and be deposited in the archives: we must do the same."

"The art no longer exists, your highness."

"Then we must be content with Indian-ink," replied the pacha, lifting the pitcher to his mouth, and emptying it.

"The sun will soon be down, Mustapha, and we must set off."

Chapter II

The pacha called for coffee, and in a few minutes, accompanied, as before, by Mustapha and the armed slaves, was prowling through the city in search of a story-teller. He was again fortunate, as after a walk of half an hour, he overheard two men loudly disputing at the door of a small wine-shop, frequented by the Greeks and Franks living in the city, and into which many a slave might be observed to glide, returning with a full pitcher for the evening's amusement of his Turkish master, who, as well as his betters, clandestinely violated the precepts of the Koran.

As usual he stopped to listen, when one of the disputants exclaimed—"I tell thee, Anselmo, it is the vilest composition that was ever drunk: and I think I ought to know, after having distilled the essence of an Ethiopian, a Jew, and a Turk."

"I care nothing for your distillations, Charis," replied the other, "I consider that I am a better judge than you: I was not a monk of the Dominican order for fifteen years, without having ascertained the merit of every description of wine."

"I should like to know what that fellow means by distilling people," observed the pacha, "and also why a Dominican monk should know wine better than others. Mustapha, I must see those two men."

The next morning the men were in attendance, and introduced; when the pacha requested an explanation from the first who had spoken. The man threw himself down before the pacha, with his head on the floor of the divan, and said,—"First promise me, your highness, by the sword of the prophet, that no harm shall result to me from complying with your request; and then I shall obey you with pleasure."

"Mashallah! what is the Kafir afraid of? What crimes hath he committed, that he would have his pardon granted before he tells his story?" said the pacha to Mustapha.

"No crime towards your state, your sublime highness; but when in another country, I was unfortunate," continued the man—"I cannot tell my story, unless your highness will condescend to give your promise."

"May it please your highness," observed Mustapha, "he asserts his crime to have been committed in another state. It may be heavy, and I suspect 'tis murder;—but although we watch the flowers which ornament our gardens, and would punish those who cull them, yet we care not who intrudes and robs our neighbour—and thus, it appears to me, your highness, that it is with states, and sufficient for the ruler of each to watch over the lives of his own subjects."

"Very true, Mustapha," rejoined the pacha; "besides, we might lose the story. Kafir, you have our promise, and may proceed."

The Greek slave (for such he was) then rose up, and narrated his story in the following words.

STORY OF THE GREEK SLAVE.

I am a Greek by birth; my parents were poor people residing at Smyrna. I was an only son, and brought up to my father's profession,—that of a cooper. When I was twenty years old, I had buried both my parents, and was left to shift for myself. I had been for some time in the employ of a Jewish wine-merchant, and I continued there for three years after my father's death, when a circumstance occurred which led to my subsequent prosperity and present degradation.

At the time that I am speaking of, I had, by strict diligence and sobriety, so pleased my employer, that I had risen to be his foreman; and although I still superintended and occasionally worked at the cooperage, I was intrusted with the drawing off and

fining of the wines, to prepare them for market. There was an Ethiopian slave, who worked under my orders, a powerful, broad-shouldered, and most malignant wretch, whom my master found it almost impossible to manage; the bastinado, or any other punishment, he derided, and after the application only became more sullen and discontented than before. The fire that flashed from his eyes, upon any fault being found by me on account of his negligence, was so threatening, that I every day expected I should be murdered. I repeatedly requested my master to part with him; but the Ethiopian being a very powerful man, and able, when he chose, to move a pipe of wine without assistance, the avarice of the Jew would not permit him to accede to my repeated solicitations.

One morning I entered the cooperage, and found the Ethiopian fast asleep by the side of a cask which I had been wanting for some time, and expected to have found ready. Afraid to punish him myself, I brought my master to witness his conduct. The Jew, enraged at his idleness, struck him on the head with one of the staves. The Ethiopian sprang up in a rage, but on seeing his master with the stave in his hand, contented himself with muttering, "That he would not remain to be beaten in that manner," and re-applied himself to his labour. As soon as my master had left the cooperage, the Ethiopian vented his anger upon me for having informed against him, and seizing the stave, flew at me with the intention of beating out my brains. I stepped behind the cask; he followed me, and just as I had seized an adze to defend myself, he fell over the stool which lay in his way—he was springing up to renew the attack, when I struck him a blow with the adze which entered his skull, and laid him dead at my feet.

I was very much alarmed at what had occurred; for although I felt justified in self-defence, I was aware that my master would be very much annoyed at the loss of the slave, and as there were no witnesses, it would go hard with me when brought before the cadi. After some reflection I determined, as the slave had said "He would not remain to be beaten," that I would leave my master to suppose he had run away,

and in the mean time conceal the body. But to effect this was difficult, as I could not take it out of the cooperage without being perceived. After some cogitation, I decided upon putting it into the cask, and heading it up. It required all my strength to lift the body in, but at last I succeeded. Having put in the head of the pipe, I hammered down the hoops and rolled it into the store, where I had been waiting to fill it with wine for the next year's demand. As soon as it was in its place, I pumped off the wine from the vat, and having filled up the cask and put in the bung, I felt as if a heavy load had been removed from my mind, as there was no chance of immediate discovery.

I had but just completed my task, and was sitting down on one of the settles, when my master came in, and inquired for the slave. I replied that he had left the cooperage, swearing that he would work no more. Afraid of losing him, the Jew hastened to give notice to the authorities, that he might be apprehended; but after some time, as nothing could be heard of the supposed runaway, it was imagined that he had drowned himself in a fit of sullenness, and no more was thought about him. In the meanwhile I continued to work there as before, and as I had the charge of every thing I had no doubt but that, some day or another, I should find means of quietly disposing of my incumbrance.

The next spring, I was busy pumping off from one cask into the other, according to our custom, when the aga of the janissaries came in. He was a great wine-bibber, and one of our best customers. As his dependents were all well-known, it was not his custom to send them for wine, but to come himself to the store and select a pipe. This was carried away in a litter by eight strong slaves, with the curtains drawn close, as if it had been a new purchase which he had added to his harem. My master showed him the pipes of wine prepared for that year's market, which were arranged in two rows; and I hardly need observe that the one containing the Ethiopian was not in the foremost. After tasting one or two which did not seem to please him, the aga observed, "Friend Issachar, thy tribe will always put off the worst goods first, if

possible. Now I have an idea that there is better wine in the second tier, than in the one thou hast recommended. Let thy Greek put a spile into that cask," continued he, pointing to the very one in which I had headed up the black slave. As I made sure that as soon as he had tasted the contents he would spit them out, I did not hesitate to bore the cask and draw off the wine, which I handed to him. He tasted it and held it to the light—tasted it again and smacked his lips—then turning to my master, exclaimed, "Thou dog of a Jew! wouldst thou have palmed off upon me vile trash, when thou hadst in thy possession wine which might be sipped with the Houris in Paradise?"

The Jew appealed to me if the pipes of wine were not all of the same quality; and I confirmed his assertion.

"Taste it then," replied the aga, "and then taste the first which you recommended to me."

My master did so, and was evidently astonished. "It certainly has more body," replied he; "yet how that can be, I know not. Taste it, Charis."—I held the glass to my lips, but nothing could induce me to taste the contents. I contented myself with agreeing with my master (as I conscientiously could), "that it certainly had more body in it than the rest."

The aga was so pleased with the wine, that he tasted two or three more pipes of the back tier, hoping to find others of the same quality, probably intending to have laid in a large stock; but finding no other of the same flavour, he ordered his slaves to roll the one containing the body of the slave into the litter, and carried it to his own house.

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"Stop a moment, thou lying kafir!" said the pacha, "dost thou really mean to say that the wine was better than the rest?"

"Why should I tell a lie to your sublime highness—am not I a worm that you may

crush? As I informed you, I did not taste it, your highness; but after the aga had departed, my master expressed his surprise at the excellence of the wine, which he affirmed to be superior to any thing that he had ever tasted—and his sorrow that the aga had taken away the cask, which prevented him from ascertaining the cause. But one day I was narrating the circumstance to a Frank in this country, who expressed no surprise at the wine being improved. He had been a wine-merchant in England, and he informed me that it was the custom there to throw large pieces of raw beef into the wine to feed it; and that some particular wines were very much improved thereby."

"Allah Kebur! God is great!" cried the pacha—"Then it must be so—I have heard that the English are very fond of beef. Now go on with thy story."

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Your highness cannot imagine the alarm which I felt when the cask was taken away by the aga's slaves. I gave myself up for a lost man, and resolved upon immediate flight from Smyrna. I calculated the time that it would take for the aga to drink the wine, and made my arrangements accordingly. I told my master that it was my intention to leave him, as I had an offer to go into business with a relation at Zante. My master, who could not well do without me, entreated me to stay; but I was positive. He then offered me a share of the business if I would remain, but I was not to be persuaded. Every rap at the door, I thought that the aga and his janissaries were coming for me; and I hastened my departure, which was fixed for the following day,—when in the evening my master came into the store with a paper in his hand.

"Charis," said he, "perhaps you have supposed that I only offered to make you a partner in my business to induce you to remain, and then to deceive you. To prove the contrary, here is a deed drawn up by which you are a partner, and entitled to one-third of the future profits. Look at it, you will find that it has been executed in due form before the cadi."

He had put the paper into my hand, and I was about to return it with a refusal, when a loud knocking at the door startled us both. It was a party of janissaries despatched by the aga, to bring us to him immediately. I knew well enough what it must be about, and I cursed my folly in having delayed so long; but the fact was, the wine proved so agreeable to the aga's palate that he had drunk it much faster than usual; besides which, the body of the slave took up at least a third of the cask, and diminished the contents in the same proportion. There was no appeal, and no escape. My master, who was ignorant of the cause, did not seem at all alarmed, but willingly accompanied the soldiers. I, on the contrary, was nearly dead from fear.

When we arrived, the aga burst out in the most violent exclamations against my master—"Thou rascal of a Jew!" said he, "dost thou think that thou art to impose upon a true believer, and sell him a pipe of wine which is not more than two-thirds full,—filling it up with trash of some sort or another. Tell me what it is that is so heavy in the cask now that it is empty?"

The Jew protested his ignorance, and appealed to me: I, of course, pretended the same. "Well, then," replied the aga, "we will soon see. Let thy Greek send for his tools, and the cask shall be opened in our presence; then perhaps thou wilt recognise thine own knavery."

Two of the janissaries were despatched for the tools, and when they arrived I was directed to take the head out of the cask. I now considered my death as certain—nothing buoyed me up but my observing that the resentment of the aga was levelled more against my master than against me; but still I thought that, when the cask was opened, the recognition of the black slave must immediately take place, and the evidence of my master would fix the murder upon me.

It was with a trembling hand that I obeyed the orders of the aga—the head of the pipe was taken out, and, to the horror of all present, the body was exposed; but instead of being black, it had turned white, from the time which it had been

immersed. I rallied a little at this circumstance, as, so far, suspicion would be removed.

"Holy Abraham!" exclaimed my master, "what is that which I see!—A dead body, so help me God!—but I know nothing about it—do you, Charis?" I vowed that I did not, and called the Patriarch to witness the truth of my assertion. But while we were thus exclaiming, the aga's eyes were fixed upon my master with an indignant and deadly stare which spoke volumes; while the remainder of the people who were present, although they said nothing, seemed as if they were ready to tear him into pieces.

"Cursed unbeliever!" at last uttered the Turk, "is it thus that thou preparest the wine for the disciples of the Prophet?"

"Holy father Abraham!—I know no more than you do, aga, how that body came there; but I will change the cask with pleasure, and will send you another."

"Be it so," replied the aga; "my slave shall fetch it now." He gave directions accordingly, and the litter soon reappeared with another pipe of wine.

"It will be a heavy loss to a poor Jew—one pipe of good wine," observed my master, as it was rolled out of the litter; and he took up his hat with the intention to depart.

"Stay," cried the aga, "I do not mean to rob you of your wine."

"Oh, then, you will pay me for it," replied my master; "aga, you are a considerate man."

"Thou shalt see," retorted the aga, who gave directions to his slaves to draw off the wine in vessels. As soon as the pipe was empty, he desired me to take the head out; and when I had obeyed him, he ordered his janissaries to put my master in. In a minute he was gagged and bound, and tossed into the pipe; and I was directed to put in the head as before. I was very unwilling to comply; for I had no reason to complain of my master, and knew that he was punished for the fault of which I had been guilty. But it was a case of life or death,—and the days of self-devotion have

long passed away in our country. Besides which, I had the deed in my pocket by which I was a partner in the business, and my master had no heirs,—so that I stood a chance to come into the whole of his property. Moreover——

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"Never mind your reasons," observed the pacha, "you headed him up in the cask—go on."

"I did so, your highness; but although I dared not disobey, I assure you that it was with a sorrowful heart—the more so, as I did not know the fate which might be reserved for myself."

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As soon as the head was in, and the hoops driven on, the aga desired his slaves to fill the cask up again with the wine; and thus did my poor master perish.

"Put in the bung, Greek," said the aga, in a stern voice.

I did so, and stood trembling before him.

"Well! what knowest thou of this transaction?"

I thought, as the aga had taken away the life of my master, that it would not hurt him if I took away a little from his character. I answered that I really knew nothing, but that, the other day, a black slave had disappeared in a very suspicious manner—that my master made very little inquiry after him—and I now strongly suspected that he must have suffered the same fate. I added, that my master had expressed himself very sorry that his highness had taken away the pipe of wine, as he would have reserved it.

"Cursed Jew!" replied the aga; "I don't doubt but he has murdered a dozen in the same manner."

"I am afraid so, sir," replied I, "and suspect that I was to have been his next victim; for when I talked of going away, he persuaded me to stay, and gave me this paper,

by which I was to become his partner with one-third of the profits. I presume that I should not have enjoyed them long."

"Well, Greek," observed the aga, "this is fortunate for you; as, upon certain conditions, you may enter upon the whole property. One is, that you keep this pipe of wine with the rascally Jew in it, that I may have the pleasure occasionally to look at my revenge. You will also keep the pipe with the other body in it, that it may keep my anger alive. The last is, that you will supply me with what wine I may require, of the very best quality, without making any charge. Do you consent to these terms, or am I to consider you as a party to this infamous transaction?"

I hardly need observe that the terms were gladly accepted. Your highness must be aware that nobody thinks much about a Jew. When I was questioned as to his disappearance, I shrugged up my shoulders and told the inquirers, confidentially, that the aga of the janissaries had put him in prison, and that I was carrying on the business until his release.

In compliance with the wishes of the aga, the two casks containing the Jew and the Ethiopian slave, were placed together on settles higher than the rest, in the centre of the store. He would come in the evening, and rail at the cask containing my late master for hours at a time; during which he drank so much wine, that it was a very common circumstance for him to remain in the house until the next morning.

You must not suppose, your highness, that I neglected to avail myself (unknown to the aga) of the peculiar properties of the wine which those casks contained. I had them spiled underneath, and, constantly running off the wine from them, filled them up afresh. In a short time there was not a gallon in my possession which had not a dash in it of either the Ethiopian or the Jew; and my wine was so improved, that it had a most rapid sale, and I became rich.

All went on prosperously for three years; when the aga, who during that time had been my constant guest, and at least three times a-week had been intoxicated in my

house, was ordered with his troops to join the Sultan's army. By keeping company with him, I had insensibly imbibed a taste for wine, although I never had been inebriated. The day that his troops marched, he stopped at my door, and dismounting from his Arabian, came in to take a farewell glass, desiring his men to go on, and that he would ride after them. One glass brought on another, and the time flew rapidly away. The evening closed in, and the aga was, as usual, in a state of intoxication;—he insisted upon going down to the store, to rail once more at the cask containing the body of the Jew. We had long been on the most friendly terms, and having this night drunk more than usual, I was incautious enough to say—"Prithee, aga, do not abuse my poor master any more, for he has been the making of my fortune. I will tell you a secret now that you are going away—there is not a drop of wine in my store that has not been flavoured either by him, or by the slave in the other cask. That is the reason why it is so much better than other people's."

"How!" exclaimed the aga, who was now almost incapable of speech. "Very well, rascal Greek! die you shall, like your master. Holy prophet! what a state for a Mussulman to go to Paradise in—impregnated with the essence of a cursed Jew!—Wretch! you shall die—you shall die."

He made a grasp at me, and missing his foot, fell on the ground in such a state of drunkenness as not to be able to get up again. I knew that when he became sober, he would not forget what had taken place, and that I should be sacrificed to his vengeance. The fear of death, and the wine which I had drunk, decided me how to act. I dragged him into an empty pipe, put the head in, hooped it up, and rolling it into the tier, filled it with wine. Thus did I revenge my poor master, and relieved myself from any further molestation on the part of the aga.

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"What!" cried the pacha, in a rage, "you drowned a true believer—an aga of

janissaries! Thou dog of a kafir—thou son of Shitan—and dare avow it! Call in the executioner."

"Mercy! your sublime highness, mercy!" cried the Greek—"Have I not your promise by the sword of the prophet? Besides, he was no true believer, or he would not have disobeyed the law. A good Mussulman will never touch a drop of wine."

"I promised to forgive, and did forgive, the murder of the black slave; but an aga of janissaries!—Is not that quite another thing?" appealed the pacha to Mustapha.

"Your highness is just in your indignation—the kafir deserves to be impaled. Yet there are two considerations which your slave ventures to submit to your sublime wisdom. The first is, that your highness gave an unconditional promise, and swore by the sword of the prophet."

"Staffir Allah! what care I for that! Had I sworn to a true believer, it were something."

"The other is, that the slave has not yet finished his story, which appears to be interesting."

"Wallah! that is true. Let him finish his story."

But the Greek slave remained with his face on the ground; and it was not until a renewal of the promise, sworn upon the holy standard made out of the nether garments of the prophet, by the pacha, who had recovered his temper, and was anxious for the conclusion of the story, that he could be induced to proceed, which he did as follows:—

* * * * *

As soon as I had bunged up the cask, I went down to the yard where the aga had left his horse, and having severely wounded the poor beast with his sword, I let it loose that it might gallop home. The noise of the horse's hoofs in the middle of the night, aroused his family, and when they discovered that it was wounded and without its

rider, they imagined that the aga had been attacked and murdered by banditti when he had followed his troop. They sent to me to ask at what time he had left my house; I replied, an hour after dark—that he was very much intoxicated at the time—and had left his sabre, which I returned. They had no suspicions of the real facts, and it was believed that he had perished on the road.

I was now rid of my dangerous acquaintance, and although he certainly had drunk a great quantity of my wine, yet I recovered the value of it with interest, from the flavour which I obtained from his body and which I imparted to the rest of my stock. I raised him up alongside of the two other casks; and my trade was more profitable and my wines in greater repute than ever.

But one day the cadi, who had heard my wine extolled, came privately to my house; I bowed to the ground at the honour conferred, for I had long wished to have him as a customer. I drew some of my best—"This, honourable sir," said I, presenting the glass, "is what I call my aga wine: the late aga was so fond of it, he used to order a whole cask at once to his house, and had it taken there in a litter."

"A good plan," replied the cadi, "much better than sending a slave with a pitcher, which gives occasion for remarks: I will do the same; but, first, let me taste all you have."

He tasted several casks, but none pleased him so much as the first which I had recommended. At last he cast his eyes upon the three casks raised above the others.

"And what are those?" inquired he.

"Empty casks, sir," replied I; but he had his stick in his hand, and he struck one.

"Greek, thou tellest me these casks are empty, but they do not sound so; I suspect that thou hast better wine than I have tasted: draw me off from these immediately."

I was obliged to comply—he tasted them—vowed that the wine was exquisite, and that he would purchase the whole. I stated to him that the wine in those casks was used for flavouring the rest; and that the price was enormous, hoping that he would

not pay it. He inquired how much—I asked him four times the price of the other wines.

"Agreed," said the cadi; "it is dear—but one cannot have good wine without paying for it:—it is a bargain."

I was very much alarmed; and stated that I could not part with those casks, as I should not be able to carry on my business with reputation, if I lost the means of flavouring my wines, but all in vain; he said that I had asked a price and he had agreed to give it. Ordering his slaves to bring a litter, he would not leave the store until the whole of the casks were carried away, and thus did I lose my Ethiopian, my Jew, and my aga.

As I knew that the secret would soon be discovered, the very next day I prepared for my departure. I received my money from the cadi, to whom I stated my intention to leave, as he had obliged me to sell him those wines, and I had no longer hopes of carrying on my business with success. I again begged him to allow me to have them back, offering him three pipes of wine as a present if he would consent, but it was of no use. I chartered a vessel, which I loaded with the rest of my stock; and, taking all my money with me, made sail for Corfu, before any discovery had taken place. But we encountered a heavy gale of wind, which, after a fortnight (during which we attempted in vain to make head against it), forced us back to Smyrna. When the weather moderated, I directed the captain to take the vessel into the outer roadstead that I might sail as soon as possible. We had not dropped anchor again more than five minutes when I perceived a boat pulling off from the shore in which was the cadi and the officers of justice.

Convinced that I was discovered, I was at a loss how to proceed, when the idea occurred to me that I might conceal my own body in a cask, as I had before so well concealed those of others.

I called the captain down into the cabin, and telling him that I had reason to suspect

that the cadi would take my life, offered him a large part of the cargo if he would assist me.

The captain who, unfortunately for me, was a Greek, consented. We went down into the hold, started the wine out of one of the pipes, and having taken out the head, I crawled in, and was hooped up.

The cadi came on board immediately afterwards and inquired for me. The captain stated that I had fallen overboard in the gale, and that he had in consequence returned, the vessel not being consigned to any house at Corfu.

"Has then the accursed villain escaped my vengeance!" exclaimed the cadi; "the murderer, that fines his wines with the bodies of his fellow-creatures: but you may deceive me, Greek, we will examine the vessel."

The officers who accompanied the cadi proceeded carefully to search every part of the ship. Not being able to discover me, the Greek captain was believed; and, after a thousand imprecations upon my soul, the cadi and his people departed.

I now breathed more freely, notwithstanding I was nearly intoxicated with the lees of the wine which impregnated the wood of the cask, and I was anxious to be set at liberty; but the treacherous captain had no such intention, and never came near me. At night he cut his cable and made sail, and I overheard a conversation between two of the men, which made known to me his intentions: these were to throw me overboard on his passage, and take possession of my property. I cried out to them from the bung-hole: I screamed for mercy, but in vain. One of them answered, that, as I had murdered others, and put them into casks, I should now be treated in the same manner.

I could not but mentally acknowledge the justice of my punishment, and resigned myself to my fate; all that I wished was to be thrown over at once and released from my misery. The momentary anticipation of death appeared to be so much worse than the reality. But it was ordered otherwise: a gale of wind blew up with such force,

that the captain and crew had enough to do to look after the vessel, and, either I was forgotten or my doom was postponed until a more seasonable opportunity.

On the third day I heard the sailors observe that, with such a wretch as I was remaining on board, the vessel must inevitably be lost. The hatches were then opened: I was hoisted up and cast into the raging sea. The bung of the cask was out, but by stuffing my handkerchief in, when the hole was under water, I prevented the cask from filling; and when it was uppermost, I removed it for a moment to obtain fresh air. I was dreadfully bruised by the constant rolling, in a heavy sea, and completely worn out with fatigue and pain; I had made up my mind to let the water in and be rid of my life, when I was tossed over and over with such dreadful rapidity as prevented my taking the precaution of keeping out the water. After three successive rolls of the same kind, I found that the cask, which had been in the surf, had struck on the beach. In a moment after, I heard voices, and people came up to the cask and rolled me along. I would not speak, lest they should be frightened and allow me to remain on the beach, where I might again be tossed about by the waves; but as soon as they stopped, I called in a faint voice from the bung-hole, begging them for mercy's sake to let me out.

At first they appeared alarmed; but, on my repeating my request, and stating that I was the owner of the ship which was off the land, and the captain and crew had mutinied and tossed me overboard, they brought some tools and set me at liberty.

The first sight that met my eyes after I was released, was my vessel lying a wreck; each wave that hurled her further on the beach, breaking her more and more to pieces. She was already divided amid-ships, and the white foaming surf was covered with pipes of wine, which, as fast as they were cast on shore, were rolled up by the same people who had released me. I was so worn out, that I fainted where I lay. When I came to, I found myself in a cave upon a bundle of capotes, and perceived a party of forty or fifty men, who were sitting by a large fire, and emptying with great

rapidity one of my pipes of wine.

As soon as they observed that I was coming to my senses, they poured some wine down my throat, which restored me. I was then desired by one of them, who seemed to be the chief, to approach.

"The men who have been saved from the wreck," said he, "have told me strange stories of your enormous crimes—now, sit down, and tell me the truth—if I believe you, you shall have justice—I am cadi here—if you wish to know where you are, it is upon the island of Ischia—if you wish to know in what company, it is in the society of those who by illiberal people are called pirates: now tell the truth."

I thought that with pirates my story would be received better than with other people, and I therefore narrated my history to them, in the same words that I now have to your highness. When I had finished, the captain of the gang observed:—

"Well, then, as you acknowledge to have killed a slave, to have assisted at the death of a Jew, and to have drowned an aga, you certainly deserve death; but, on consideration of the excellence of the wine, and the secret which you have imparted to us, I shall commute your sentence. As for the captain and the remainder of the crew, they have been guilty of treachery and piracy on the high seas—a most heinous offence, which deserves instant death; but as it is by their means that we have been put in possession of the wine, I shall be lenient. I therefore sentence you all to hard labour for life. You shall be sold as slaves in Cairo, and we will pocket the money and drink your wine."

The pirates loudly applauded the justice of a decision by which they benefited, and all appeal on our parts was useless. When the weather became more settled, we were put on board one of their small xebeques, and on our arrival at this port were exposed for sale and purchased.

Such, pacha, is the history which induced me to make use of the expressions which you wished to be explained; and I hope you will allow that I have been more

unfortunate than guilty, as on every occasion in which I took away the life of another, I had only to choose between that and my own.

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"Well, it is rather a curious story," observed the pacha, "but still, if it were not for my promise, I certainly would have your head off for drowning the aga—I consider it excessively impertinent in an unbelieving Greek to suppose that his life is of the same value as that of an aga of janissaries, and follower of the prophet; but, however, my promise was given, and you may depart."

"The wisdom of your highness is brighter than the stars of heaven," observed Mustapha. "Shall the slave be honoured with your bounty?"

"Mashallah! bounty! I've given him his life, and, as he considers it of more value than an aga's, I think 'tis a very handsome present. Drown an aga, indeed!" continued the pacha, rising, "but it certainly was a very curious story. Let it be written down, Mustapha. We'll hear the other man to-morrow."

Chapter III

"Mustapha," said the pacha the next day, when they had closed the hall of audience, "have you the other Giaour in readiness?"

"Bashem ustun! Upon my head be it, your highness. The infidel dog waits but the command to crawl into your sublime presence."

"Let him approach, that our ears may be gratified. Barek Allah! Praise be to God. There are others who can obtain stories besides the Caliph Haroun."

The slave was ordered into the pacha's presence. He was a dark man with handsome features, and he walked in with a haughty carriage, which neither his condition nor tattered garments could disguise. When within a few feet of the carpet of state he bowed and folded his arms in silence. "I wish to know upon what grounds you

asserted that you were so good a judge of wine the other evening, when you were quarrelling with the Greek slave."

"I stated my reason at the time, your highness, which was, because I had been for many years a monk of the Dominican order."

"I recollect that you said so. What trade is that, Mustapha?" inquired the pacha.

"If your slave is not mistaken, a good trade every where. The infidel means that he was a mollah or dervish among the followers of Isauri."[2]

[2] Jesus Christ.

"May they and their fathers' graves be eternally defiled," cried the pacha. "Do not they drink wine and eat pork? Have you nothing more to say?" inquired the pacha.

"My life has been one of interest," replied the slave, "and if it will please your highness, I will narrate my history."

"It is our condescension. Sit down and proceed."

STORY OF THE MONK.

May it please your highness, I am a Spaniard by birth, and, a native of Seville; but whether my father was a grandee, or of a more humble extraction, I cannot positively assert. All that I can establish is, that when reason dawned, I found myself in the asylum instituted by government, in that city, for those unfortunate beings who are brought up upon black bread and oil, because their unnatural parents either do not choose to incur the expense of their maintenance, or having, in the first instance, allowed unlawful love to conquer shame, end by permitting shame to overcome maternal love.

It is the custom, at a certain age, to put these children out to different trades and callings; and those who show precocity of talent are often received into the bosom of the church.

Gifted by nature with a very fine voice and correct ear for music, I was selected to

be brought up as a chorister in a Dominican convent of great reputation. At the age of ten years, I was placed under the charge of the leader of the choir. Under his directions, I was fully occupied receiving my lessons in singing, or at other times performing the junior offices of the church, such as carrying the frankincense or large wax tapers in the processions. As a child my voice was much admired; and after the service was over, I often received presents of sweetmeats from the ladies, who brought them in their pockets for the little Anselmo. As I grew up, I became a remarkable proficient in music; at the age of twenty, I possessed a fine counter-tenor; and flattered by the solicitations of the superior of the convent and other dignitaries of the church, I consented to take the vows, and became a member of the fraternity.

Although there was no want of liberty in our convent, I was permitted even more than the rest of the monks. I gave lessons in music and singing, and a portion of my earnings were placed in the superior's hands for the benefit of the fraternity. Independent of this, my reputation was spread all over Seville; and hundreds used to attend the mass performed in our church, that they might hear the voice of brother Anselmo. I was therefore considered as a valuable property, and the convent would have suffered a great deal by my quitting it. Although I could not be released from my vows, still I could by application have been transferred to Madrid; and the superior, aware of this circumstance, allowed me every indulgence, with the hopes of my being persuaded to remain. The money which I retained for my own exigencies enabled me to make friends with the porter, and I obtained egress or ingress at any hour. I was a proficient on the guitar; and incongruous as it may appear with my monastic vows, I often hastened from the service at vespers to perform in a serenade to some fair senora, whose inamorato required the powers of my voice to soften her to his wishes.

My sedillas and canzonettas were much admired; and eventually no serenade was considered as effective, without the assistance of the counter-tenor of Anselmo. I

hardly need observe that it was very profitable; and that I had the means of supplying myself with luxuries which the rules of our order did not admit. I soon became irregular and debauched; often sitting up whole nights with the young cavaliers, drinking and singing amorous songs for their amusement. Still, however, my conduct was not known, or was overlooked for the reasons which I have stated before.

When once a man indulges to excess in wine, he is assailed by, and becomes an easy prey to every other vice. This error soon led me into others; and, regardless of my monastic vows, I often felt more inclined to serenade upon my own account than on that of my employers. I had the advantage of a very handsome face, but it was disguised by the shaven crown and the unbecoming manner of cutting the hair; the coarse and unwieldly monastic dress belonging to our order hid the symmetry of my limbs, which, might have otherwise attracted notice on the Prado. I soon perceived that, although my singing was admired by the other sex, their admiration went no further. They seemed to consider that in every other point I was, as I ought to have been, dead to the world.

There was a young lady, Donna Sophia, whom I had for some time instructed in music, who appeared to be more favourably inclined. She was an excellent performer, and passionately fond of the science: and I have always observed, your highness, that between the real amateurs of harmony there is a sympathy, a description of free-masonry, which immediately puts them on a level, and on terms of extreme intimacy; so much so, that were I a married man, and my wife extremely partial to music, I should be very careful how I introduced to her a person of a similar feeling, if I possessed it not myself. I was very much in the good graces of this young lady, and flattered myself with a successful issue: when one day, as we were singing a duet, a handsome young officer made his appearance. His hair, which was of the finest brown, curled in natural ringlets: and his clothes were remarkably well-fitted to his slender and graceful figure. He was a cousin, who had just returned

from Carthagena; and as he was remarkably attentive, I soon perceived that all my advances had been thrown away, and that I was more and more in the background each morning that I made my appearance.

Annoyed at this, I ventured to speak too freely; and during his absence calumniated him to the Donna Sophia, hoping by these means to regain my place in her affections; but I made a sad mistake: for not only were my services dispensed with for the future, but, as I afterwards discovered, she stated to her cousin the grounds upon which I had been dismissed.

I returned to the convent in no pleasant mood, when I was informed that my presence had been demanded by the superior. I repaired to the parlour, where he stated that my licentious conduct had come to his ears; and after much upbraiding, he concluded by ordering me to submit to a severe penance. Aware that disobedience would only be followed up by greater severity, I bowed with humility in my mien, but with indignation in my breast; and returning to my cell, resolved upon immediately writing for my removal to Madrid. I had not been there many minutes when the porter brought me a note. It was from Donna Sophia, requesting to see me that evening, and apologising for her apparent ill-usage, which she had only assumed the better to conceal her intentions; being afraid, at our last interview, that her mother was within hearing.

I was in raptures when I perused the note, and hastened to comply with her request. Her directions were to repair to the back door, which looked out upon some fields, and give three taps. I arrived, and as soon as I raised my hand to give the signal, was seized by four men in masks, who gagged and bound me. They then stripped off my friar's dress, and scourged me with nettles, until I was almost frantic with the pain. When their vengeance was satisfied, they cast me loose, removed the gag, and ran away. As I then suspected, and afterwards discovered to be true, I was indebted to the young officer for this treatment, in return for what I had said, and which his

mistress had repeated. Smarting with pain, and boiling with rage, I dragged on my clothes as well as I could, and began to reflect in what manner I should act. Conceal my situation from the other members of the convent I could not; and to explain it would not only be too humiliating, but subject me to more rigorous discipline. At last, I considered that out of evil might spring good; and gathering a large bundle of the nettles, which grew under the walls, I crawled back to the convent. When I attained my cell, I threw off my gown, which was now unbearable from the swelling of my limbs, and commenced thrashing the walls of my cell and my bed with the nettles which I had procured.

After a short time I moaned piteously, and continued so to do, louder and louder, until some of the friars got up to inquire the reason; when they found me, apparently, castigating myself in this cruel manner. When they opened the door, I threw myself on the bed, and cried still more vociferously. This certainly was the only part of my conduct which was not deceptive, for I was in the most acute agony. To their inquiries, I told them that I had been guilty of great enormities; that the superior had reproved me, and ordered me penance; and that I had scourged myself with nettles; requesting them to continue the application as my strength had failed me. With this injunction they were too humane to comply. Some went for the surgeon of the convent, while others reported the circumstance to the superior. The former applied remedies which assuaged the pain: the latter was so pleased at my apparent contrition, that he gave me absolution, and relieved me from the penance to which I had been subjected. When I recovered, I was more in favour, and was permitted the same indulgences as before.

But I was some days confined to my bed, during which I was continually reflecting upon what had passed. I perceived, to my misery, the pale which I had placed between me and the world, by embracing a monastic life; and how unfit I was, by temperament, to fulfil my vows. I cursed my father and mother, who had been the original cause of my present situation. I cursed the monastic dress which blazoned

forth my unhappy condition. Then I thought of the treacherous girl, and planned schemes of revenge. I compared my personal qualifications with those of the young officer; and vanity suggested, that were it not for my vile professional disguise, the advantage was on my side. At last I decided upon the steps that I would take.

As I before stated, my purse was well supplied from the lessons which I gave in music, and from assisting at the serenades. When I was sufficiently recovered to go out, I proceeded to a barber, and on the plea of continual headache, for which it had been recommended that I should shave my head, requested him to make me a false tonsure. In a few days it was ready, and being very well made, no difference could be perceived between the wig and my own hair, which was then removed. So far I had succeeded; but as the greatest caution was necessary in a proceeding of this nature, to avoid suspicion, I returned to the convent, where I remained quiet for several days. One evening I again sallied forth, and when it was quite dark repaired to the friperie show of a Jew, where I purchased a second—hand suit of cavalier's clothes, which I thought would fit me. I concealed them in my cell, and the next morning, went in search of a small lodging in some obscure part, where I might not be subject to observation. This was difficult, but I at last succeeded in finding one to let, which opened upon a general staircase of a house, which was appropriated to a variety of lodgers, who were constantly passing and repassing. I paid the first month in advance, stating it would be occupied by a brother, whom I daily expected; in the meantime took possession of the key. I bought a small chest, which I had conveyed to my lodgings, and having removed my cavalier's dress from the convent, locked it up. I then remained quiet as before, not only to avoid suspicion, but to ingratiate myself with the superior, by my supposed reformation.

After a few days, I sallied forth, and leaving a note for one of the most skilful perruquiers of Seville, desired him to call at my lodgings, at an hour indicated. Having repaired there, to be ready to receive him, I took off my monk's dress and false tonsure, which I locked up in my chest; I tied a silk handkerchief round my

head, and got into bed, leaving the cavalier's suit on my chair near to me. The perruquier knocked at the appointed time. I desired him to come in, apologised for my servant being absent on a message, and stating that I had been obliged to shave my head on account of a fever, from which I had now recovered, requested that he would provide me with a handsome wig. I explained at his request the colour and description of hair which I had lost; and in so doing, represented it as much lighter than my own really was, and similar to that of the young officer, whose ringlets had been the cause of my last disaster. I paid him a part of the price down, and having agreed upon the exact time at which it should be delivered, he departed; when I rose from my bed, I resumed my monastic dress and tonsure, and returned to the convent.

During the whole of the time occupied by these transactions, I had been assiduous in laying up money, which before I had squandered as fast as I obtained it, and had realised a considerable sum. I could not help comparing myself to a chrysalis previous to its transformation. I had before been a caterpillar, I was now all ready to burst my confinement, and flit about as a gaudy butterfly. Another week, I continued my prudent conduct, at the end of which I was admitted to my superior, in whose hands I placed a sum of money which I could very conveniently spare, and received his benediction and commendations for having weaned myself from my former excesses. With a quickened pulse, I hastened to my lodgings, and throwing off my hateful gown and tonsure, dressed myself in my new attire.

The transformation was complete. I could not recognise myself. I hardly could believe that the dashing young cavalier that confronted me in the mirror, was the brother Anselmo. "Is this a face," said I, communing with myself, "to be disfigured with a vile tonsure? are these limbs to be hid under the repulsive garment of a monk?" Again I surveyed myself, and it was with difficulty that I could tear myself away from contemplating my metamorphosis. I was indeed a butterfly. At last, I determined upon sallying forth. I locked up my monastic dress and descended the staircase. I must acknowledge, that it was with trepidation I ventured into the street,

but I had soon reason to take confidence, for I was met by one of my most intimate friends, who looked in my face, and passed on without the slightest recognition. Overjoyed at this circumstance, I took courage, and boldly proceeded to the Prado, where I was greeted with favourable glances from the women, and sneers from the men, both of which I considered equally flattering. In the evening, I returned to my lodgings, resumed the habit of my order, and gained the convent. I now felt that there was no chance of discovery, and anticipated the happiness which had been denied me. I subsequently ordered the most fashionable and expensive clothes, hired my lodgings for six months, assumed the name of Don Pedro, made the acquaintance of many young men, and amongst others of the officer who had treated me so ill. He took a fancy to me, which I encouraged to further my views. I became his confidant, he informed me of his amour with his cousin, adding that he was tired of the business, and wished to break with her; also, as an excellent joke, the punishment which he had inflicted upon the friar Anselmo.

He was a great proficient with the small sword, an accomplishment, which of course had been neglected in my education, and which I accounted for by stating that until the death of my elder brother, I had been intended for the church. I accepted his offer to be my instructor, and my first rudiments in the science were received from him. Afterwards I applied to a professor, and, constantly practising, in the course of a few months, I knew, from occasional trials of skill with the officer, that I was his superior. My revenge, which hitherto had been controlled was now ripe.

But in narrating my adventures abroad, it must not be supposed that I neglected every thing that prudence or caution could suggest, to avoid discovery. On the contrary, now that I had the means of enjoying myself, I was more careful that I did not by any indiscretion excite surmises. I generally devoted four days out of the seven in the week to the convent and to my professional occupation as music-master. To increase the difficulty of identification, I became more serious in my manner, more dirty in my person, as the brother Anselmo. I pretended to have

imbibed a fancy for snuff, with which I soiled my face and monastic attire, and seldom if ever spoke, or if I did, in a very solemn voice. So far from suspicion, I every day gained more and more the good will of the superior. My absence in the day-time was not noticed, as it was known that I gave lessons in music, and my irregularity during the night was a secret between the porter and myself.

I hardly need observe that, as Don Pedro, I always lamented not having been gifted with a voice, and have even in the presence of my companions, sent a billet to brother Anselmo to serenade a lady whom I courted as Don Pedro. I do not believe until ulterior circumstances, that there was ever in the mind of any the slightest idea that, under my dissimilar habits, I was one and the same person.

But to continue: one day the young officer, whose name was Don Lopez, informed me that he did not know how to act; he was so pestered with the jealousy and reproaches of his mistress; and requested my advice as to how to proceed. I laughed at his dilemma. "My dear Lopez," replied I, "introduce me to her, and depend upon it, that she will give you no more trouble. I will make love to her, and, pleased with her new conquest, she will soon forget you."

"My good fellow," replied he, "your advice is excellent: will you come with me this afternoon?"

Once more I was in the presence of her whom I had loved, but loved no more, for I now only felt and lived for revenge. She had not the most distant recognition of me. Piqued as she was with Don Lopez, and fascinated with my exertions to please, I soon gained an interest; but she still loved him, between the paroxysms of her hate. Trying all she could to recover him at one moment, and listening to my attentions at another, he at last accused her of perfidy, and took his leave for ever. Then her violence broke out, and as a proof of my attachment, she demanded that I should call him to account. I wished no better, and pretending to be so violently attached to her that I was infatuated, I took an occasion of his laughing at me, to give him the lie,

and demand satisfaction. As it was in the presence of others, there was no recall or explanation allowed. We met by agreement, alone, in the very field where I had received my chastisement; I brought with me my monastic habit and tonsure, which I concealed before his arrival among the very nettles which he had gathered for my chastisement. The conflict was not long: after a few thrusts and parries, he lay dying at my feet. I immediately threw over my dress that of the friar, and exchanging the wig for the tonsure, stood by him. He opened his eyes, which had closed from the fainting, occasioned by the sudden gush from his wound, and looked at me with amazement.

"Yes, Don Lopez," said I, "in Don Pedro behold the Friar Anselmo; he whom you scourged with nettles; he who has revenged the insult." I then threw off the monk's dress, and exposed to him the other beneath it, and changing my tonsure for the wig, "now you are convinced of the truth," added I, "and now I have my revenge."

"I am, I am," replied he faintly; "but if you have slain me as Don Pedro, now that I am dying, I entreat you, as brother Anselmo, to give me absolution. Carry not your revenge so far as to deny me this."

I could not refuse; and I gave absolution in the one costume, to the man who had fallen by my hand in the other: for my own part, I thought it was an absurdity, but my revenge was satisfied, and I would not refuse him such a poor consolation.

A few minutes afterwards he expired, and I hastened to my lodgings, changed my dress, and repaired to the convent, where, as Don Pedro I wrote to Donna Sophia, informing her of what had taken place, and of my having absconded until the hue and cry should be over. For three weeks I remained in the convent, or only appeared abroad as the Friar Anselmo. I brought a considerable sum to the superior for the use of the church, partly to satisfy the qualms of conscience which assailed me for the crime which I had committed; partly that I might continue in his good graces.

At the expiration of the time I sent a note to the young lady, as from Don Pedro,

acquainting her with my return, and my intention to call upon her in the dusk of the evening. I went to my lodgings, dressed myself as Don Pedro, and tapping at her door, was admitted; but instead of being cordially greeted, as I expected, I was repulsed, loaded with abuse, and declared an object of detestation. It appeared that, although in her rage at the desertion of her lover, she had listened to the dictates of revenge, now that he was no more, all her affection for him had revived. I returned her upbraiding, and quitted the room to leave the house: but she had no intention that I should escape, and had stationed two of her relations below, ready to intercept me.

She called to them as I descended the stairs; when I arrived at the hall, I found them with drawn swords to dispute my passage. I had no resource but to fight my way; and charging them furiously, I severely wounded one, and shortly afterwards disarmed the other, just as the enraged fair one, who perceived that I was gaining the day, had run behind me and seized my arms; but she was too late: I threw her indignantly upon the wounded man, and walked out of the house. As soon as I was in the street, I took to my heels, gained my lodgings, changed my dress, and repaired to the convent.

This adventure sobered me much. I now remained quiet for some months, never assuming my dress as Don Pedro, lest the officers of justice should lay hold of me. I became more rigid and exact in my duties, and more austere in my manner.

The several confessional chairs in our church were usually occupied by the senior monks, although, when absent from sickness or other causes, the juniors occasionally supplied their place. One of the monks had been taken ill, and I knew that the mother of the young lady, who was very strict in her religious duties, confessed at that chair every Friday; I took possession of it, with the hopes that I should find out some means of prosecuting my revenge. The young lady also confessed at the same chair, when she did come, which was but seldom. Since the death of her lover, she had never made her appearance.

As I anticipated, the mother came, and after having run over a string of peccadilloes, for which I ordered a slight penance, I inquired, through the punctured communication on the side of the confessional chair, whether she had not children, to which she answered in the affirmative. I then asked when her daughter had confessed last. She mentioned a long date, and I commenced a serious expostulation upon the neglect of parents, desiring that her daughter might be brought to confess, or otherwise I should be obliged to inflict a penance of some hundred Pater-Nosters and Ave-Marias upon herself, for not attending to her parental duties. The old lady, who had no wish to submit to her own penance, promised to bring her daughter the next day, and she was true to her word. Donna Sophia appeared to come very unwillingly. As soon as she had taken her seat by the confessional chair, she made a confession of a hundred little nothings, and having finished her catalogue, stopped as if waiting for absolution.

"Have you made no reservation?" inquired I, in the low muttering tone which is used at the confessional; for although neither party can distinguish the person of the other, I did not wish her to recognise my voice.

"Every thing," replied she, in a faint whisper.

"My daughter," replied I, "by your trembling answer, I know that you are deceiving yourself and me. I am an old man, and have been too many years in this chair, not to ascertain by the answers which I receive, whether the conscience is unloaded. Yours, I am convinced, has something pressing heavily upon it; something for which you would fain have absolution, but which you are ashamed to reveal. If not a principal, you have been a party to crime; and never shall you have absolution until you have made a full confession." Her heart swelled with emotion, she attempted to speak, and burst into tears. "These are harbingers of good," observed I; "I am now convinced that my supposition was correct: pour out your soul in tribulation, and receive that comfort which I am empowered to bestow. Courage, my daughter! the

best of us are but grievous sinners." As soon as she could check her sobbing, she commenced her confession; narrating her penchant for me, her subsequent attachment to the young officer, my abuse of him, and the punishment which had ensued—his desertion, the introduction of Don Pedro, her pique at having instigated him to kill her lover, his death, and all that I have narrated to your highness.

"These are serious crimes, my daughter! grievous indeed; you have yielded to the tempter in your own person, caused the death of one man, you have led another astray, and have deceived him, when he claimed the reward of his iniquity; but all these are trifles compared to the offence upon the holy monk, which is the worst of sacrilege. And what was his fault? that he cautioned you against a person, whose subsequent conduct has proved, that the worthy man was correct in his suppositions.

"In every way you have offended Heaven; a whole life will be scarce sufficient for the task of repentance, laying aside the enormous crime of sacrilege, which, in justice, ought to be referred to the Inquisition. Excommunication is more fitting in your case than absolution." I waited some time before I again spoke, during which she sobbed bitterly. "My daughter," observed I, "before I can decide upon what is to be done to save you from everlasting perdition, it is necessary that you humble yourself before the religious man, whose person you have abused. Send to the convent to which he belongs, and entreat him to come; and when you have confessed your crime, offer to him the same implements of punishment, which through your instigation were so sacrilegiously applied. Submit to his sentence, and the penance which he may prescribe. When you have done that, repair again to me. I shall be in this chair the day after to-morrow."

The girl muffled up her face, waited a few minutes to compose herself, and then returned to her mother, who wondered what could have detained her so long.

That evening, I received a note from Donna Sophia, requesting me to call on the ensuing day. I found her in her room, she had been weeping bitterly, and when I

entered coloured up with shame and vexation; but she had been too much frightened on the day before, to resist the injunctions which she had received: a large bundle of nettles lay on the chair; and when I entered she turned the key of the door, and falling down on her knees, with many tears made a full confession. I expressed the utmost horror and surprise; she embraced my knees, implored my pardon, and then, pointing to the nettles, requested I would use them if I thought proper. Having said this, she covered her face with her hands, and remained on her knees in silence.

I must confess, that when I called to mind the punishment which had been inflicted on me through her means, and the manner in which she had attempted to betray me to my death, I felt very much inclined to revenge myself by scourging her severely; but although the affection I once felt for her had passed away, I had a natural tenderness for the sex, which made me abandon this petty revenge. My object was to remove her, so that I might not be recognised in my worldly attire; and she, I knew, was the only person who could prove that I had killed her lover. I therefore raised her up, and telling her that I was satisfied with her repentance, and, as far as I was personally concerned, forgave her ill-treatment, desired her to repair to her confessor, who was the proper person to award a punishment for such a catalogue of heinous crimes. The next day I was in the confessional, when she narrated all that had passed: I then told her she had nothing to do, but to propitiate Heaven by dedicating her musical talents to its service; pointing out, that her only chance of salvation was from immediately taking the veil. I refused to listen to any other species of penance, however severe, for which she gladly would have compromised the sentence. Goaded by her conscience, miserable at the desertion and death of her lover, and alarmed at the threats of excommunication, in less than a week she repaired to the Ursuline Convent; and, after a short probation, she took the veil, and was admitted as one of the sisterhood.

As soon as my only accuser was fairly locked up, I occasionally resumed my dress and wig. I say occasionally, because in the society which I chiefly delighted in, and

in which I became the connoisseur of good wine, that I asserted myself to be, when your highness overheard me, I had no occasion for it, being quite as well received when I sang and played the guitar in my monkish dress, as I should have been in my other. Besides which, I never had to pay when in that costume, as I was obliged to do when I sported the other; which was only put on when I wished to make myself agreeable to any fair one. I hardly need observe, that I took great care to avoid the society in the one dress with which I mixed in the other. This disguise I continued very successfully for three years, when a circumstance occurred, which ended in my discovery, and my eventually becoming a slave in your highness's dominions.

For some time I had taught the niece of an elderly lady, who was of noble family and very rich. The aunt was always present at the lessons; and, knowing that she was very devout, I rejected all songs that were of an amorous tendency, and would only practise such as were unimpeachable. In my demeanour I was always sedate and respectful—full of humility and self-accusation. When I received my money from the old lady, I used to thank her in the name of our convent, for whose use it was to be appropriated, and call her donation a charity, for which Heaven would reward her. Her confessor died, and the old lady chose me to supply his place. This was what I was anxious to obtain, and I redoubled my zeal, my humility, and my flattery.

It was not that I had originally any design upon the affections of the niece, although she was a very pretty girl, but upon the old lady's purse, for I knew that she could not last for many years. On the contrary, I was anxious, if possible, to have the niece removed, as it was supposed that she would inherit the old lady's doubloons; but this required time and opportunity, and, in the mean while, I assiduously cultivated the old lady's good graces. She used to confess once a week; and I often observed that she acknowledged as a sin, thinking too much of one who had led her from her duty in former days, and for whom she still felt too much worldly passion. One evening when the clock had struck ten, we had laid down the cards, which we occasionally played, it being the day and her usual hour for confessing. Again she repeated the

same offence, and I then delicately hinted, that she might be more at ease if she were to confide to me the circumstances connected with her compunctions. She hesitated; but on my pointing out to her that there ought to be no reservation, and that the acknowledgment of the compunction arising from a sin was not that of the sin itself, she acquiesced. Her confession referred to her early days, when, attached to a young cavalier, against the wishes of her parents, under a solemn promise of marriage, she had consented to receive him into her chamber. The intercourse continued for some time, when it was discovered. Her lover had been waylaid and murdered by her relations, and she had been thrown into a convent. There she had been confined, and the child removed as soon as it was born: she had resisted all the force and threats employed to induce her to take the veil; and at the death of her father had been released and came into possession of her property, of which they could not deprive her: that she made every endeavour to find out to where her child had been removed, and at last discovered that it had been sent to the Foundling Asylum; but this information was not obtained until some years afterwards, and all the children sent there at the period had been dispersed. Never having married, her thoughts would revert to the scenes which had taken place with her adored Felix, although years had rolled away, and she felt that she was wrong to dwell upon what in itself had been so criminal.

I listened to her story with great interest, for the idea occurred to me, that I might be the unfortunate offspring of their loves, and if not, that in all probability the old lady might be induced so to believe. I inquired whether her child had any marks by which he could be recognised. She answered, that she made most particular inquiries of the people who attended her, and that one of the women had stated that the child had a large wart upon the back of its neck: this however was not likely to remain, and she had abandoned all hopes of its discovery.

I observed that warts were easily removed when contracted accidentally, but that those which appeared at the birth were no more to be removed than moles. I then

turned the conversation, by stating that I could not consider her conduct criminal; it was more than could be expected from human nature, that she should not retain affection for one who had lived with her as a husband, and died for her sake. I gave her absolution for half a dozen Ave-Marias, and took my leave for the night. When I lay on my pallet, I reflected upon what had passed; the year and month agreed exactly with the time at which I had been sent to the Asylum. A wart, as she very truly observed, might disappear. Might not I be the very son whom she was lamenting? The next morning I repaired to the Asylum, and demanded the date of my reception, with all the particulars, which were invariably registered in case of the infants being eventually claimed. It was in the month of February. There was one other entry in the same month, same day, and nearly the same hour as my own.

"At nine at night, a male infant left at the door in a basket, parties absconded, no marks, named Anselmo."

"At ten at night, a male infant brought to the door in a capote, parties absconded, no marks, named Jacobo."

It appeared then that there were two children brought within an hour of each other to the Asylum, and that I was one of them. In the evening I returned to the old lady, and accidentally resumed the subject of her not having made further search for her child, and asked if she had the precise date. She answered that she had it in her memory too well, and it was on the 18th of February; and that when she referred to the Asylum, they had informed her that the children brought in February had no marks; that they had all been sent away, but where they could not tell, as the former governor had died, and he was the only person who could give the information. That either I or the other was her child was clear, but to prove which, was impossible. It however made me less scrupulous about my plan of proceeding, which was to identify myself with the child she had lost. It was useless to prove that I was sent in on that day as there was a competitor; besides which, my monastic vows were at

variance with my speculation: I therefore resolved to satisfy her, if I could not satisfactorily prove it to myself or to the rest of the world, and I took my measures accordingly.

It was in my worldly disguise, that I determined to attempt my purpose; and as it was necessary to have a wart on my neck, I resolved to obtain one as soon as possible. This was easily managed: a friar of the convent was troubled with these excrescences, and I jocularly proposed a trial to see whether it was true that the blood of them would inoculate. In a fortnight I had a wart on my finger which soon became large, and I then applied the blood of it to my neck. Within three months I had a large wart on the back, of my neck, or rather a conglomeration of them, which I had produced by inoculation, assisted by constant irritation: during this period I was not so frequent in my attendance upon the old lady, excusing myself on account of the duties of the convent which devolved upon me. The next point was how to introduce myself in my other apparel. This required some reflection, as it would be but occasionally that I could make my appearance. After some reflection, I determined that the niece should assist me, for I knew that even if I succeeded in my plans, she would be a participator in the property which I wished to secure. Often left in her company, I took opportunities of talking of a young friend whom I highly extolled. When I had raised her curiosity, I mentioned in a laughing manner, that I suspected he was very much smitten with her charms, as I had often found him watching at the house opposite. An admirer is always a source of gratification to a young girl; her vanity was flattered, and she asked me many particulars. I answered them so as to inflame her curiosity, describing his person in a very favourable manner, and extolling his good qualities. I also minutely described his dress. After the music lesson was over, I returned to my lodgings, arrayed myself in my best suit, and putting on my curling ringlets, walked up and down before the window of the house. The niece soon recognised me as the person whose dress and appearance I had so minutely described, one moment showing herself at the window, at another

darting away with all the coquetry of her sex. I perceived that she was flattered with her conquest; and, after parading myself for a short time, I disappeared.

When I called the next day in my monastic costume, I had a billet-doux ready in my pocket. The singing commenced: I soon found out that she had a prepossession, from her selecting a song which in the presence of her aunt I should have put on one side, but it now suited my purpose that she should be indulged. When the aunt made her appearance we stopped, and commenced another: by this little ruse I became a sort of confidant, and the intimacy which I desired was brought about. When we had practised two or three songs, Donna Celia, the aunt, left the room: I then observed that I had seen the young cavalier whom I had mentioned, and that he appeared to be more infatuated than ever: that he had requested me as a favour to speak on his behalf, but that I had threatened to acquaint her aunt if he mentioned the subject; for I considered that my duty as a confessor in the family would be very irreconcileable with carrying clandestine love-messages. I acknowledged that I pitied his condition; for to see the tears that he shed, and listen to the supplications which he had made, would have softened almost any body; but that notwithstanding my great regard for him, I thought it inconsistent with my duty to interfere in such a business: I added, that he had told me that he had walked before the house yesterday afternoon, with the hopes of meeting one of the servants, whom he might bribe to convey a letter; and that I had threatened to acquaint Donna Celia if he mentioned the subject again. Donna Clara (for such was her name) appeared very much annoyed at my pretended rigour, but said nothing. After a little while, I asked her if she had seen him; she replied in the affirmative without further remarks. Her work-box lay upon the sofa, upon which she had been seated, and I put the note in it without being perceived. The lesson was finished, and I repaired to her aunt's apartments to pay her a visit in the quality of confessor. After half-an-hour's conversation, I returned through the saloon, where I had left Donna Clara: she was at her embroidery, and had evidently seen and read the note, for she coloured up when I entered. I took no notice, but,

satisfied that she had read it, I bade her adieu. In the note, I had implored her for an answer, and stated that I should be under her window during the whole night. As soon as it was dark, I dressed myself as Don Pedro and repaired to the street, striking a few notes on the guitar to attract her attention. I remained there more than half-an-hour, when the casement opened, and a little hand threw out a billet, which fell at my feet: I kissed it with apparent rapture, and retired. When I gained my lodgings, I opened it, and found it as favourable as I could hope. My plan then was to act as her confidant.

When I called the next day, I told her that, satisfied with the honourable intentions of the young cavalier, he had overcome my scruples, and I had consented to speak in his behalf: that I thought it was not right; but the state of the young man was so deplorable, that I could not withstand his entreaties; but that I expected that no steps would be taken by either party without my concurrence; and with this proviso, if she was pleased with the young cavalier, I would exert my influence in their behalf. Donna Clara's face beamed with delight at my communication: and she candidly acknowledged, as she had before in the note, that his person and his character were by no means displeasing. I then produced another note, which I said he had prevailed upon me to deliver. After this, affairs went on successfully. I repeatedly met her in the evening; and although I at first was indifferent, yet I soon became attached from the many amiable and endearing qualities which love had brought to light. She one day observed that there was a strong resemblance between Don Pedro and me, but the possibility of a serious shaven monk, and a gay cavalier with his curling locks, being one and the same person, never entered her head. When I considered matters ripe, I called upon Donna Celia, and, with the preamble that I had something of importance to communicate, informed her I had discovered that a young man was attached to her niece; and that I strongly suspected the regard was reciprocal; that I knew the young cavalier very well, who was very amiable, and possessed many good qualities, but there seemed to be a mystery about his family,

as he never mentioned them. I ended by observing, that I considered it my duty to acquaint her with the circumstance; as if she objected to the match, or had other views for her niece, an immediate stop ought to be put to their correspondence.

The old lady was very much astonished at the information, and very angry that her niece should have presumed to make an acquaintance without her knowledge. I waited until she had said all she could think of, and then calmly took up the right of a confessor, pointing out that she had herself fallen into the same error in her youthful days; that the young man had confessed to me that his views were honourable; but had not an idea, at the time, that I was acquainted with the family. Donna Celia then appeared to be more pacified, and asked many questions: all that she seemed to object to, was the mystery about his family, which at her request I promised to clear up before any other steps should be taken. Cautioning her against any violence of language to her niece, I took my leave. As I went out I spoke a few words to Clara, informing her of the dénouement which had taken place, and recommending her by no means to irritate her aunt, but to be very penitent when she was reproved. Clara obeyed my injunctions, and the next day, when I called, I found her sitting by the side of Donna Celia, who was apparently reconciled. I motioned Clara out of the room, when Donna Celia informed me that she had acknowledged her error; and as she had promised for the future to be regulated by her advice, she had overlooked her indiscretion. When she had finished: "Prepare yourself, madam," said I, "for strange tidings—the ways of Heaven are wonderful. Last evening I had an explanation with the young cavalier, Don Pedro, and he proves to be—that son whose loss you have so much lamented."

"Merciful heaven!" cried the old lady, and she fainted away. As soon as she recovered, she cried out, "Oh where is he! bring him to me—let a mother's eyes be blessed with his sight—let the yearnings of a mother's heart be recompensed in his embraces—let the tears of affection be wept upon his bosom."

"Calm yourself, my dear madam," replied I: "the proofs you have not yet seen. First be satisfied, and then indulge in your delightful anticipation. When I pressed Don Pedro upon the subject of his family, I told him candidly that his only chance of success was unlimited confidence: he acknowledged that he had been sent to the Asylum when an infant, and that he did not know his parents; that the mystery and consequent stigma on his birth had been a source of mortification to him through life. I asked him if he knew his age, or had a copy of the register of his reception. He took it out of a small cabinet; it was on the 18th of February, in the same year that your child was sent there. Still as I was not sure, I stated that I would call upon him this morning, and see what could be done; assuring him that his candid avowal had created strong interest in his favour. This morning I repaired to the Asylum, when I examined the register. Two children were brought in on that night: here is the extract, and I feel much mortified, as you will observe, that no marks are mentioned. If, therefore, the wart you spoke of was not still remaining, the uncertainty would have been as great as ever. When I returned to him about an hour since, I renewed the subject, and stated that I thought it was the custom to make a note of any particular marks upon the children, by which they might be eventually reclaimed. He replied that it was customary when they were indelible, but not otherwise: that he had no indelible mark, although a large wart had been on the back of his neck as long as he could remember; 'but,' added he, 'it is of no use,—all hopes of finding my parents have long since been abandoned, and I must submit to my unfortunate destiny. I have thought upon what has passed, and I feel that I have acted wrong. Without family and without name, what right have I to aspire to the hand of any young lady of good parentage? I have made the resolution to conquer my feelings; and before the intimacy has been carried on to an extent that a rupture would occasion any pangs to her that I adore, I will retire from Seville, and lament in solitude my unfortunate condition.'

"'Are you capable of making such a sacrifice, Don Pedro?' said I.—'I am, Father

Anselmo,' replied he: 'I will always act as a man of honour and of family, although I cannot prove my descent.'

"'Then,' said I, 'Don Pedro, do me the favour to call upon me this evening at my convent, and I hope to have some pleasing intelligence to impart.' I then left him, to come here and acquaint you with the joyful discovery."—"But why did you not bring him here immediately?" cried Donna Celia.

"Madam, I have important duties at my convent which will occupy me with the superior till late at night. These must be attended to; and it is not impossible that the affairs of our convent may require my absence for some time, as there are new leases of our lands to be granted, and I have reason to expect that the superior may dispatch me on that business. I will acquaint the young man with what has been discovered, and will then send him to your arms; but it were advisable that you allow a few hours to repose after the agitation which you have undergone, and previous to the affecting scene that will naturally take place. I wish I could be present; for it is not often, in this world, that we can witness the best affections of the heart in their virtuous action."

I then took my leave, requesting Donna Celia to inform her niece of the circumstances, as I presumed there would now be no obstacle to the mutual attachment of the young people.

My reason for an early departure was that I might arrange the story I should tell, when, as Don Pedro, my new mother would demand from me the events of my life. I had also to request leave of absence, which I obtained in expectation of some property being left to the convent by an elderly gentleman residing at Alicant, who was expected to die, and from whom I produced a letter, requesting my presence. As I was on the best terms with the superior, and there was a prospect of obtaining money, his consent was given. That I should be there in time, I was permitted to depart that evening. I took my leave of the superior, and the rest of the monks,

intending never to return, and hastened to my lodgings, where I threw off my monastic habit, which from that hour has never been resumed. I repaired to Donna Celia's house, was admitted and ushered into a room to await her arrival. My person had been set off to the best advantage. I had put on a new wig, a splendid velvet cloak, silk doublet and hose; and as I surveyed myself for a second or two in the mirror, I felt the impossibility of recognition, mingled with pride at my handsome contour. The door opened, and Donna Celia came in, trembling with anxiety. I threw myself on my knees, and in a voice apparently choked with emotion, demanded her blessing. She tottered to the sofa overpowered by her feelings; and still remaining on my knees, I seized her hand, which I covered with kisses.

"It is—it is my child," cried she at last; "all powerful nature would have told me so, if it had not been proved," and she threw her arms round my neck, as she bent over me and shed tears of gratitude and delight. I do assure your highness that I caught the infection, and mingled my tears with hers; for I felt then, and I even now firmly believe, that I was her son. Although my conscience for a moment upbraided me, during a scene which brought back virtuous feelings to my breast, I could not but consider, that a deception which could produce so much delight and joy, was almost pardonable. I took my seat beside her, and she kissed me again and again, as one minute she would hold me off to look at me, and the next strain me in her embraces.

"You are the image of your father, Pedro," observed she, mournfully, "but God's will be done. If he has taken away, he also hath given, and truly grateful am I for his bounty." When we had in some degree recovered our agitation, I entreated her to narrate to me the history of my father of which I had heard but little from the good brother Anselmo, and she repeated to me those events of her youthful days which she had communicated before.

"But you have not been introduced to Clara: the naughty girl little thought that she was carrying on an amour with her own cousin."

When Donna Celia called her down, I made no scruple of pressing the dear girl to my heart, and implanting a kiss upon her lips: with our eyes beaming with love and joy, we sat down upon the sofa, I in the centre, with a hand locked in the hand of each. "And now, my dear Pedro, I am anxious to hear the narrative of your life," said Donna Celia: "that it has been honourable to yourself, I feel convinced." Thanking her for her good opinion, which I hoped neither what had passed, or might in future occur, would be the means of removing, I commenced the history of my life in the following words.

* * * * *

"Commenced the history of your life?" interrupted the pacha. "Does the slave laugh at our beards? What then is all this you have been telling us?"

"The truth, your highness," replied the Spaniard. "What I am about to tell, is the history of my life, which I invented to deceive the old lady Donna Celia, and which is all false."

"I understand, Mustapha, this kafir is a regular Kessehgou,[3] he makes one story breed another; but it is late, see that he attends to-morrow afternoon, Bero! Go, infidel, the muezzin calls to prayers."

[3] Eastern story-teller.

The Spaniard quitted the sublime presence, and in obedience to the call of the muezzin, the pacha and Mustapha paid their customary evening devotions—to the bottle.

Chapter IV

The next day the Spanish slave was summoned to continue his narrative.

"Your sublime highness of course recollects where I lest off yesterday evening," commenced the slave.

"Perfectly well," replied the pacha, "you left off at the beginning of your story; but I hope you will finish it this evening, as I have already forgotten a great deal of what you said."

"Your highness may recollect that I was seated—"

"Yes, in our presence," interrupted the pacha; "such was our condescension to a Giaour. Now go on with your story."

"With due submission to your highness, I was seated on a sofa, between my mother Donna Celia and my mistress Donna Clara."

"Very true; I recollect now that you were."

"A hand clasped in the hand of each."

"Exactly," replied the pacha, impatiently.

"And was about to tell a story of my own invention, to deceive the old lady my mother."

"Anna Senna! curses on your mother!" cried the pacha, in an angry tone. "Sit down and continue your story. Is a pacha nothing? Is the lion to be chafed by a jackall? Wallah le Nebi! By God and the Prophet! do you laugh at our beard? The story!"

"The story requested by your highness," replied the slave, with great coolness, "was commenced in the following words."

STORY OF THE MONK.

What occurred during my infancy, my dearest mother, I do not recollect; but I can retrace to the age of seven years, when I found myself in company with a number of others, from the squalling infant of a few days old, up to about my own age. I also recollect that our fare was indifferent, and our punishment severe.

"Poor child!" exclaimed Donna Celia, pressing my hand which was still locked in hers. I continued there until the age of ten, when an old lady who came to the

Asylum, took a fancy to me; for I often heard it remarked, that I was a very handsome boy, although I have rather grown out of my good looks lately, Clara.

A pressure of my other hand, and a negative smile, was the answer; and I proceeded—

The old lady Donna Isabella, who was of the noble family of Guzman, wanted a page, and intended to bring me up in that capacity. She carried me to her house, where I was clad in a fancy dress. I used to sit by her side on the carpet, and run upon any message which might be required; in fact, I was a sort of human bell, calling up every body and fetching every thing that was wanted; but I was well fed, and very proud of a little dagger which I wore in my girdle. The only part of my education to which I objected, was learning to read and write from a priest, who was domiciled in the family, and who had himself as great an aversion to teaching as I had to learning. Had the affair rested entirely between us, we might have arranged matters so as to please both parties; but as the old lady used to prove my acquirements by making me read to her, as she knotted, we neither of us could help fulfilling our engagements. By dint of bullying and beating, at last I was sufficiently enlightened to be able to read a romance to my mistress, or answer an invitation-note in the negative or affirmative. My mistress had two nieces who lived with her, both nearly grown up when I entered the family. They taught me dancing for their own amusement, as well as many other things, and by their care I improved very much, even in reading and writing. Although a child, I had a pleasure in being taught by two pretty girls. But it is necessary that I should be more particular in my description of these two young ladies. The eldest, whose name was Donna Emilia, was of a prudent, sedate description, always cheerful, but never boisterous; she constantly smiled, but seldom, if ever, indulged in a laugh. The youngest, Donna Teresa, was very different—joyous and light-hearted, frank and confiding in her temper, generous in disposition: her faults arose from an excess of every feeling—a continual running into extremes. Never were two sisters more fond of each other: it

appeared as if the difference between their dispositions but added to their attachment. The serious character of the elder was roused to playfulness by the vivacity of the younger, and the extravagance of the younger was kept in due bounds by the prudence of the elder. As a child I liked Donna Emilia, but I was devotedly fond of Donna Teresa.

I had been three years in this situation, when legal business required the presence of Donna Isabella at Madrid. The young ladies, who were both very handsome, and remarkably like each other in person, were much admired by the cavaliers. Two had gained the victory over the rival candidates—Don Perez was the favoured suitor of Donna Emilia, while Don Florez was proud to wear the chains of the lively Teresa. Donna Isabella had, however, no intention that her nieces should quit her for the present, and aware, by the serenading which took place every night, that there were pretenders to her nieces' smiles, she hastened back to Seville sooner than she had intended.

Although I had not been trusted by either, I had an idea of what was going on; but with more prudence than most boys of my age, I made no remarks either to my mistress or to the young ladies. We had returned to Seville about a month, when Donna Emilia called me aside, and said, "Pedro, can you keep a secret?"

I told her—"Yes, if I was paid for it."

"And what do you want to induce you to keep it, you little miser?"

I replied—"From her, only a kiss."

She called me a little rogue, gave me the kiss, and then told me, that a cavalier would be under the window a little after vesper bell, and that I must give him a billet, which she put into my hand. Of course, having received my payment before hand, I consented. At the time mentioned I looked out of the gate, and perceiving a cavalier under the window, I accosted him, "What ho, Senor, what is it you expect from a fair lady?"

"A billet, my little page," replied he.

"Then here you have it," replied I, pulling it out of my vest. He put a doubloon in my hand, and immediately disappeared.

I liked the gold very much, but I preferred the other payment more. I put the money into my pocket, and returned into the house. I had hardly come into the hall, when Donna Teresa, the other young lady, accosted me. "Pedro, I have been looking for you—can you keep a secret?"

"Yes, if I am paid for it," replied I, as before.

"And what must it be that will keep that little tongue of yours from chattering?"

"From you," replied I, "it must be a kiss."

"Oh! you little mannikin—I'll give you twenty;" and she did so, until she almost took away my breath. "And now," said she, "there is a senor waiting below for a note, which you must take him." I took the note, and when I came to the gate, found a cavalier there, as she had mentioned. "Oh, Senor," said I, "what are you waiting for, is it a billet-doux from a sweet lady?"

"It is, my pretty boy," answered he.

"Perhaps this will interest you," replied I, handing him the note. He snatched it from me, and would have departed. "Senor," said I, "I cannot allow my mistress to be affronted. Her favours are beyond all price, but still they are always coupled with gold. Since you are so poor, and gold must pass, here is a piece for you," and I offered him the doubloon which I had received from the other cavalier.

"You are a witty boy," replied he, "and have corrected my negligence, for it was nothing more, I assure you. Add this to the other,"—and he put a quarter-doubloon in my hand and disappeared. I returned to the house, and as I had been some time away from my mistress I went into the saloon—where she was sitting alone.

"Pedro, come hither, child, you know how good I have been to you, and how

carefully I have brought you up. Now tell me, can you keep a secret?"—"Yes, madam," replied I, "I can keep yours, for it is my duty."

"That's a good child; well then, I have an idea that my two nieces are followed by some of the gay cavaliers, who saw them at Madrid, and I wish you to find out if it is true.—Do you understand?"

"Oh, yes, madam," replied I; "I do perfectly."

"Well then, do you watch,—and Pedro, here are two reals for you, to buy sugar-plums."

Thus did I enter in one day into the real occupation of a page. I added the two reals to the gold, and, as you may suppose, meant to serve as I was paid. But, as I found out afterwards, I had made a terrible mistake with the two billets-doux. That of Donna Emilia I had given to Don Florez, who was Donna Teresa's admirer; that of Donna Teresa I had given to Don Perez, who was the lover of Donna Emilia; but I had better explain to you, before I go on, what did not come to my knowledge until the dénouement took place. Don Perez, the lover of Emilia, was a young man who was entitled to large property, at the death of an uncle, to whom he was heir by entail. Don Florez, on the contrary, was in possession of a splendid fortune, and able to choose for himself. From fear of discovery, the notes were both in a disguised hand, and not signed by the respective Christian names of the ladies. Donna Emilia's ran thus:—"I found your note in the spot agreed, but my aunt has taken away the key of the shrubbery, and is I believe suspicious.—Why are you so urgent?—I trust your affection, like mine, will but increase from delay. It will be impossible to meet you to-night; but I have entered the page in my service, and will write soon." That of Donna Teresa, which I put in the hands of Don Perez, ran as follows:—"I can no longer refuse your solicitations for an interview. My aunt has locked up the shrubbery, but if you have courage enough to scale the garden-wall, I will meet you in the saloon which opens upon the garden; but not a word must be said, as the

servants are continually passing the door—neither can we have a light—I must trust to your honour."

Don Perez was delighted at Donna Emilia's having at last yielded to his entreaties for a meeting; and Don Florez, as much annoyed at the reserved conduct of his mistress, went home accusing her of coquetry. At the appointed hour, Don Perez met his supposed mistress in the saloon. The two sisters were confidantes, and as I was in their secret, they made no scruple of talking before me. The next day, when their aunt left the room, they began arguing upon the personal merits of the respective cavaliers. After a good-humoured controversy, they appealed to me. "Come, Pedro," said Teresa, "you shall decide.—Which do you think the handsomest cavalier?"

"Why," answered I, "I think that your senor is, for a fair man, the handsomest I ever saw—but still the beautiful dark eyes of the Donna Emilia's cavalier are equally prepossessing."

"Why Pedro, you have mistaken the two," said Emilia, "it is Don Perez, the fair one, who is my admirer, and the dark senor is Don Florez, who is in love with my sister." I perceived that I had made a mistake when I delivered the notes, and Teresa coloured up. But I had sense enough to answer—"Very true, madam, you are right, I now recollect that I am confounding the two."

Shortly afterwards the aunt came into the room, and Teresa quitted it, beckoning me to follow her. As soon as I had joined her, she said, "Now, Pedro, tell the truth: did you not make the mistake that you stated, and deliver my note to the fair cavalier, Don Perez."

I answered, "that I had, as I had already delivered Emilia's note to the dark gentleman." Donna Teresa put her hands over her face and wept bitterly,—"Pedro, you must now keep this secret, for it is of the greatest importance.—My God, what will become of me?" cried she, and for some time she was in the greatest distress: at last she wiped her eyes, and after much reflection, she took up paper and wrote a

note.—"Pedro, take this note to the direction; recollect it is for the dark cavalier that it is intended." Teresa had read the note of Emilia to Don Perez, which had been received by Don Florez—in consequence her present note ran thus:—"You may think me harsh for having refused to see you last night, but I was afraid. Do not accuse me with trifling with your feelings, I will meet you in the saloon that leads to the garden, which was last night occupied; come at ten this evening."

I went out with the note and gave it into the hands of Don Florez. "My dear boy, tell Donna Teresa I will not fail; I know now why she could not receive me last night; I only hope I may be as fortunate as Don Perez." He put a doubloon in my hand, and I went away. I had not quitted the street when I met Don Perez.

"Ah! my little page, this is indeed lucky; just step to my rooms while I write a note to Donna Emilia." I did so, and he gave me a quarter-doubloon as before. "I thank you, senor," replied I; what with the doubloons of Don Florez and your quarter-doubloons, I shall soon be a rich man."

"How say you," replied he, "Don Florez give you doubloons—then he spoils the market; but I must not allow him to pay you better than I do, or I shall not be served so faithfully.—Here's a doubloon and a half, which, with what you have already received, will make the accounts square." I made my bow, and with many thanks withdrew.

Young as I was, I had an idea that something had occurred at the mistaken meeting of last night, which seriously affected Donna Teresa. As I was much more partial to her than to her sister, I resolved not to deliver the note of Don Perez to Emilia, until I had consulted Donna Teresa. On my return, I beckoned her into her chamber, and told her the answer of Don Florez, with his observation, "that he hoped he should be as fortunate as Don Perez was last night." She coloured with shame and vexation; and I then told her how I had met Don Perez, and what had passed. I then gave her the note, and asked whether I should deliver it or not. She hastily tore it open—it ran

as follows:—"How can I sufficiently express my gratitude to my adored Emilia, for her kindness to me last night? Tell me, dearest angel, when am I to have the pleasure of meeting you again in the saloon? Till you once more grant me the favour, life will be a blank."

"Pedro," said she, "you have indeed done me a service—you have been my preserver. How can I ever repay you?"

"Give me a double allowance of kisses, this time," replied I.

"I will give you a thousand," answered she, and she kissed and blessed me while tears ran down her cheeks; she then took some paper, and imitating the hand-writing, wrote as follows:—"I must submit to your wishes, Donna Emilia; and while your sister blesses Don Florez, must yield to the severity of your disposition. Still I hope that you will relent—I am very miserable; write to me, if you have any love still remaining for your adorer.——Perez."

"Take this to Emilia, my sweet child.—What can I do to reward you?"

"Why you must take care of my money," said I, "for if my mistress finds it out, I shall never be able to tell how I came by it." She smiled mournfully as she received my doubloons, and locked them up in a trinket-box. "I will add to your wealth, Pedro," said she.

"No," replied I, "only kisses from you." I told her why her aunt gave me the two reals, and we separated. I delivered the note to Donna Emilia, who in the afternoon put an answer into my hand; but I would not act without Donna Teresa knowing what took place, and it occurred to me, that it would be very possible to repair the mischief, which my mistake had occasioned. I therefore took the answers of Donna Emilia to her lover to Donna Teresa, and told her what I thought, "My dear Pedro, you are indeed a treasure to me," replied Teresa.

She opened Emilia's note, which ran as follows:—"You accuse me of unkindness, which I do not deserve. Heaven knows my heart is but too yielding. I will arrange a

meeting as soon as I possibly can; but as I before said, my aunt is suspicious, and I cannot make up my mind, like Teresa, to run the risk of discovery."

Teresa tore up this note, and wrote as follows:—"If a woman has the misfortune to yield too much to the solicitations of her lover, he becomes arrogant, and claims as a right, what only can be received as a favour. I consider that what passes in darkness should remain as secret in the breast, and as silent in the tongue. I now tell you candidly, that I shall consider it as an insult, if ever you refer to the meeting of last night; and to punish you for your arrogant request of another, shall treat you with the same reserve as before. Recollect that the least intimation of it, however private we may be, will be the signal of your dismissal. At the same time, expecting implicit obedience to this command, I shall punish you no further, if you offend not again. When I feel inclined to see you, I will let you know. Till then, Yours, etc."

I took this note to Don Perez, whom I found at his lodgings drinking in company with Don Florez, for they had no secrets from each other. Perez opened the note, and appeared a little astonished.—"Read this, Florez," said he, "and tell me if woman is not a riddle."

"Well, now I like her spirit," replied Florez, "some women would have been dying with apprehension at your leaving them: she, on the contrary, considers that you are under greater obligations than before; and assumes her dominion over you. I recommend you to comply with her injunctions, if you wish to retain her love."

"I don't know but what you are right, Florez; and as we are lords and masters after marriage, it is but fair, that they should hold their uninterrupted sway before. I feel more attached to her than ever, and if she chooses to play the tyrant, why she shall. It shows her good sense; for keeping us off, is the only way to induce us to go on."

I returned home, delivering a note from Don Perez to Emilia, stating his intention to abide by her wishes, and stated to Donna Teresa all that had passed between the cavaliers.

"Thanks to your prudence and sagacity, my dear little Pedro, all as yet is well; but it may yet be discovered; for I will now confide to you, that the tenderness last night, intended for Don Florez, was by your mistake, and the darkness and silence prescribed at the meeting, lavished upon my sister's admirer. But all will I trust be well, and I shall not suffer for an unintentional misfortune."

That evening Don Florez was received by Teresa in the saloon; and the next morning, I was sitting as usual by my mistress, when she asked, "Well, Pedro, have you discovered anything?"

"Yes, madam," replied I.

"And what is it, child?"

"Why, madam, a gentleman asked me to give a letter, but I would not."

"Who was it for, child?"

"I don't know, madam, for I refused to take it in my hand."

"Well, Pedro, you were right; the next time he offers you a letter take it, and bring it to me."

"I will, madam," said I.

"Here are two reals for you, child—have you spent the last I gave you?"

I left the room—when Donna Emilia met me outside, and put a note into my hand for Don Perez. I first took it to my friend Teresa, who opened it:—"At last my affection has borne down my resolution, and I consent to see you. There is no other way but in the saloon. Be careful not to offend me, or it will be for the last time."

"This may go, Pedro," said Teresa, "and you may call at Don Florez' lodgings as you pass by."

I delivered the note to Don Perez, and before he had finished it, Don Florez entered the room.—"Congratulate me, my dear friend," said he. "I was received as kindly as I could wish."

"And my fair one has not taken long to relent," answered Perez, "for I have an appointment with her this evening. Pedro, tell your mistress, that I do not write, but that I bless her for her kindness, and shall not fail to meet her.—Do you understand? Well, what are you waiting for? Oh! you little rogue, I understand," and he threw me a doubloon.—"Florez, you give that boy too much money, and I am obliged to do the same." Florez laughed, and I again took my departure.

Thus did I continue in my vocation for some time, when the old lady fell sick and died. She divided her fortune between her two nieces, and as they were now independent, they married their respective lovers; but the old lady forgot to mention me in her will, and I should have been turned adrift on the world had it not been for Donna Teresa, who immediately appointed me as her own attendant. I was as happy as before, although no more doubloons fell into my hands, after the marriages took place. It appears that Don Perez was so much afraid of offending Donna Emilia, that he never ventured to speak of the meeting, which he supposed he had had with her in the saloon, until after marriage: then, feeling himself quite at liberty, he had laughed at her on the subject. Donna Emilia was all astonishment, declared most positively that it had not taken place; and although he at first ridiculed the idea of her denial, yet recollecting that he still had her notes in his possession, he brought them out, and showed her the one in which she had prohibited him from speaking on the subject. Donna Emilia protested that it was not her writing, and was confounded at the apparent mystery. She stated that Teresa had agreed to meet Don Florez in the saloon that night.

"On the contrary," replied Don Perez, "he received a letter from Donna Teresa, refusing him a meeting, at the same time that I received this from you, giving me the assignation."

Donna Emilia burst into tears. "I see how it is," replied she, "the page by mistake has given the note which I wrote you to Don Florez, and Teresa's note fell into your

hands. You have taken an unworthy advantage of the circumstance, and have met my sister. Never make me believe, Don Perez, that you were not aware of the mistake, when she received you in the saloon—or that she could not distinguish you from Don Florez. Cruel sister, thus to rob me of my happiness! Treacherous Don Perez, thus to betray your friend and me!"

Don Perez tried all he could to pacify his wife, but in vain. Her jealousy, her pride, and her conscientious scruples were roused, and she would not listen to any reasoning or protestations. Although he was almost certain, that the fact was as his wife had stated, he determined to make sure by referring to me. He came to Don Florez' house, and after staying a little while with him and his wife, during which he appeared so uneasy that they asked him whether he was unwell, he went away making a sign for me to follow him. He then entered into all the particulars, and asked me about the delivery of the notes. I took it for granted, that an explanation had taken place between him and his wife—my only object was to save Donna Teresa.

"Senor, whether what Donna Emilia says is true, I know not," replied I; "but, that it was not Donna Teresa who met you, I can certify, for I was in her room with her that night till she went to bed, playing at piquet for sugar-plums."

"Then who could it be," observed he.

"I know not, senor, for I did not go downstairs, where my mistress was, because she had sent me to bed, and I knew that I should have been scolded for being up. Therefore I cannot say whether Donna Emilia was with you or not."

Don Perez meditated some time, and then came to the conclusion that his wife was ashamed of having been too indulgent to him in an unguarded moment, and would not acknowledge it. Still he was far from being satisfied. He returned home to explain what he had gathered to his wife, but found that she had left the house some time before, without stating whither she was going. As soon as Don Perez left the

house, I hastened to my mistress, to acquaint her with what had passed, and what I had told him.

"I thank you for your kind intention, Pedro, but I am afraid that all will be discovered. It is a judgment on me for my folly and indiscretion."

In the meantime, Donna Emilia, who had taken refuge in a neighbouring convent, sent for Don Florez. He found her in the convent-parlour in tears. Convinced by her jealousy, that her sister had an attachment to Don Perez, and that there had been a mutual understanding, she stated to Don Florez the whole of the circumstances, and pointing out to him how treacherously they both had been treated, acquainted him with her intention to retire from the world.

Don Florez, stirred to madness by the information, exclaimed—"It was for this, then, that she put me off on that night, and was kind to me the next. Cursed dupe that I have been; but, thank heaven, it is not too late to be revenged. Don Perez, you shall pay dearly for this." So saying, he quitted Donna Emilia, uncertain whether he should first wreak his vengeance upon Don Perez or his wife. But this point was soon decided, for at the convent gate he encountered Don Perez, who had been informed whither his wife had retreated.

"You are the person I have been anxiously wishing to see, Don Perez—treacherous villain, void of all honour."

"Not so, Don Florez. I am an unfortunate man, who is half mad by a cruel mistake which has occurred. Recall your words, for they are unjust."

"I do not intend to recall them, but assert the truth with the point of my rapier. If you are not as great a coward, as you are a villain, you will follow me."

"Such language will admit of no reply. I am at your service," cried Don Perez.

The two brothers-in-law walked in silence, until they reached a field hard by, where they threw off their cloaks, and fought with the fury of demons. Victory was decided in favour of Don Perez; his sword passed through the heart of his adversary, who

never spoke again. Don Perez viewed the body with a stern countenance, wiped his sword, took up his cloak, and walked straight to the house of Don Florez. "Donna Teresa," said he (I only was present), "I call upon you, as you value salvation in the day of judgment, to tell me the truth. Was it you, that, by an unfortunate mistake, I met one night in the saloon, and were those caresses, intended for Don Florez, bestowed upon me?"

There was a wildness, a ferocity in his air that frightened her; she stammered out at last—"for my sins, it is true; but you know, too well, that I never was false in heart, although when I found out my mistake, I attempted to conceal my indiscretion."

"Had you, madam, been as virtuous as your sister, all this mischief would not have happened—and your husband would not now be lying a corpse, by the hand of his brother."

Donna Teresa fainted at the intelligence, and Don Perez immediately quitted the house. I hastened to her assistance, and succeeded in restoring her to life.

"It is but too true," said she, mournfully; "crime will always meet with punishment, in this world, or in the next. By permitting my love to overcome the dictates of virtue, by being too fond of my husband, I have murdered him. Oh God! I have murdered him, and rendered the lives of two others as much a burden to them as my own will ever be. My poor, dear sister, where is she?"

I tried all my powers of consolation, but in vain: all she requested was that I would find out where her sister was, and let her know. I set off upon my melancholy task, and met the people bearing in the body of Don Florez. I shuddered as it passed by, when I recollected how principal a part I had acted in the tragedy. I soon gained the information, and brought it to Donna Teresa. She dressed herself in deep mourning, and, desiring me to follow her, knocked at the convent gate, and requesting to see the superior, was admitted. The superior came out of the parlour to receive her, not wishing that any one should enter, while Donna Emilia was in such a state of misery

and despair.

"It is my sister that I come to see, madam, and I must not be refused; lead me to her, and be witness of the scene, if you please."

The superior, who was not aware that Emilia would have refused to see Donna Teresa, led the way, and we were ushered into the presence of Emilia, who, looking up as Donna Teresa entered, turned away from her as if in abhorrence.

"Emilia," said my mistress, "we are born of the same mother, we have lived as children, and we have grown up together; never did we have a secret from each other, till this unfortunate mistake occurred. On my knees, I request you to listen to me, and to believe what I say."

"Plead your cause with your husband, Teresa; it is more necessary to pacify him than me."

"I have no husband, Emilia; he is now pleading his own cause with God—for he has fallen by the sword of yours."

Donna Emilia started.

"Yes, Emilia, dear, dear sister, it is but too true, and still more true, that you have caused his death. Do not kill me too, Emilia, by refusing to believe what I declare, as I hope for eternal salvation,—that I never was aware of the mistake, until the boy discovered it to me, on the ensuing day. If you knew the shame, the vexation, the fear of discovery which racked my frame, when I was but too sure of it, you would forgive my having tried to hide a fault, the knowledge of which would make others miserable, as well as me. Say you believe me—say you forgive me, Emilia. Oh! Emilia, cannot you forgive a sister?"

Emilia answered not, and Teresa, clinging to her knees, and embracing them, sobbed hysterically. At this moment, Don Perez, who had obtained admittance to see his wife, came into the room, and walking up to the part in which the two unfortunate ladies remained in the attitudes described, said,—"You, Teresa, who have been the

original cause of this unhappy business, I mean not to reproach again. Your punishment has been greater than your offence. It is to you, madam, I must address myself, who, by not believing in the words of truth, have caused me to slay my dearest friend and brother, and, after having unwittingly wounded him in the tenderest point, add to the injury by taking away his life. Are you yet satisfied, madam? Are you satisfied with having embittered my days by your injustice and unworthy suspicions—by having reduced your unfortunate, yet not guilty sister, to the state of an unhappy, lonely woman, now suing in vain for pardon at your feet; by having been the occasion of the death of your brother by marriage—her husband and my friend? Say, madam, are you yet satisfied, or will you have more victims to your unbelief?"

Emilia answered not, but continued with her face averted.

"Be it so, then, madam;" replied Don Perez; and, before any one was aware of his intention, he drew his sword, and fell upon it. "Now, Emilia, let the sacrifice of my life be a proof to you of my sincerity. As I hope for pardon, I have told the truth;" and Don Perez fell on his back, and was dead.

Emilia started round when he fell, and threw herself down by his side in horror and amazement. The film that passion had thrown over her eyes was removed, as she witnessed the last melancholy result of her unbelief. When Don Perez ceased speaking, she threw herself on his body, in an agony of grief.—"I do, I do believe—Perez, I do, I do! Oh! indeed I do believe—speak to me, Perez—O God, he is dying!—Sister, Teresa, come, come, he'll speak to you—he's not angry with you—Sister, sister, speak—O God! O God!" screamed the unhappy woman, "he's dead—and I have murdered him!"—and she dashed her head upon the floor. Teresa hastened to her sister, and held her in her arms, while the tears poured fast. It was some time before reason resumed her seat; at last, exhausted by the violence of her feelings, she was relieved with a flood of tears.

"Who is it?—you, Teresa—kind sister, whom I have used so ill—I do believe you—I do believe, Teresa; God forgive me! kiss me, sister, and say that you forgive me—for am I not punished?"

"It is all my fault," answered Teresa, bursting into tears: "Oh! how wicked, how foolish have I been!"

"No, no, sister, your fault is small, compared to mine; you allowed your passion to overcome you, but it arose from an excess of love, the best feeling in our nature—the only remnant of heaven left us since our fall. I too have allowed my passion to overcome me; but whence has it arisen?—from hatred and jealousy, feelings which were implanted by demons, and which create a hell, wherever they command. But it is done, and repentance comes too late."

The unfortunate sisters embraced each other and mingled their tears together; and I hardly need say, that the Lady Abbess and I could not restrain our meed of pity at the affecting scene. As the evening closed, they separated, each to attend to the same mournful duty, of watching by the bodies of their husbands, and bedewing them with their tears. A few days after the interments took place, Emilia sent for her sister, and after an affectionate interview, took the veil in the convent to which she had retired—endowing the church with her property. Donna Teresa did not take the veil; but employed herself in the more active duties of charity and benevolence—but she gradually wasted away—her heart was broken. I stayed with her for three years, when she died, leaving a considerable sum to me, and the remainder of her wealth to beneficent institutions. This is about five years ago, since when I have been living on the property, which is nearly all expended by my extravagance. The stigma on my birth is, however, the only subject which has weighed upon my spirits—this is providentially removed, and I trust that I shall not disgrace the mother who has so kindly acknowledged me, or the dear girl who has honoured this faulty person with her attachment.

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My mother and Clara thanked me when I had concluded my narrative, and we remained unto a late hour entering upon family affairs, and planning for the future. My mother informed me that upon the estates she had only a life interest, as they were entailed, and would revert to a cousin; but that she had laid by a considerable sum of money, intending it as a dowry for my Clara, and that she hoped to increase it before she died. As I was anxious to quit Seville, where I feared daily discovery, I proposed that we should retire to the estate near Carthagena, by which not only a considerable expense would be saved, but I should feel more happy in the company of Clara and herself. My mother and my intended gladly consented to the proposal, not only for the above reasons, but because she was aware that the questions which might be asked about me would tend to the injury of her character. In less than a fortnight the establishment at Seville was broken up, and we retired to the country, where I was made happy by the possession of my Clara. I now considered myself as secure from any discovery, and although I had led a life of duplicity, meant by future good conduct to atone for the past. Whether Donna Celia was my mother or not, I felt towards her as if she was, and after some time from habit considered it an established fact. My Clara was as kind and endearing as I could desire, and for five years I was as happy as I could wish. But it was not to last; I was to be punished for my deceit. My marriage with Clara, and the mystery attached to my birth, which was kept secret, had irritated the heir of the estate, who had been in hopes, by marrying Clara himself, to secure the personal as well as the real property. We occasionally met, but we met with rancour in our hearts, for I resented his behaviour towards me. Fearful of discovery, I had never paid any attention to music since my marriage; I had always pretended that I could not sing. Even my wife was not aware of my talent; and although latterly I had no fear of the kind, yet as I had always stated my inability, I did not choose to bring forth a talent, the reason for concealing which I could not explain even to my wife and mother, without acknowledging the deception

of which I had been guilty.

It happened that one evening at a large party I met my cousin, the heir of the entailed estates. We were very joyous and merry, and had drunk a good deal more than usual. The wine was powerful, and had taken effect upon most of us. Singing was introduced, and the night passed merrily away, more visitors occasionally dropping in. My cousin was much elated with wine, and made several ill-natured remarks, which were meant for me. I took no notice for some time, but, as he continued, I answered with such spirit, as to arouse his indignation. My own blood boiled; but the interference of mutual friends pacified us for the time, and we renewed our applications to the bottle. My cousin was called upon for a song; he had a fine voice and considerable execution, and was much applauded.

"Now, then," said he, in an ironical tone, "perhaps Don Pedro will oblige the company; although perhaps the real way to oblige them will be by not attempting that of which he is not capable."

Stung with this sarcasm, and flushed with wine, I forgot my prudence. Snatching the guitar from him, after a prelude which created the greatest astonishment of all present, I commenced one of my most successful airs: I sang it in my best style, and it electrified the whole party. Shouts proclaimed my victory, and the defeat of my relative. Some embraced me in their enthusiasm, and all loudly encored; but as soon as there was a moment's silence, I heard a voice behind me observe—"Either that is the monk Anselmo's voice, or the devil's."

I started at the words, and turned round to the speaker, but he had mingled with the crowd, and I could not discover who it was. I perceived that my relative had followed him on; and I now cursed my own imprudence. As soon as I could, I made my escape from the company, and returned home. As I afterwards found out, my relative had immediately communicated with the person who had made the observation. He was one of the priests who knew me at Seville. From him, my

cousin gained the information that brother Anselmo had left the convent about five years ago, and not having returned, it was thought that an accident had happened to him. But a discovery had since been made, which led them to suppose, that brother Anselmo had, for some time, been carrying on a system of deception. You may remember I stated, that when I resumed my worldly apparel to introduce myself as the son of Donna Celia, I changed the dress at my lodgings. I locked up my friar's dress and the false tonsure in the chest, intending to have returned, and destroyed it; but I quite forgot it, and left Seville with the key of my lodgings in my pocket. The landlord waited until his rent was due, when, not hearing anything of me, he broke open the door and found the chest. This he opened, and discovered the false tonsure and friar's gown. Knowing the monastic order to which it belonged, and suspecting some mischief, he took it to our convent, and all the habits of the monks being numbered in the inside, it was immediately recognised as mine: the false tonsure also betrayed that I must have been breaking through the rules of my order, and the most rigorous search after me was made for some time without success. Possessed of this information, my vindictive relative repaired to Seville to ascertain the exact date of my quitting the convent, and found that it was about a fortnight previous to Donna Celia having quitted Seville. He then repaired to the landlord for further information. The landlord stated that the lodgings had been taken by a monk, for his brother, who had occupied them. He described the brother's person, which exactly corresponded with mine; and my relation was convinced that the monk Anselmo and Don Pedro were one and the same person. He immediately gave notice to the Inquisition. In the mean time, I was in the greatest consternation. I felt that I should be discovered, and reflected upon my conduct. I had lately abjured all deceit, and had each day gained a step in the path of virtue. I acknowledged with bitterness, that I deserved all that threatened me, and that sooner or later, vice will meet with its reward. Had I at first made known my situation to Donna Celia, she would have had interest enough (believing me to be her son), to have obtained a dispensation of my

vows. I then might have boldly faced the world—but one act of duplicity required another to support it, and thus had I entangled myself in a snare, by which I was to be entrapped at last. But it was not for myself that I cared; it was for my wife whom I doted on—for my mother (or supposed mother), to whom it would be the bitterness of death. The thoughts of rendering others miserable as well as myself drove me to distraction—and how to act I knew not.

After much reflection, I resolved as a last resource, to throw myself upon the generosity of my adversary; for although inimical to me, he bore a high character as a Spanish cavalier. I desired to be informed the moment that he returned from Seville; and when the intelligence came, I immediately repaired to his house, and requested an audience. I was admitted, when Don Alvarez, for that was his name, addressed me.

"You wish to speak with me, Don Pedro—there are others at your house by this time, who wish to speak with you."

I guessed that he meant the officers of the Inquisition, but pretending not to understand the remark, I answered him: "Don Alvarez, the enmity that you have invariably shown towards me has, I am sure, proceeded from the affront, which you consider that your noble family has received, by your cousin having formed an alliance with one of unknown parentage. I have long borne with your pointed insults, out of respect for her who gave me birth; I am now about to throw myself upon your generosity, and probably when I inform you, that I am the unhappy issue of the early amour of Donna Celia (which of course you have heard of), I may then claim your compassion, if not your friendship, from having at least some of the same noble blood in my veins."

"I was not indeed aware of it," replied Don Alvarez, with agitation; "I would to heaven you had confided in me before."

"Perhaps it would have been better," replied I, "but permit me to prove my

assertions." I then stated my having been the friar Anselmo, the discovery of my birth by accident, and the steps which I had taken. "I am aware," continued I, "that I have been much to blame, but my love for Donna Clara made me regardless of consequences. Your unfortunate enmity induced me, in an unguarded moment, to expose myself, and it will probably end in my destruction."

"I acknowledge the truth of your remark, and that no power can save you. I lament it, Don Pedro; but what is done cannot be undone. Even now the officers of the Inquisition are at your house." As he uttered these words, a loud knocking at the door announced that they had followed me. "This must not be, Don Pedro," said Don Alvarez, "step this way." He opened a panel, and desired me to go in—and he hardly had time to shut it before the officers came into the room.

"You have him here, Don Alvarez, have you not?" inquired the chief.

"No, unfortunately," replied he, "I tried to detain him, but suspecting some discovery he forced his way out, sword in hand, and has gone I do not know in what direction; but he cannot be far—saddle all the horses in my stable and pursue the sacrilegious wretch. I would sacrifice half my worldly wealth, that he should not escape my vengeance."

As Don Alvarez was the informant, and uttered these words with the apparent violence of rage, the inquisitors had no suspicion, but hastened to comply with his request. As soon as they had departed, he opened the panel and let me out.

"So far, Don Pedro, have I proved the sincerity of my assertion; but now, what remains to be done?"

"But one thing, Don Alvarez, to conceal the truth from my poor wife and mother. I could bear it all with firmness, but for them" (and I fell on a sofa and burst into tears). Don Alvarez was much affected.

"Oh, Don Pedro! it is too late now, or I should say, 'What a warning this ought to be to us—that honesty is the best policy!' Had you communicated to me the mystery of

your birth, this never would have occurred. Instead of having been your persecutor, I should have been your friend.—What can I do?"

"Kill me, Don Alvarez," replied I, baring my breast, "and I will bless you for the deed. My death may afflict them, but they will recover from their grief in time; but to know that I am murdered by the Inquisition, as a sacrilegious impostor, will bring them to their grave with shame and mortification."

"Your observation is correct, but kill you I must not. I will, however, so far comply with your wishes, that I will bear the news of your death, and their hatred of the deed, rather than the family should be disgraced." He then went to his scrutoire, and taking out a bag of one thousand pistoles—"This is all the money that I have at present—it will serve you for some time. Put on one of my servant's dresses, and I will accompany you to a seaport and secure your safety before I leave you. I will then state, that I met you in a fair duel, and will bribe the officers of the Inquisition to hold their tongues about the circumstances which have been communicated."

The advice was good and I agreed to it; following him as a servant, I arrived safely at Carthagena, whence I took a passage for New Spain. We sailed, and before we were clear of the Straits of Gibraltar, we were attacked by one of the cruisers of the state. We fought desperately, but were overpowered by numbers, and they took possession after we had lost more than half of our crew. They brought us into this port, where, with the rest, I was sold as a slave.

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"Such is my history," ended the Spaniard, "which I trust has afforded some amusement to your sublime highness."

The immediate answer of the pacha was a loud yawn.

"Shukur Allah! Praise be to God you have done talking. I do not understand much about it," continued the pacha, turning round to Mustapha, "but how can we expect a good story from an unbelieving dog of a Christian?"

"Wallah Thaib! Well said, by God!" replied Mustapha; "who was Lokman, that they talk of his wisdom? Are not these words of more value than strung pearls?"

"What was the name of the country?" demanded the pacha.

"Spain, your sublime highness; the infidel tribes which you allow to remain there, are employed in cultivating the olive for true believers."

"Very true," rejoined the pacha; "I remember now. Let the Kafir taste of our bounty. Give him two pieces of gold, and allow him to depart."

"May the shadow of your sublime highness never be less," said the Spaniard. "I have here a manuscript which I received from an ancient monk of our order when at the point of death. At the time of my capture it was thrown on one side, and I preserved it as curious. It refers to the first discovery of an island. As your highness is pleased to be amused with stories, it may be worth while to have it translated." The Dominican then handed from his breast a discoloured piece of parchment.

"Very good," replied the pacha, rising. "Mustapha! let it be put into Arabic by the Greek slave, who shall read it to us some evening when we have no story-tellers."

"Be Chesm! Upon my eyes be it," replied Mustapha, bowing low, as the pacha retired to his harem.

Chapter V

The pacha had repeated his perambulations for many nights, without success; and Mustapha, who observed that he was becoming very impatient, thought it advisable to cater for his amusement.

Among those who used to repair to Mustapha when he exercised his former profession, was a French renegade, a man of considerable talent and ready invention, but a most unprincipled scoundrel, who, previous to the elevation of Mustapha, had gained his livelihood by daring piratical attempts in an open boat. He

was now in the employ of the vizier, commanding an armed xebeque which the latter had purchased. She passed off as a government cruiser, but was in reality a pirate. Selim, for that was the name which the renegade had adopted when he abjured his faith, condemned every vessel that had the misfortune to meet with him, taking out the cargoes, burning the hull, and throwing the crews overboard, with the privilege of swimming on shore if they could. By this plan he avoided the inconveniences attending any appeals from the jurisdiction of the High Court of Admiralty, which he had established upon the seas.

The consequence was, that his cruises were more successful than ever, and Mustapha, who was not content with pillaging the pacha's subjects on dry land, was amassing a large fortune at their expense by his maritime speculations.

Occasionally, bales or packages would be recognised when landed as having the identical marks and numbers of those which had been shipped from the quay but a fortnight before; but the renegade could always give a satisfactory explanation to the vizier; and after a Jew, who could not bear the idea of parting with his property without remonstrance, had been impaled, people shrugged up their shoulders and said nothing.

Now it occurred to Mustapha, that Selim might be able to assist his views. He talked fast and loud, vaunted his own exploits, curled his whiskers as he swore to the most improbable assertions, and had become a general nuisance and terror since he had obtained the vizier's protection.

Mustapha sent for him, and, as a preliminary question, inquired if ever he had read the Arabian Nights.

"Yes, vizier," replied the renegade; "many years before I turned Turk."

"Do you recollect the voyages of Sindbad the Sailor?"

"To be sure I do; he is the only man that could ever hold a candle to me in lying."

"Well, then, his highness the pacha delights in such stories; and it is my wish that

you prepare to recount your own voyages, as Sindbad has done before you."

"But what am I to get for it?"

"My good-will and protection; besides which, his highness, if pleased, will not fail to order you a handsome present."

"Well," replied Selim, "any man who can produce gold in this world will always be able to change it for base metal. I can coin lies in my mint faster than he can coin sequins in his; and since you wish it, and say that it will be profitable, why—I am very much at his service."

"Then, Selim, observe my directions, for every thing must appear accidental."

In pursuance to the orders received from Mustapha, the renegade remained that evening at the corner of a certain street, through which Mustapha took care that the pacha should pass in his disguise. When he perceived their approach, the renegade exclaimed. "Allah, Allah! when is the happy time to come, promised in my seventh and last voyage?"

"Who are you, and why do you call upon Heaven for happy times?" inquired the pacha.

"I am Huckaback the Sailor," replied the renegade, "who, after a life of danger and disaster, am anxiously awaiting the fulfilment of a promise from the Most High."

"I must see this man to-morrow," observed the pacha:—"Mustapha, as you value your life, see that he attends."

The vizier bowed, and the pacha returned to the palace without further adventure.

The next day, as soon as the business of the divan had closed, the renegade was ordered in. Prostrating himself before the pacha, he then rose, and, folding his arms over his breast, awaited his commands in silence.

"I have sent for you, Huckaback, to inquire the meaning of the words you made use of last night: and to know what was the promise made to you in your seventh and

last voyage; but I will thank you to begin at the first, as I wish to hear the history of all your voyages."

"May it please you highness, as I live but to obey you, all that has occurred in my eventful life shall, if you command it, be submitted to your ear. It will, however, be necessary that I should revert to my early days to enable your highness more fully to comprehend the whole."

"Aferin! well said," replied the pacha; "I don't care how long a story it is, provided that it is a good one:" and Selim, having obeyed a sign from his highness, intimating that he might sit down, commenced as follows.

HUCKABACK.

I am a native of Marseilles, your highness, where I was brought up to the profession of my father; a profession (continued the wily renegade), which, I have no hesitation to assert, has produced more men of general information, and more men of talent, than any other—I mean that of a barber.

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"Wallah Thaib; well said, by Allah!" observed Mustapha.

The pacha nodded his approbation, and the renegade proceeded with his story.

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I was gifted by nature with a ready invention, and some trouble and expense were bestowed upon my education. To the profession of a barber, my father added that of bleeding and tooth-drawing. At ten years old I could cut hair pretty well. People did say, that those upon whom I had operated, looked as if their heads had been gnawed by the rats; but it was the remark of envy, and as my father observed, "there must be a beginning to every thing."

At fifteen, I entered upon the rudiments of shaving; and after having nearly ruined my father's credit, from the pounds of flesh which I removed with the hair of my

customers (who were again consoled by his observing that "there must be a beginning to every thing"), I became quite expert. I was subsequently initiated into the higher branches of tooth-drawing and bleeding. In the former, at first I gave great dissatisfaction, either from breaking the decayed tooth short off, and leaving the stump in the socket, or from mistaking the one pointed out, and drawing a sound engine of mastication in its stead. In the latter, I made more serious mistakes, having more than once cut so deep as to open the artery, while I missed the vein; in consequence of which I was never afterwards employed, except by a husband to relieve a scolding wife, or by nephews who were anxious about the health of an everlasting uncle. But, as my father wisely observed, "there must be a beginning to everything;" and, as I could only practise upon living subjects, "individuals must suffer for the good of the community at large." At the age of twenty I was an accomplished barber.

But rapid as was my career, I was not fated to continue in it long. Like the shot propelled from the mouth of the cannon, which, in its extreme velocity, is turned from the direction which has been given it by glancing along the weakest substance, so was my course of life changed from its direction by meeting with a woman.

My father had a good customer; he had shaved him every morning for years, had extracted every tooth in his head, and was now winding up his long account by bleeding him daily, under the direction of an ignorant apothecary. I was often at the house—not to bleed him, for my father either thought him too valuable, or was too grateful for past favours to trust him in my hands;—but I held the basin, procured water, and arranged the bandages. He had a daughter, a lovely girl, whom I adored in secret; but her rank in life was too far above mine to allow me to express my feelings. I was then a handsome young man, although Time has since exerted his utmost, through jealousy, to make me appear almost as old and ill-favoured as himself. The young lady took a fancy to me, complained of the toothache, and asked for remedies. I offered to extract the tooth; but either having heard of my reputation,

or not wishing to remove the excuse for our interviews, or, what is still more probable, having no toothache whatever, she would not consent.

The death of her mother, which had taken place when she was a child, had left her without guidance,—and the helpless situation of her father, without protection. Naturally of a warm temperament, and yielding to the impulse of her feelings, she carried on an intimacy which could only end in her disgrace; and, at the expiration of a year, her situation could no longer be concealed. I was now in a dilemma. She had two brothers in the army, who were returning home, and I dreaded their vengeance. I loved her very much, but I loved myself more; so, one evening, I packed up all that I could call my own, and all that I could lay my hands on belonging to my honoured parent, and shipped on board a Genoese vessel, which was then standing out of the harbour. She was a large ship, mounting twelve long guns, with a complement of sixty men; being what is termed in European countries a "letter of marque." This implies that she fights her way without convoy, capturing any of the enemy's vessels she may happen to fall in with, who are not strong enough to resist her. We had cleared out for Genoa with a cargo of lead, which lay at the bottom of the hold, and which merely served for ballast.

I soon found out, by the conversation of the crew, that we were not to proceed to Genoa direct; in fact, your highness, she was a pirate, manned by a most desperate set of men. As soon as my qualifications were made known, I had the honour to remove the beards of sixty of the greatest villains that ever were permitted to exist, receiving nothing but blows and curses for my trouble. I certainly improved very much in my profession; for it was as much as my life was worth to draw blood, although they made no scruple of carrying on a conversation during the whole time of the operation. We had taken the cargoes out of several vessels, all of which were added to the "manifest" by our correct captain; when one day, we were chased by an English frigate. I never met the English on shore, but I must say that, afloat, they are the most impertinent people that swim on the seas. They cannot be content with

minding their own business, although they have plenty on their hands, but they must interfere in that of others. They board you, and insist upon knowing where you come from, whither you are bound, and what you have on board; examining you with as much scrutiny as if they had been the delegated custom-house officers of the whole world.

Now it did not exactly suit our captain to submit to such a rigorous search; he therefore made all sail for an island about seven miles distant, and anchored under the protection of a battery. Austria—the nation to whom the island belonged—was not at war with England; she was preserving what is called an "armed neutrality."

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"Pray what is the meaning of an armed neutrality?" demanded the pacha.

"It varies according to circumstances, your highness; but, generally speaking, it means a charge of bayonets."

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The frigate followed; and being prevented by the shallowness of the water from approaching sufficiently near to us herself, sent her boats to examine us: but as there were six of them full of men, and each mounting a gun at her bow, our captain thought it advisable to refuse them permission to come on board. As a hint that he disapproved of their measures, he poured his whole broadside of round and grape into them, when they were about a quarter of a mile distant: upon which they gave three cheers, and were obstinate enough to pull faster towards us than ever.

We received them with all the honours of war, in the shape of cutlasses, pistols and boarding pikes; but they were very determined. As soon as one was knocked down, another jumped up in his place; and somehow or another they had possession of the ship in less time than I have been telling the story. I was on the poop, when an English sailor, with a pigtail as thick as a cable made a cut at me: I ran back to avoid the blow, and, in so doing, came with such force against another of their men, that

we both tumbled overboard together. I lost my cutlass, but he had not parted with his; and as soon as we rose to the surface, he seized me by the collar, and presented the point to my breast. It seemed to be all the same to him whether he fought on the deck or in the water. Fortunately I shifted a little on one side, and he only drove it through my jacket. I recollected that I had my razor in my pocket, which I took out under the water unperceived, and, closing with him before he could repeat his thrust, I cut his throat from ear to ear, and then made for the shore as fast as I could. As I swam remarkably well, I had no great difficulty in reaching it. As soon as I landed, I looked back, and observing that the English boats were towing our vessel out I made all the haste I could to the fort, which was close at hand. There I was hospitably received, and we sat up till past midnight, drinking, smoking, and abusing the English.

The next morning, a felucca anchored to procure some water, and, as she was proceeding to Toulon, I requested a passage. We sailed with a fine breeze; but a heavy gale came on, which tossed us about for many days, and the master of the vessel had no idea to where she had been driven. He consoled us, however, by asserting that we could never go to the bottom, as there was a lady of great sanctity passenger in the cabin, who had been sent for to assume the office of lady abbess of a convent near Marseilles, and whom the saints would indubitably preserve.

This was some comfort, although fine weather would have been greater. The gale continued; and the next morning we thought that we descried land on the lee beam. The following night we were certain of our conjectures having been correct, for the vessel was thrown on shore, and in a few minutes went to pieces. I had the good fortune to save myself upon a part of the wreck, and lay half-dead upon the beach until the morning. When the day broke, I looked around me: there were the fragments of the vessel strewed upon the beach, or tossed in mockery by the surge; and close to me lay the dead body of the lady, whose sanctity the captain had assured us would be a safeguard to us all. I then turned from the beach to look at the

inland country, and perceived, to my astonishment, that I was not three miles from my native city, Marseilles. This was a horrid discovery; for I knew that I should receive no mercy, and could not proceed a mile without being recognised. What to do was now the subject of my thoughts; and at last, as I viewed the body of the dead lady, it occurred to me that I might pass myself off for her.

I stripped it of its outer garment, and having then hauled my own clothes upon the corpse, and covered it over with sea-weed, I dressed myself in the religious habit which she had worn, and sat down awaiting the arrival of the people, which I knew must soon take place. I was then without a symptom of beard; and, from the hardship and ill-treatment which I had received on board of the Genoese, was thin and sallow in the face. It was easy in a nun's dress to mistake me for a woman of thirty-five years of age, who had been secluded in a cloister. In the pockets of her clothes I found letters, which gave me the necessary clue to my story, and I resolved to pass myself off as La Soeur Eustasie, rather than be put in prison, or run through the body.

I had scarcely time to finish reading these documents, when a party, attracted by the fragments on the beach, came up to me. I narrated the loss of the vessel, the death of the whole crew, my name and condition, my having come over at the request of the bishop to assume the guidance of the convent of St Therese; and added, that I had called upon the Virgin in my distress, who had come to my aid, and floated me on shore with as much care and comfort as if I had been reposing on cushions of down. The report was spread and credited; for the circumstance of a helpless woman being the sole survivor of a whole crew was miracle enough in itself.

The bishop's carriage was sent for me, and I was conducted into the town, followed by a concourse of priests, monks, and common people, who were anxious to kiss even the ground that had been trod upon by a personage so especially under the protection of Heaven. I was conducted to the bishop's palace, where I held a sort of

court, being visited by deputations from the official bodies, the governor, and all the people of consequence. After a sojourn of three days, I removed to the convent of which I was the supposed abbess, and was enthusiastically received by the nuns, who flocked round me with mingled veneration and delight.

On the second day of my establishment as abbess, the two elder sisters, who could with difficulty be got rid of even when I retired to bed the night before, introduced the whole of the nuns in rotation, beginning with the elder, and ending with those who last took the vow of chastity. I felt little interest, I must confess, at the commencement of my levee; but as it came near to a close, many beautiful countenances attracted my attention and I gave the kiss of peace with more zest than prudence would have justified. The last of the sisterhood came forward, and was introduced as Soeur Marie. Gracious Heaven! it was the poor girl whom I had deserted. I started when I saw her advance: her eyes were bent upon the ground, as if in reverence to my acknowledged sanctity. As she knelt before me to receive the kiss, she raised them up. Love can pierce through all disguises.—At the moment, she thought that she beheld her fugitive lover, and caught her breath in amazement—but recollection pointed out to her the utter impossibility of the fact, and she sighed at the uncommon likeness, as she received the kiss from those lips which had indeed been so often pressed to hers before.

When the ceremony had been gone through I complained of fatigue, and requested to be left alone.

I wished to reflect upon what had passed, and determine how I was to act: to escape the danger which threatened me, I had placed myself in a situation of still greater difficulty. Where could it end? After a long reverie, I decided that I would make Marie my confidante, and trust to circumstances to guide my future conduct. I rang the bell, and, requesting the presence of the elder sister of the convent, commenced an inquiry into the different characters of the nuns who had been presented.

Flattered by the confidence demanded, there was no end to the loquacity and the ill-natured remarks of the old beldame: she held her list in her hand, and ran over the families and private history of each. It was two hours before she had finished, which she did with Marie, of whose history she gave me a most minute detail; and if she was as correct in her reports of all the others, I certainly had no reason to compliment myself upon being abbess, as far as the previous characters of the nuns under my surveillance were concerned. "Good sister," replied I, "I thank you for your information, which I shall not fail to profit by in my plans for the improvement of the morality of those under my charge. I have always made it a rule, that one of the sisterhood should remain in my room every night, to watch and do penance. I have found that when coupled with my seasonable exhortations, it has produced an excellent effect. Of course I allude not to sage and devout women like you; I refer to those who in their folly and their flow of youthful passions, have not yet humbled themselves sufficiently by abstinence and mortification. Who would you propose to watch here this night?"

The old beldame, who I had perceived by the violence of her manner, had a dislike to Marie, immediately mentioned her as one to whom severe penance would be of especial benefit. I conversed with her for another half-hour; then, wishing her good-night, prepared for bed, and requested that Marie might be summoned to attend.

Marie entered with her book of Prières in her hand, and, bowing humbly to me as she passed, sat down near to the lamp which was lighted before an image of the Virgin, at the farther end of the room, and commenced her task of watching and of prayer.

"Marie," said I, as I stood by the bed: she uttered a faint scream as she heard my voice for the first time, and throwing herself down upon her knees before the image of the Virgin, covered her face with her hands, and appeared to be in silent but

earnest supplication.

"Marie," again said I, "come here." She rose, and came trembling to the foot of the bed. "To you, and to you alone, do I intrust a secret which, if discovered, would subject me to a painful and ignominious death. You were not deceived, when you started at the face beneath the nun's attire; and you must now be certain, from the voice which you have heard, that I am indeed François. How I became the lady abbess of this convent you have yet to learn." I then narrated what I have already done to your highness. "By what means," continued I, "I am to deliver myself from this dangerous situation, I know not; I have, however, one consolation, in finding myself once more in company with the object of my love.

"Come hither, Marie; it is indeed your own François." Marie remained at the foot of the bed, but advanced not; and I perceived that the tears fell fast, as she cast her eyes to heaven.

"Speak to me, Marie, if ever you loved me."

"That I loved you, François, you know full well: not even your unkind desertion could affect that love, which was unchangeable. I dared all for your sake; my brothers, my father, could not extort the secret from me, and their suspicions, although directed towards you, could never be confirmed. I bore the offspring of my guilt in solitary anguish, afterwards loaded with reproaches when I needed comfort and consolation, and stunned with imprecations when I required soothing and repose. I buried it with shame and sorrow and contumely. You had abandoned me, and I felt that all ties to this world were over. I took the veil, and never was the world quitted by so willing a votary as myself. I have since been peaceful, if not happy."

"And now, Marie, you shall be happy," cried I, stretching out my arms to her. "Come to me, I will explain my motives for leaving Marseilles, and what my future intentions were, if they had not been frustrated by unforeseen events. All shall yet be

well."

"François, all is well. I have taken a solemn vow—it is registered in heaven. You have by fraud and imposition entered into a holy place, and assumed a holy character. Add not to your crime by even harbouring the idea of impropriety, and add not to my humiliation by supposing for a moment that I am capable of being a participator. Holy Virgin," cried she, falling on her knees, "I demand thy powerful aid in this conflict of worldly passions and holy wishes. Oh! make me dead to all but thee, and to the spouse whom I have accepted at thy hands."

She then rose and continued—"How you will be able to leave this convent, François, I know not; but your secret is safe with me, provided that you do not again request my presence, as you have this night. My prayers shall ever be for you, but we must meet no more;" and Marie waved her hand mournfully, and quitted the apartment.

Although I had always a great contempt for the Catholic religion, of which I at that period was a member, I was awed by the beauty of virtue as it appeared in Marie, and I passed the night in melancholy reflections. I felt more love for her than ever, and determined upon persuading her to quit the convent and become my wife. The next morning I sent for her.

"Marie, you gave yourself to heaven, when you imagined that you had no tie upon earth. You were deceived; there was one whom you still loved, and who still adored you. Vows made in delusion are not registered. Leave this convent with me, become my wife, and you will do your duty better towards heaven than by pining between these walls, which contain nothing but envy, hatred, and remorse."

"François, you have had my answer. What has been done, cannot be undone. Save yourself, and leave me to my unhappy fate," answered Marie; then bursting into tears, "O François, why, why did you leave me without one word? Had you but pointed out your danger to me, I should have been the first to have insisted upon your absence, and all, all would have been borne with patience, if not with pleasure,

for your sake. If what you now say is truth, all would have been well; but now I have naught to cheer me in my lonely pilgrimage, and naught to wish but that it soon may come unto its close. I forgive you, François, but pity me, for I deserve your pity."

"Once more, Marie, I entreat you to consent to my proposal."

"Never, François; I will not be less faithful to my God than I was to you. He will not desert me; and if I suffer now, will reward me for it hereafter." And Marie again quitted my apartment.

My situation in the nunnery now became insupportable, and I determined to escape. I pleaded ill health and kept my bed. The physician of a neighbouring convent, who had a great reputation, was sent for against my wishes. When I heard of his arrival, I dressed to receive him, for I was fearful of some scrutiny. He inquired what ailed me: I answered that I had no pain, but that I was convinced I should soon depart. He felt my pulse, and not being able to discover symptoms of disease took his leave.

To the elder sisters who visited me, I spoke in enigmas, and told them that I had a summons, that they must expect soon to find me gone: and the sanctity of my reputation make them receive my innuendoes as inspired remarks. One night, I complained of being much worse, and requested their early retiring: they would have sent for the physician, but I forbade it, telling them I was beyond a physician's cure: kissing them all, and pronouncing over them a solemn blessing, I dismissed them. As soon as it was dark, I threw off my nun's attire, leaving it in my bed, as if I had slipped out of it; and as the windows of my apartment, which looked into the convent garden, were not barred, unclothed as I was I dropped down, and reached the ground in safety. I took the precaution, when I was outside, to shut the window, that my having escaped should not enter their ideas, and climbing a tree which overhung the wall of the garden, dropped from a bough on the other side, and found myself at liberty. As I knew that the farther I was from the nunnery, the less chance I had of being supposed an impostor, I gained the high road, and ran as fast as I could

in the direction from Marseilles to Toulouse.

I had proceeded several miles without encountering any body at that still hour of the night, occasionally alarmed at the barking of some snarling cur, as I passed through the small villages in my route,—when, worn out with fatigue and cold, I sat down under a hedge to screen myself from the cold "mistral" which blew. As the wind lulled, I heard sounds of voices in lamentation, which appeared to proceed from the road at a short distance. I rose, and continued my route, when I stumbled over the body of a man. I examined him by the faint light that was emitted from the stars. He was quite dead; and it immediately occurred to me that a robbery had been committed, and the lamentations which I had heard proceeded from those who had escaped with their lives. The cloak of the dead man was lying underneath him; it was a capote, such as are worn by officers. I unclasped it from his neck, round which it was fastened with two bear's-paws chased in silver, and, wrapping it round my benumbed limbs, proceeded further on to where I now occasionally heard voices much plainer than before. I again fell in with two more prostrate bodies, and, as the day had now begun to break, perceived that they were clothed like people of low condition. Passing my hand over their faces, I felt that they were quite dead and stiff. Afraid that if found close to the spot, and unable to give any account of myself, I should be accused of murder, I thought of immediate flight; but the plaintive voice of a woman met my ears, and it was an appeal that I could not resist. I proceeded a few yards further, and perceived a carriage, the horses of which lay dead in their traces, with the driver beside them. To the hind wheels were secured with ropes an elderly man and a young woman.

"God be praised, my dear father, help is at hand!" said the young woman, as I approached; and as I came close to them, she cried out, "Oh, I know him by his cloak; it's the gentleman who defended us so gallantly, and whom we supposed to have been killed. Are you much hurt, sir?"

Aware that I had better be any body than myself, with my usual invention and presence of mind I replied, "Not much, madam, thanks be to heaven! I was stunned, and they left me for dead: I am happy that I am still alive, to be of service to you:" and I immediately proceeded to cast loose the ropes by which the father and daughter (as by their conversation they appeared to be) had been confined to the wheels. The robbers had stripped them both nearly to the skin, and they were so numbed with the cold that they could scarcely stand when they were unbound,—the poor girl especially, who shivered as if suffering under a tertian ague. I proposed that they should enter the carriage as the best shelter they could receive from the bitter keen wind which blew, and they agreed to the prudence of my suggestion.

"If I am not requesting too great a favour, sir," said the old gentleman, "I wish you would lend my poor daughter that cloak, for she is perishing with the cold."

"I will with pleasure, sir, as soon as you are both in the carriage," replied I; for I had made up my mind how to proceed. I assisted them in, and, shutting the door, slipped off the cloak and put it in at the window, saying, "Believe me, madam, I should have offered it to you before, but the fact is, the rascals served me, as I lay stunned, in the same manner as they have you, and I must now go in search of something to cover myself." I then went off at a quick pace, hearing the young woman exclaim, "Oh, my father, he has stripped himself to cover me!"

I immediately returned to the body of the gentleman whose cloak I had borrowed, and for whom I had no doubt that I had been mistaken. I stripped off all the clothes from his rigid limbs, and put them on: they fitted me exactly, and, what was more fortunate, were not stained with blood, as he had received his death-wound from a bullet in the brain. I then dragged the body to the other side of the hedge, where I threw it into a ditch, and covered it with long grass, that it might not be discovered. Daylight had made its appearance before I had completed my toilet; and when I came back to the carriage, the old gentleman was loud in his thanks. I told him that

in returning to strip one of the other bodies I had found my own clothes in a bundle, which the robbers had left in their haste to escape from pursuit.

The young lady said nothing, but sat shrouded up in the cloak, in one corner of the carriage. I now entered into conversation with the old gentleman, who explained to me how the attack began, before I had come to their assistance: and from the information I received from him, I was enabled to form a very good idea of the story that I was to tell. I found that I had been on horseback with my servant, when I rode to their assistance; that we had been both supposed to be killed, and that we were about five miles from any post town.

By this time it was broad daylight, and I made another discovery, which was, that I was wearing an officer's undress. Anxious to gratify my curiosity by a sight of the young lady, I turned to her, as she lay muffled up in the cloak, and expressed a hope that she did not feel cold. She put her head out, and answered in the negative with such a sweet smile, upon such a sweet face as I never had before witnessed. I looked at her as if transfixed, and did not take my eyes off until she blushed, and again sank back as before.

This brought me to my recollection; I offered to go for assistance, and my services were thankfully accepted. I passed by the men who had been killed, as I went on my mission; one was habited in a livery similar to the coach-man who lay dead by his horses; the other was in that of a groom, and I took it for granted that he had been my servant. I searched in his pockets for information, and, collecting the contents, commenced reading them as I walked along.

By his memoranda I found out that I had come from Aix. By letters and papers in my own pockets I ascertained who I was, who my father was, to what regiment I belonged, that I was on leave of absence, and that I had a brother, whose affectionate letter I read carefully for further information. I had not time to count a considerable sum of money, which was in my purse, before I fell in with a countryman, who was

leading his horses to the plough. Briefly narrating the circumstances, I offered him a handsome remuneration, if he would mount one of his horses, and procure immediate assistance. Having seen him off in a hand-gallop, I returned to the carriage to try if it were possible to have one more view of that face which had so enchanted me. I stated the good fortune I had met with, and my hopes of a speedy deliverance from their trouble. I answered the old gentleman's inquiry of the name and condition of the person to whom he and his daughter had been so much indebted, talked of my father the Compte de Rouillé, of my regiment, and then requested a similar confidence.

He was le Marquis de Tonseca, and the young lady was his daughter; they were proceeding to their chateau about seven miles distant, where he hoped I would accompany them, and allow him an opportunity of showing his gratitude.

I hesitated, talked of engagements—not that I intended to refuse the invitation, but because the young lady had not joined in the request. My plan had the desired effect; again the lovely face appeared from under the cloak, and the sweetest voice in the world expressed a wish that I would not refuse her father's invitation. I blushed, and stammered consent. Pleased at her victory, she smiled, and again was folded up in the cloak, which I could have torn to pieces for its envious concealment.

Assistance had now arrived; a crowd of people, headed by an officer to take the procés verbal, and two pair of post-horses came up; the depositions of the Marquis and myself were briefly taken; his as to what he had seen, and mine "to the best of my knowledge and belief." The papers were signed, the dead bodies were carried off, the horses put to, and, at the request of the Marquis, I took my seat in the carriage between him and his daughter, and we proceeded to the chateau.

In two hours we arrived at a magnificent pile, which bespoke the wealth and ancestry of the owner, and I had the pleasure of carrying in my arms, up the long flight of steps by which we ascended to the entrance, the beautiful girl, muffled up

as she was in the cloak. As soon as I had laid her down upon a sofa, I left her to the care of the females who were in attendance and quitted the room. The Marquis had retired to his own apartment, to supply the deficiencies in his attire, and for a short time I was left alone to my own reflections. What is to be the result of all this? thought I. Is there to be no end of my assumption of the clothes and titles of other people,—this continual transmigration before death? Yet how much more has it depended upon circumstances than upon myself!

After much reflection, I determined upon letting things take their own course, trusting to my own ready invention and good fortune for the issue. I felt it to be impossible to tear myself from the sweet creature whose personal charms had already fascinated me, and I vowed that there was no risk, no danger, that I would not brave to obtain her love.

In an hour we met at the breakfast-table, and I was more than ever enchanted;—but I will not detain your highness by dwelling too long upon the subject.

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"No, don't, yaha bibi, my friend," said the pacha, yawning, "your story gets very dry already. We'll suppose the cypress waist, the stag's eyes, and full moon of her face. We Mussulmans don't talk so much about women; but I suppose as you were a Frenchman, and very young then, you knew no better. Why you talk of women as if they had souls!" The renegade did not think it advisable to express his opinion in contradiction to that of his highness, and the assertions of the prophet. "It cannot be said that I behaved to them as if they had," replied he; "and before I changed my religion, I was often smitten with remorse for my selfish and unfeeling conduct towards Marie; but all that is past, I am now a Turk;" and the renegade passed his hand over his brow; for some long-smothered feelings of virtue had been conjured up by remorse, as he was reminded of the career of guilt which he had run through, and which he had climaxed by the denial of his Redeemer. After a short pause he

continued—

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For a week I remained in the society of the Marquis and his daughter, daily ingratiating myself more and more with both. I had not declared my passion to his daughter, for there was something that irresistibly prevented me; yet I knew that I was not viewed with indifference. Our party was then increased by the appearance of the Bishop of Toulouse, the brother of the Marquis, who came to congratulate him and his niece upon their fortunate escape. I was presented as the gentleman who had so materially assisted. The bishop stared at me with surprise.

"It is strange," observed he, "that a body has been found in a ditch, near to where the robbery occurred, and has been recognised to be that of the very young officer to whom you now introduce me. How can this be?"

The marquis and his daughter appeared astonished at the intelligence (and in truth so was I), but it was only for a second. "How say you, sir," exclaimed I, with trepidation, "a body recognised as the son of the Comte de Rouillé? My poor, poor brother! my dear Victor, have you then perished? what injustice have I done you!" Throwing myself on the fauteuil, I covered my face with my handkerchief, as if overpowered with grief; but, in reality, I was reflecting what I should say next.

"Your brother!" exclaimed the Marquis in surprise.

"Yes, Marquis, my brother. I will now state the circumstances which induced me to conceal from you that he was in my company at the time of the attack. When I galloped to your assistance, I was followed by my brother, who was riding with me to Marseilles, and of whom you recollect I have spoken; but after the first discharge of firearms I found that he was not at my side, and I imagined that he had deserted me from fear. I could not bear that such a disgrace upon the family should be known, and I therefore made no mention of him when I came back. Little did I think, that while I was accusing him in my heart of cowardice, he was dead, and his

heart's blood had been poured out in my defence. Victor, my dear Victor!" continued I, "how great has been my injustice, and what can repay me for your loss?" and I threw myself down on the sofa, as if frantic with grief.

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"Huckaback," observed the pacha, "it appears to me that in your younger days you were a great scoundrel."

"I acknowledge it," replied the renegade; "but, in extenuation, your highness must call to mind that at that time I was a Christian."

"By the beard of the prophet, that is well said, and very true!" replied the pacha.

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The Marquis and his brother were shocked at having so unintentionally plunged me into affliction. They offered consolation, but finding their endeavours fruitless, quitted the room, thinking it advisable to leave me to myself. Cerise, for that was the name of the daughter, remained, and after a short pause came to me, and in her silvery voice, as she laid her hand upon my shoulder, addressed me:

"Console yourself, my dear Felix;" but I made no answer. "How unhappy I am!" said she: "it was in my defence that he lost his life: it was to your courage that I am indebted for my preservation:—he is dead, and you are miserable. Can nothing repay you for the loss of your brother?—Nothing, Felix?"

I raised my head; her eyes were swimming with tears, and beaming with love. As I resumed my seat upon the sofa, I drew her gently towards me. She offered no resistance, and in a moment she had sunk down by my side, as my arms entwined her beauteous form.

"Yes," murmured I, "Cerise, I am repaid." Smiling through her blushes, she disengaged herself, and rose to depart. Returning once more at my request, I imprinted a kiss upon her brow: she waved her hand, and hastened out of the room.

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"That was a very nice girl, by your description," interrupted the pacha: "pray what might you pay for such a girl in your country?"

"She was beyond all price," replied the renegade, with an absent air, as if communing with times past. "Love is not to be bought. The Moslem purchases the slave and blind submission to his will, but he makes not love."

"No, he buys it ready made," replied the pacha; "and I must say I wish you had done the same: for, with all this love making, you get on but slowly with your story. Proceed."

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I remained another week, when the bishop, who had not yet taken his departure, one morning drove over to Marseilles, and returned to dinner. "I was sent for," observed he, as we sat down to table, "to consult as to the propriety of requesting from the Pope the canonisation of the Soeur Eustasie, of whom you have heard so much, and whose disappearance has been attributed to miraculous agency: but during our consultation, a piece of information was sent in, which has very much changed the opinion of parties as to her reputed sanctity. It appears that near the spot where the vessel was wrecked they have discovered the body of a woman dressed in man's clothes; and it is now supposed that some miscreant has personified her at the Convent, and has subsequently escaped. The officers of justice are making the strictest search, and if the individual is found, he will be sent to Rome to be disposed of by the Inquisition."

As your highness may imagine, this was not very agreeable news; I almost started from my chair when I heard it; but I had sufficient mastery over myself to conceal my feelings, although every morsel that I put into my mouth nearly choked me.

But before dinner was over the plot thickened; a letter was brought to the Marquis from my adopted father the Comte de Rouillé stating that such contradictory reports

had been received, that he could not ascertain the truth. From one he heard that his eldest son was alive, and at the château; from others that he had been murdered: others congratulated him in their letters upon the escape of one of his sons. He requested the Marquis to inform him of the real state of affairs, and to let him know by the bearer whether his eldest son was with him, or whether he had met with the unfortunate death that was reported; and as his youngest son was at home, and had been there for some months, he could not but imagine, as both of them were mentioned in the reports, that there might be some imposture in the business.

I perceived by the change of countenance in the Marquis that affairs were not going well, and was to a certain degree prepared, when he gravely handed the letter to the bishop, who, having read it, passed it over to me, saying, with a stern look, "This concerns you, sir." I read it with a composed countenance, and, returning it to the Marquis, I observed with a sigh, "There is no kindness in such deception, the blow will only fall heavier upon the old man when it does come. You are aware, sir, I mentioned it to you (or rather, I believe, it was to Mademoiselle Cerise), that my father is blind, and has been so for the last two years. They have been afraid to tell him the truth, and have made him believe that Victor is there. You must know, sir, that it was clandestinely that my dear brother quitted his father's house to accompany me. Unhappy hour when I yielded to his entreaties! But, Monsieur le Marquis, I perceive it is now imperative that I should go to my father; he will need the assurance of my existence to support him in his grief. I will therefore, with your permission, write a few lines by the bearer of this communication, and to-morrow morning at daylight must unwillingly tear myself away from your charming society."

The cool and confident air with which I answered, removed suspicion; and having written a few lines to the Comte, and requested from the Marquis the loan of his seal, I applied the wax, and desired the servant to deliver it as an answer to the messenger, whom I was not sorry to see galloping by the window. "Oh," cried I, "'tis

Pierre: had I known that, I should have asked him some questions."

This well-timed exclamation of mine, I perceived, did not fail to have its weight. We again sat down to table, and I was treated with more than usual kindness by the Marquis and his brother, as if in compensation for their having, for a moment, harboured a suspicion of my honesty. But I was ill at ease, and I felt that I never had acted with more prudence than in proposing my early departure.

In the evening I was alone with Cerise. Since the news of my brother's death, and the scene that followed, we had sworn unalterable love; and in that instance only was I sincere. I loved her to desperation, and I doat on her memory now, though years have rolled away, and she has long been mingled with the dead. Yes, Cerise, if from the regions of bliss, where thy pure spirit dwells, thou canst look down upon a wretch so loaded with guilt as I am, oh, turn not away with horror, but view with pity one who loved as fondly as man could love, and hereafter will care little for all that Paradise can offer, if thy fair spirit must not bid him welcome!

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"I wish, Huckaback," observed the pacha, angrily, "that you would go on with your story: you are talking to a dead woman, instead of a live pacha."

"I entreat your pardon," replied the renegade; "but to amuse your highness, I have entered into scenes which long have been dismissed from my memory; and the feelings attending them will rise up, and cannot well be checked. I will be more careful as I proceed."

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Cerise was melancholy at the idea of my departure. I kissed the tears away, and the time flew rapidly. I persuaded her to allow me an interview after the family had retired, as I had much to say to her.

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"Well, well, we'll suppose all that," observed the pacha, impatiently: "now go on; you remember you were to set off in the morning."

"Yes, yes, your highness," replied the renegade, somewhat displeased.

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And I did set off in the morning upon one of the Marquis's horses, and rode as hard as I could to Toulon. I determined again to try my fortune at sea, as I was afraid that I should be discovered if I remained on shore. I purchased a small venture with the money in my purse, and having made my agreement with the captain of a vessel bound to St Domingo, exchanged my dress for a jacket and trousers, and was again at the mercy of the waves.

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"Such, your highness, is the history of my First Voyage, and the incidents which resulted from it."

"Well," said the pacha, rising, "there was too much love and too little sea in it; but, I suppose, if you had left the first out it would not have been so long. Mustapha, give him five pieces of gold, and we will have his Second Voyage to-morrow."

As soon as the pacha had retired, the renegade growled out, "If I am to tell any more stories, I must not be checked and dictated to. I could have talked for an hour after I had met Cerise, if I had not been interrupted: as it was, I cut the matter short."

"But, Selim," replied Mustapha, "the pacha is not fond of these sort of adventures; he likes something much more marvellous. Could you not embellish a little?"

"How do you mean?"

"Holy prophet! what do I mean!—Why, tell a few lies,—not adhere quite so much to matter of fact."

"Adhere to matter of fact, vizier!—why, I have not stated a single fact yet!"

"What! is not all this true?"

"Not one word of it, as I hope to go to heaven!"

"Bismillah!—what, not about Marie and the Convent—and Cerise?"

"All lies from beginning to end."

"And were you never a barber?"

"Never in my life."

"Then why did you make such long apostrophes to the dead Cerise, when you observed that the pacha was impatient."

"Merely because I was at fault, vizier, and wished to gain time, to consider what I should say next."

"Selim," replied Mustapha, "you have great talent; but mind that your next voyage is more wonderful; I presume it will make no difference to you."

"None whatever; but the pacha is not a man of taste. Now give me my five pieces, and I'll be off: I'm choked with thirst, and shall not be comfortable till I have drunk at least a gallon of wine."

"Holy prophet! what a Turk!" exclaimed the vizier, lifting up his hands. "Here is your money, Kafir;—don't forget to be here to-morrow."

"Never fear me, vizier; your slave lives but to obey you, as we Turks say."

"We Turks!" muttered the vizier, as he cast his eyes upon the retiring figure of the renegade. "Well of all the scoundrels—" "Well," muttered the renegade, who was now out of hearing, "of all the scoundrels—" Whom they were referring to in their separate soliloquies must be left to the reader's imagination; for caution prevented either of the parties from giving vent to the remainder of their thoughts.

Chapter VI

"Mashallah! How wonderful is God! Did the Caliph Haroun ever hear such stories?" observed the pacha, taking the pipe from his mouth, as he was indulging in company

with Mustapha: "that infidel tells strange histories of strange countries—What will his mouth open to next?"

"The Shaitan Bacheh, for a son of the devil he still is, although he wears the turban and bows to Allah, will prove a treasury of amusement to your sublime highness," replied Mustapha: "but what are the words of the sage?—'If thou hast gold in thy hazneh, keep it locked and add thereto; thus shalt thou become rich.'"

"They are the words of wisdom," replied the pacha.

"Then may I advise your highness to walk out this evening in search of more, and not exhaust that which is in your possession?"

"Wallah Thaib! It is well said!" answered the pacha, rising from his musnud or carpet of state: "the moon is up—when all is ready we will proceed."

In a quarter of an hour the pacha, attended by Mustapha and the armed slaves as before, again set out upon their perambulations through the city of Cairo.

They had not walked more than half-an-hour when they observed two men sitting at the door of a fruit-shop, at high words with each other. The pacha held up his finger to Mustapha, as a sign to stop, that he might over-hear their discourse.

"I tell you, Ali, that it is impossible to hear those long stories of yours without losing one's temper."

"Long stories!" whispered the pacha to Mustapha with delight: "the very thing!—Shukur Allah! Thanks be to God!"

"And I tell you in reply, Hussan, that yours are ten times worse. You never have spoken for ten minutes, without my feeling an inclination to salute your mouth with the heel of my slipper. I wish there was any one who would hear us both and decide the point."

"That I will," said the pacha, going up to them: "to-morrow I will hear both your stories, and decide upon the merits of each."

"And who are you?" observed one of the men, with surprise.

"His highness the pacha," replied Mustapha, coming forward. Both the men prostrated themselves, while the pacha directed Mustapha that they should be brought before him on the following day: and the vizier, having given them in charge to the slaves who had followed at a distance, returned home with the pacha; who was delighted at the rich harvest which he expected to reap from the two people who accused each other of telling such long stories.

When the divan of the following day had closed, the two men were summoned into the presence of the pacha.

"I shall now decide upon the merits of your stories," observed he. "Sit down there both of you, and agree between yourselves which of you will begin."

"May it please your highness, you will never be able to listen to this man Ali," observed Hussan: "you had better send him away."

"Allah preserve your highness from all evil," replied Ali, "but more especially from the talking of Hussan, which is as oppressive as the hot wind of the desert."

"I have not sent for you to hear you dispute in my presence, but to hear your stories. Ali, do you begin."

"I do assure your highness," interrupted Hussan, "that you will not listen to him three minutes."

"I do assure you," retorted the pacha, "that if you say one word more, until you are ordered, you will be rewarded with the bastinado for your trouble. Ali, begin your story."

"Well, your highness, it was about thirty years ago, you know, that I was a little boy, you know."

Here Hussan lifted up his hands, and smiled.

"Well, your highness, you know——"

"I don't know, Ali; how can I know until you tell me," observed the pacha.

"Well, then, your highness must know that ever since I was born I have lived in the same street where your highness saw us seated last night, and thirty years, you know is a long period in a man's life. My father was a gardener, and people of his condition, you know, are obliged to get up early, that they may be in time for the market, where, you know, they bring their vegetables for sale."

"This is all very true, I dare say," observed the pacha; "but you will oblige me by leaving out all those you knows, which I agree with your comrade Hussan to be very tedious."

"That's what I have already told him, your highness—'Ali,' says I, 'if you can only leave out your you knows,' says I, 'your story might be amusing, but,' says I——"

"Silence with your says I's," observed the pacha; "have you forgotten the bastinado? there seems to be a pair of you. Ali, go on with the story and remember my injunction; the felek and ferashes are at hand."

"Well, your highness, one morning he rose earlier than usual, as he was anxious to be the first in the market with some onions, which, you know, are very plentiful; and having laden his ass, he set off, at a good round pace, for the city. There, you know, he arrived at the market-place a little after the day had dawned, when, you know,——"

"Did you not receive my orders to leave out you know? Am I to be obeyed or not? Now go on, and if you offend again, you shall have the bastinado till your nails drop off."

"I shall observe your highness's wishes," replied Ali.—"A little after the day had dawned, you—, no, he, I mean, observed an old woman sitting near one of the fruit-stalls, with her head covered up in an old dark-blue capote; and as he passed by, you—she I mean, held out one of her fingers, and said, 'Ali Baba,' for that was my father's name, 'Listen to good advice; leave your laden beast, and follow me.'

Now my father, you know, not being inclined to pay any attention to such an old woman, you know, replied, you know,——"

"Holy Allah!" exclaimed the pacha in a rage to Mustapha, "what does this man deserve?"

"The punishment due to those who dare to disobey your highness's commands."

"And he shall have it: take him out; give him one hundred blows of the bastinado; put him on an ass with his face turned towards the tail; and let the officer who conducts him through the town proclaim, 'Such is the punishment awarded by the pacha to him who presumes to say that his highness knows, when in fact, he knows nothing.'"

The guards seized upon the unfortunate Ali to put in execution the will of the pacha; and as he was dragged away, Hussan cried out, "I told you so; but you would not believe me."

"Well," replied Ali, "I've one comfort, your story's not told yet. His highness has yet to decide which is the best."

After a few minutes' pause, to recover himself from the ruffling of his temper, the pacha addressed the other man—"Now, Hussan, you will begin your story, and observe that I am rather in an ill-humour."

"How can your highness be otherwise, after the annoyance of that bore Ali? I said so; 'Ali,' says I,——"

"Go on with your story," repeated the pacha angrily.

"It was about two years ago, your highness, when I was sitting at the door of the fruit-shop, which your highness might have observed when you saw us last night, that a young female, who seemed above the common class, came in, followed by a porter. 'I want some melons,' says she. 'I have very fine ones, so walk in,' says I: and I handed down from the upper shelf, where they were placed, four or five musk, and

four or five water-melons.

"'Now,' says I, 'young woman, you'll observe that these are much finer melons,' says I, 'than you usually can procure; therefore the lowest price that I can take,' says I, 'is——'"

"Why, your says I's are much worse than Ali's you knows; leave them out, if you please, and proceed with your story," cried the pacha, with increased ill-humour.

"I will obey, your highness, if possible. I stated the lowest price, and she lifted up her veil—'I have an idea,' said she, as she allowed me to look upon one of the prettiest faces in the world, 'that they are to be had cheaper.'

"I was so struck with her beauty, that I was quite speechless. 'Am I not right?' said she, smiling. 'From you, madam,' says I, 'I can take nothing; put as many in the basket of your porter as you please.' She thanked me, and put into the basket all that I had handed down. 'Now,' says she, 'I want some dates, the best and finest that you have.' I handed some down that would have been admired by the ladies of your highness's harem. 'These, madam,' says I, 'are the best dates that are to be found in Cairo.' She tasted them, and asked the price; I mentioned it. 'They are dear,' replied she, 'but I must have them cheaper;' and again she lifted her veil. 'Madam,' says I, 'these dates are much too cheap at the price which I have mentioned; it really is impossible to take one para less; observe, madam,' says I, 'the beauty of them, feel the weight, and taste them,' says I, 'and you must acknowledge,' says I, 'that they are offered to you at a price which,' says I——"

"Holy prophet!" cried the pacha in a rage; "I will hear no more of your says I's: if you cannot tell your story without them, you shall fare worse than Ali."

"May it please your highness, how will it be possible for you to know what I said, unless I point out to you what I did say? I cannot tell my story without it."

"I'll see that," replied the pacha, in a savage tone; and, making the sign, the executioner made his appearance. "Now, then, go on with your story; and,

executioner, after he has repeated says I three times, off with his head! Go on."

"I shall never be able to go on, your highness; consider one moment how harmless my says I's are to the detestable you knows of Ali. That's what I always told him; 'Ali,' says I, 'if you only knew,' says I, 'how annoying you are! Why there,' says I!" At this moment the blow of the scimitar fell, and the head of Hussan rolled upon the floor; the lips from the force of habit still quivering in their convulsions, with the motioning which would have produced says I, if the channel of sound had not been so effectually interrupted.

"That story's ended!" observed the pacha in a rage. "Of all the nuisances I ever encountered, these two men have beat them all. Allah forbid that I ever should again meet with a says I, or a you know!"

"Your highness is all wisdom," observed Mustapha; "may such ever be the fate of those who cannot tell their stories without saying what they said." The pacha, irritated at his disappointment, and little soothed by the remark of Mustapha, without making any answer to it, was about to retire to his harem, when Mustapha, with a low salaam, informed him that the renegade was in attendance to relate his Second Voyage, if he might be permitted to kiss the dust of his presence. "Khoda shefa midêhed—God gives relief," replied the pacha, as he resumed his seat: "let him approach."

The renegade entered and, having paid the customary obeisance, took his seat, and commenced the narrative of his Second Voyage.

May it please your most sublime highness, the day after I embarked, we sailed with a fair wind, and having cleared the Straits, flattered ourselves with the prospect of a successful voyage; but we were miserably disappointed, for three days afterwards we fell in with a small brig under English colours. As she was evidently a merchant vessel, we paid no attention to her running down to us, supposing that she was out of her reckoning, and wished to know her exact position on the chart. But as soon as

she was close to us, instead of passing under our stern, as we expected, she rounded-to, and laid us by the board. Taken by surprise, and having no arms, we were beaten down below, and in a few minutes the vessel remained in the possession of our assailants. They held a short consultation, and then, opening the hatches, a boatswain pulled out his whistle, and in a tremendous voice roared out, "All hands ahoy!" which was followed by his crying out, "Tumble up there, tumble up!" As we understood this to be a signal for our appearance on deck, we obeyed the summons. When we all came up, we found out that if we had had any idea that they were enemies, we might have beaten them off, as they were only fifteen in number, while we mustered sixteen. But it was too late: we were unarmed, and they had each of them a cutlass, with two pistols stuck in their girdles. As soon as we were all on deck, they bound our arms behind us with ropes, and ranged us in a line. Having inquired of each of us our respective ranks and professions, they held a short consultation, and the boatswain addressing me said—"Thank heaven, you scoundrel, that you were brought up as a barber, for it has saved your life!"

He then cut loose the cords which bound me, and I remained at liberty. "Now then, my lads!" continued the boatswain, "come, every man his bird!" and, so saying, he seized upon the captain of the vessel, and leading him to the gangway, passed his sword through his body, and tossed him into the sea.

In the same manner each of the murderous villains led forward the man he had selected, and putting an end to his life, either by the sword or pistol, launched the corpse into the waves.

My blood curdled as I beheld the scene, but I said nothing. I considered myself too fortunate to escape with life. When it was all over, the boatswain roared out, "That job's done! Now, Mr Barber, swab up all this here blood, and be d——d to you! and recollect that you are one of us." I obeyed in fear and silence, and then returned to my former station near the taffrail.

The people who had captured us, as I afterwards found out, were part of the crew of an English Guineaman, who had murdered the master and mate, and had taken possession of the vessel. As our brig was a much finer craft in every respect, they determined upon retaining her, and scuttling their own. Before night, they had made all their arrangements, and were standing to the westward with a fine breeze.

But exactly as the bell struck eight for midnight, a tremendous voice was heard at the hatchway, if possible, more than a hundred times louder than the boatswain's, roaring out "All hands ahoy!"

The concussion of the air was so great, that the ship trembled, as if she had been struck with a thunderbolt; and as soon as the motion had subsided, the water was heard to rush into every part of the hold. Every body ran on deck astonished with the sound, expecting the vessel immediately to go down, and looking at each other with horror as they stood trembling in their shirts. The water continued to rush into the vessel, until it reached the orlop beams; then, as suddenly, it stopped.

When the panic had, to a certain degree, subsided, and they perceived that the water did not increase, all hands applied to the pumps, and by eight o'clock in the morning the vessel was free. Still the unaccountable circumstance weighed heavy on the minds of the seamen, who walked the deck without speaking to each other, or paying any attention to the ship's course; and as no one took the command, no one was ordered to the helm.

For my own part, I thought it a judgment upon them for their cruelty; and, expecting that worse would happen, I had made up my mind to my fate. I thought of Marie, and hoping for pardon yet fearing the worst, I vowed, if I escaped, that I would amend my life.

At night we again retired to our hammocks, but no one slept, so afraid were we of a second visitation. The bell was not struck by the men, but it struck itself, louder than I ever heard it before; and again the dreadful voice was heard, "All hands ahoy!"

again the water rushed in, and again we ran on deck. As before, it mounted as high as the orlop beams; it then stopped, and was pumped out again by eight o'clock on the ensuing morning.

For a month, during which time we never saw land, for we had lost all reckoning, and no one cared to steer—the same dreadful visitation took place. Habit had to a degree hardened the men; they now swore and got drunk as before, and even made a jest of the boatswain of the middle watch, as they called him, but at the same time they were worn out with constant fatigue; and one night they declared that they would pump no longer. The water remained in the vessel all that day, and we retired to our hammocks as usual; when at midnight, the same voice was again heard at the hatchway, not followed by the rush of water, but by a shriek of "Tumble up there, tumble up!"

We all started at the summons, and hastened on deck; there was something that impelled us in spite of ourselves. Never shall I forget the horrid sight which presented itself: stretched in a row on the deck of the vessel lay the fifteen bloody corpses of my shipmates who had been murdered. We stood aghast; the hair rose straight up from our heads, as we viewed the supernatural reappearances. After a pause of about five minutes, during which we never spoke or even moved, one of the corpses cried out in a sepulchral voice, "Come, every man his bird!" and held up its arms as it lay.

The man, whose office it had been to take the living body to the gangway, and after killing it to throw it overboard, advanced towards it; he was evidently impelled by a supernatural power, for never shall I forget the look of horror, the faint scream of agony, which escaped him as he obeyed the summons. Like the trembling bird fascinated by the snake, he fell into the arms of the dead body; which grasping him tight, rolled over and over in convolutions like a serpent, until it gained the break of the gangway, and then tumbled into the sea with its murderer entwined in its

embraces. A flash of lightning succeeded, which blinded us for several minutes; and when we recovered our vision, the remainder of the bodies had disappeared.

The effect upon the guilty wretches was dreadful; there they lay, each man on the deck where he had crouched down, when the lightning had flashed upon him: the sun rose upon them, yet they moved not; he poured his beams on their naked bodies when at his meridian height, yet they still remained: the evening closed in, and found them in the same positions. As soon as it was dark, as if released from a spell, they crawled below, and went into their hammocks: at midnight again the bell struck; again the voice was heard, followed by the shriek; again they repaired on deck: the fourteen remaining bodies lay in a row: another of the murderers was summoned, obeyed, and disappeared: again the flash of lightning burst upon us, and all had vanished; and thus it continued every night, until the boatswain, who was reserved for the last, was dragged overboard after the rest by the corpse of the captain; and then a tremendous voice from the maintop, followed by exulting laughter, cried out, "That job's done." Immediately after which, the water rushed out of the bottom of the vessel, and she was clear as before.

Returning thanks to heaven that I was not a party sufferer with the rest, I lay down, and for the first time for many weeks fell into a sound sleep. How long I slept, I know not: it may have been days; but I awoke at last by the sound of voices, and found that the people on board of a vessel bound from Mexico to the South of Spain, perceiving the brig lying with her sails torn, and her yards not trimmed, had sent a boat to ascertain whether there was any body remaining in her. I was afraid that if I told them what had happened, they either would not believe me, or else would refuse to take on board a person who had been in company with such examples of divine vengeance. I therefore stated that we had been attacked by dysentery about six weeks before, and all had died except myself, who was supercargo of the brig.

As their vessel was but half full, the cargo, consisting chiefly of cochineal and

copper, which is stowed in small space, the captain offered to take as many of my goods as he could stow, provided I would allow him the freight. This I willingly consented to, and, examining the manifest, selected the most valuable, which were removed to the Spanish vessel.

We had a favourable wind; and having run through the Straits, expected in a day or two we should anchor at Valencia, to which port she was bound; but a violent gale came on from the N.E. which lasted many days, and drove us over to the African shore. To increase our misfortunes, the ship sprung a leak, and made so much water that we could scarcely keep her free.

The Spaniards are but indifferent sailors, your highness, and in a storm are more inclined to pray than to work: they became frightened, gave over pumping, and having lighted a candle before the image of St Antonio, which was fixed on the stern of the vessel, began to call upon him for assistance. Not immediately obtaining their request, they took the image out of the shrine, abused it, called it every vile name that they could think of, and ended with tying it against the main-mast, and beating it with ropes.

In the meantime the vessel filled more and more; whereas, if, instead of praying, they had continued at the pumps, we should have done well enough, as the gale was abating, and she did not make so much water as before.

Enraged at their cowardice, and at the idea of losing so much property as I had on board (for I considered it as my own), I seized the image from the mast, and threw it overboard, telling them to go to their pumps if they wished to be saved. The whole crew uttered a cry of horror, and would have thrown me after the image, but I made my escape up the rigging, from whence I dared not descend for many hours.

Having now no saint to appeal to, they once more applied to the pumps. To their astonishment, the vessel made no more water, and in the course of a few hours she was free.

The next morning the gale was over, and we were steering for Valencia. I observed that the captain and sailors avoided me, but I cared little about it, as I felt that my conduct had saved the ship as well as my own property. On the second day we anchored in the bay, and were boarded by the authorities, who went down into the cabin, and had a long conversation with the captain. They quitted the ship, and about an hour afterwards I proposed going ashore, but the captain said that he could not permit it until the next morning. While I was expostulating with him as to the reasons for my detention, a boat rowed alongside, from out of which came two personages dressed in black. I knew them to be familiars of the Inquisition; and it immediately occurred to me that my personification of the lady abbess had been discovered, and that my doom was sealed. The captain pointed me out; they collared and handed me into the boat, and pulled for the shore in silence.

When we landed, I was put into a black coach, and conveyed to the palace of the Inquisition, where I was thrown into one of the lowest dungeons. The next day the familiars appeared, and led me to the hall of judgment, where I was asked whether I confessed my crime. I replied that I did not know what I was accused of. They again asked me if I would confess, and on my making the same answer I was ordered to the torture.

As I knew that I had no chance, I thought I might as well avoid unnecessary pain, and declared that I did confess it.

"What instigated you to the deed?"

Not well knowing what to reply, as I was not exactly aware of the nature of my offence, I answered that it was the blessed Virgin.

"Blasphemer!" cried the grand inquisitor, "what! the blessed Virgin desired you to throw St Antonio overboard?"

"Yes," replied I (glad that at all events the crime was not what I had anticipated), "she did, and told me that it would be the saving of the vessel."

"Where were you?"

"On the deck."

"Where did you see her?"

"She was sitting on a small blue cloud, a little above the topsail yard. 'Fear not, François,' said she, motioning with her hand, 'to throw the image overboard.'" The inquisitors were astonished at my boldness: a consultation was held, as to whether I should be treated as a blasphemer, or the circumstance blazoned into a miracle. But it unfortunately happened for me that a miracle had occurred very lately; and there were very few people to be burnt at the auto da fé of the ensuing month.

It was therefore decided against me. I was reviled, abused, and sentenced to the flames; but I determined, as my only chance, to put a good face upon the matter to the very last. Looking up, as if to a point in the ceiling of the dark hall of judgment, and holding my hands before, as if in amazement—"Holy Virgin," cried I, bending on my knee, "I thank thee for the sign. My Lord," continued I fiercely, "I fear you not; you have sentenced me to perish by the flames; I tell you that I shall leave my dungeon with honour, and be as much courted as I have been now reviled."

The inquisitors were for a moment staggered, but their surprise gave place to their cruelty, when they considered how long they had tortured thousands for doubting points to which they themselves had never for a moment given credence. I was remanded to my dungeon; and the gaoler, who had never before witnessed such boldness in the hall of justice, and was impressed with the conviction that I was supported as I had affirmed, treated me with kindness, affording me comforts, which, had it been known, would have cost him his situation.

In the meantime the cargo of the vessel was landed at the Custom House, and she was hauled on shore to have her bottom caulked and pitched, when, to the astonishment of the captain and crew, the hole which had occasioned the leak was discovered with the head of the figure of the saint, which I had thrown overboard, so

firmly wedged in, that it required some force to pull it out. "A miracle! a miracle!" was cried from the quays, and proclaimed through every part of the town. It was evident that the Virgin had instigated me to throw over the image, as the only means of stopping the leak. The friars of the nearest convent claimed the image from their propinquity, and came down to the ship in grand procession to carry it to their church. The grand inquisitor, hearing the circumstance, acknowledged to the bishop and heads of the clergy my intrepid behaviour in the hall of judgment; and not three hours after the ship had been hauled on shore, I was visited in my dungeon by the grand inquisitor, the bishop, and a long procession, my pardon requested, and the kiss of peace demanded and given. I was taken away with every mark of respect, and looked upon as one under special favour of the Virgin. "Did I not say, my lord, that I should leave my dungeon in honour?"

"You did, my friend," answered the inquisitor; and I heard him mutter, "either there is such a person as the Virgin Mary, or you are a most ready-witted scoundrel."

During my stay at Valencia, I was courted and feasted by everybody, and sold my goods at an enormous price; for everyone thought that to possess anything that had belonged to me must bring them good fortune. I received many handsome presents, had divers requests to become a member of the different fraternities of monks, and eventually quitted the town with a large sum of money, with which I proceeded to Toulon, with the intention of making some inquiry after my dear Cerise, whose image was still the object of my dreams, as well as of my waking thoughts.

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"Stop," said the pacha; "I wish to know, whether you believe that the Virgin, as you call her, did thrust the head of the image into the hole in the bottom of the ship."

"May it please your highness, I do not. I believe it originated from nothing but cause and effect. It is the nature of a whirlpool to draw down all substances that come within its vortex. The water pouring into the bottom of the ship is but the vortex of a

whirlpool reversed; and the image of the saint, when it was thrown overboard to leeward of the ship, which was pressed down upon it by the power of the wind, was forced under the water, until it was taken into the vortex of the leak, and naturally found its way into the hole."

"I dare say you are very right," answered the pacha, "but I don't understand a word you have said."

"Such your highness were the adventures attending my second voyage," concluded the renegade, with an inclination of his head.

"And a very good voyage too! I like it better than your first. Mustapha, give him ten pieces of gold: you will bring him here to-morrow, and we will hear what happened in his third."

"You observe," said Mustapha, when the pacha had retired, "my advice was good."

"Most excellent!" replied the renegade, holding out his hand for the money: "To-morrow I'll lie like any barber."

Chapter VII

"Khoda shefa midêhed—God gives relief!" cried the pacha, as the divan closed: and, certainly, during its continuance many had been relieved of their worldly goods, and one or two from all future worldly thoughts or wanderings.—"What have we to-day, Mustapha?"

"May your highness's shadow never be less!" replied the vizier. "Have we not the slave who offered to lay his story at your sublime feet, on the same evening that we met those sons of Shitan—Ali and Hussan, who received the punishment merited by their enormous crimes? Have we not also the manuscript of the Spanish slave, now translated by my faithful Greek; who tells me that the words are flowing with honey, and their music is equal to that of the bulbul when singing to his favourite rose?"

"And the Giaour who relates his voyages and travels," interrupted the pacha—"where is he? No Kessehgou of our own race tells stories like unto his."

"The Giaour is on the waters, your highness. He is a very rustam on board of a ship, and brings wealth to the hazneh of your sublime highness. He consulted the astrologers, and the stars were propitious. To-morrow I expect he will return."

"Well, then, we must content ourselves with what is offered. Let the slave approach, and we will listen to his story, since we cannot have the wonderful tales of Huckaback."

"Whose dog was Lokman, to be compared to your sublime highness in wisdom?" replied Mustapha. "What are the words of Hafiz—'Every moment that you enjoy, count it gain. Who shall say what will be the event of any thing?'"

The slave, who had been detained by the orders of Mustapha, was ordered to appear. During his confinement, Mustapha had been informed by his people that he was "visited by Allah;" or in other words, that he was a madman. Nevertheless, Mustapha—who was afraid to release a man (or rather, a story) without the consent of the pacha, and could not send for the renegade to supply any defalcation—considered that, upon the whole, it was better that he should be admitted to the presence of the pacha.

"You asked me to hear your story," observed the pacha, "and I have consented,—not to please you, but to please myself, because I am fond of a good story: which I take it for granted yours will be, or you would not have presumed to make the request. Now you may go on."

"Pacha," replied the slave, who had seated himself in a corner, working his body backward and forward, "it is the misfortune of those who not aware—of the excitement which—as I before stated to your highness—exceeds in altitude the lofty and snow-covered peak of Hebrus—and, nevertheless, cannot be worth more than four or five paras—"

"Holy prophet! what is all this?" interrupted the pacha; "I cannot understand a word that you say. Do you laugh at our beard? Speak more intelligibly. Remember!"

"I remember it as if it were now," continued the maniac, "although years have rolled away. Never will it be effaced from my recollection while this heart, broken as it is, continues to beat, or this brain may be permitted to burn. The sun had just disappeared behind the rugged summits of the mountain which sheltered my abode from the unkind north-east wind: the leaves of the vines that hung in festoons on the trellis before my cottage, which, but a minute before, pierced by his glorious rays, had appeared so brilliant and transparent, had now assumed a browner shade, and, as far as the eye could reach, a thin blue vapour was descending the ravine: the distant sea had changed its intense blue for a sombre grey, while the surf rolled sullenly to the beach, as if in discontent that it could no longer reflect the colours of the prism as before, when it seemed to dance with joy under the brilliant illumination of the god of day—"

"Poof!" ejaculated the pacha, fanning himself.

"My boat was on the beach; my eyes were fixed upon it, in happy vacancy, until the shades of night prevented my discerning the nets which were spread upon its gunnel. I turned round at the soft voice of my Etana, who was seated near me with her infant in her arms, and watching the little one's impatience, as it would demand a more rapid flow of milk from that snowy breast, and the fond smile of the delighted mother, as she bent over the first dear pledge of our affection. I felt happy—almost too happy: I had all I wished—yes I had,"—and the maniac paused and smote his forehead, "but it is past now."

After a second or two he resumed—

"For my part it has always been my opinion that when the wind backs to the south-east, the fish repair to the deep water; and if you will be careful when you gather the grapes not to throw in the stalks, that the wine will, as I before stated to

your highness, only increase the extreme difficulty of ascertaining how far a man could conscientiously demand, that is to say, in proportion to the degree of intellect, stated at different intervals, and extending down the crags of the whole ravine."

"I cannot, positively, understand a word of all this!" exclaimed the pacha, with irritation; "can you, Mustapha?"

"How is it possible for your slave to comprehend that which is concealed from the wisdom of your highness?"

"Very true," replied the pacha.

"Your highness will understand it all by-and-bye," observed the maniac; "but it will be necessary that you wait until I have finished the story, when it will all reel off like a skein of silk, which at present but appears to be ravelled."

"Well then," replied the pacha, "I wish you would begin at the end of your story, and finish with the beginning. Now go on."

"There is nought under heaven so interesting—so graceful—so pleasing to contemplate as a young mother with her first-born at her breast. The soft lisps and caresses of childhood—the expanding graces of the budding maiden—the blushing, smiling, yet trembling bride, all lose in the comparison with woman in her beauty fulfilling her destiny on earth; her countenance radiating with those intense feelings of delight, which more than repay her for her previous hours of sorrow and of anguish. But I'm afraid I tire your highness."

"Wallah el Nebi!—by God and his Prophet, you do indeed. Is it all to be like that?"

"No! pacha. I wish to heaven that it had been. Merciful God!—why didst thou permit the blow?—Was not I grateful?—Were not my eyes suffused with tears, springing from gratitude and love, at the very moment when they rushed in—when their murdering weapons were pointed to my breast—when the mother shrieked as they tore away the infant as a useless encumbrance, and dashed it to the ground—when I caught it up, and the pistol of the savage Turk put an end to its

existence? I see it now, as I kissed the little ruby fountain which bubbled from its heart: I see her too, as they bore her away senseless in their arms. Pacha, in one short minute I was bereft of all—wife, child, home, liberty, and reason; and here I am, a madman and a slave!"

The maniac paused: then starting upon his feet, he commenced in a loud voice:—"But I know who they were—I know them all, and I know where she is too: and now, pacha, you shall do me justice. This is he who stole my wife; this is he who murdered my child; this is he who keeps her from my arms: and thus I beard him in your presence:"—and as he finished his exclamations, he sprang upon the terrified Mustapha, seizing him by the beard with one hand, while with the other he beat his turban about his head.

The guards rushed in, and rescued the vizier from the awkward position in which he was placed by his own imprudence, in permitting the man to appear at the divan.

The rage of the pacha was excessive; and the head of the maniac would have been separated from his body, had it not been for the prudence of Mustapha, who was aware that the common people consider idiots and madmen to be under the special protection of heaven, and that such an act would be sufficient to create an insurrection. At his intercession, the man was taken away by the guards, and not released until he was a considerable distance from the palace.

"Allah Karim!—God is merciful!" exclaimed the pacha as soon as the maniac had been carried away. "I'm glad that he did not think it was me who had his wife."

"Allah forbid that your highness should have been so treated. He has almost ruined the beard of your slave," replied the vizier, adjusting the folds of his turban.

"Mustapha, make a memorandum never again to accept an offer. I'm convinced that a volunteer story is worth nothing."

"Your highness speaks the truth—no man parts readily with what is worth retaining—gold is not kicked up with the sandal, nor diamonds to be found glittering

in the rays of the sun. If we would obtain them, we must search and labour in the dark mine.—Will your highness be pleased to hear the manuscript which had been translated by the Greek slave?"

"Be it so," replied the pacha, not in the very best of humours.

The Greek made his appearance and made his salutation, and then read as follows:—

MANUSCRIPT OF THE MONK,

RECORDING THE DISCOVERY OF THE ISLAND OF MADEIRA.

Before I am summoned to that offended tribunal, to propitiate which I have passed so many years in penitence and prayer, let me record for the benefit of others the history of one, who, yielding to fatal passion, embittered the remainder of his own days, and shortened those of the adored partner of his guilt. Let my confession be public, that warning may be taken from my example; and may the sincerity with which I acknowledge my offence, and the tears which I have shed, efface it from the accumulated records of the wilfulness and disobedience of man!

In a few days this attenuated frame will be mingled with the dust from which it sprung, and scattered by the winds of heaven, or by the labour of future generations, as chance may dictate, will yield sustenance to the thistle which wars against the fertility of nature, or the grain which is the support of our existence,—to the nightshade with its deadly fruit, or the creeping violet with its sweet perfume. The heart which has throbbed so tumultuously with the extreme of love, and which has been riven with the excess of woe, will shortly pant no more. The mind which has been borne down by the irresistible force of passion,—which has attempted to stem the torrent, but in vain, and, since the rage of it has passed away, has been left like the once fertile valley which has been overflown, a waste of barrenness and desolation,—will shortly cease from its wearied action. In a few brief days I must appear in the presence of an offended, yet merciful Saviour, who, offering every

thing, weeps at the insanity of our rejection. Let then the confessions of Henrique serve as a beacon to those who are inclined to yield to the first impulse; when, alarmed at the discovery of their errors, they will find that conviction has arrived too late, and that, like me, they will be irresistibly impelled against the struggles of reason and of conscience.

I am an Englishman by birth: my parents were called away before I was five years old; yet still I have a dreaming memory of my mother—a faint recollection of one at whose knees I used, each night, to hold up my little hands in orison, and who blessed her child as she laid him to repose.

But I lost those whose precepts might have been valuable to me in after-life, and was left to the guardianship of one who thought that, in attending to my worldly interests, he fulfilled the whole duty which was required of him. My education was not neglected, but there was no one to advise me upon points of more serious importance. Naturally of a fiery and impatient temper,—endued with a perseverance which was only increased by the obstacles which presented themselves, I encouraged any feeling to be working in my mind in preference to repose, which was hateful. To such excess did it arrive as I grew up, that difficulty and danger, even pain and remorse, were preferable to that calm sunshine of the breast which others consider so enviable. I could exist but by strong sensations: remove them, and I felt as does the habitual drunkard in the morning, until his nerves have been again stimulated by a repetition of his draughts. My pursuits were of the same tendency: constant variety and change of scene were what I coveted. I felt a desire "to be imprisoned in the viewless winds, and blown with restless violence about the pendent world." At night I was happy; for as soon as sleep had sealed my eyes, I invariably dreamt that I had the power of aerostation, and, in my imagination, cleaved through the air with the strength of an eagle, soaring above my fellow-creatures, and looking down upon them and their ceaseless drudgery with contempt.

To a mind thus constituted by nature, and unchecked by counsel, it is not surprising that the darling wish and constant idea was to roam the world; and the vast ocean, which offered to me the means of gratifying my passion, was an object of love and adoration. If I had not the wings of the eagle with which fancy had supplied me in my dreams, still I could fly before the wings of the wind, and, as in my aerial excursions when asleep, leave no track behind. As soon as I had arrived at the age which allowed me to take possession of my property, I sought the element so congenial to my disposition. For some years I continued the profession, and was fortunate in my speculations; but I cared little for gain; my delight was in roving from clime to clime, flying before the gale,—in looking with defiance at the vast mountainous seas which threatened to overwhelm me,—in the roaring of the wind,—in the mad raging of the surf,—in the excitement of battle, even in the destruction and disasters of the wreck.

It may be a source of astonishment that I arrived at the age of thirty without ever feeling the sensation of love; but so it was. This most powerful of excitements, which was so to influence my future existence, had not yet been called into action: but it was roused at last, and, like the hurricane, swept every thing before it in ruin and desolation. I was at Cadiz, where I had arrived with a valuable cargo, when it was proposed that I should witness the ceremony of taking the White Veil. As the young woman who professed was of a noble family, and the solemnity was to be conducted with the greatest splendour, I consented. The magnificent decorations of the church, the harmony of the singing, the solemn pealing of the organ, the splendid robes of the priests in contrast with the sombre humility of the friars and nuns, the tossing of the censers, the ascending clouds of frankincense, and, above all, the extreme beauty of the fair devotee,—produced feelings of interest which I had not imagined could have been raised from any description of pageantry. When the ceremony was over, I quitted the church with new and powerful sensations, which at the time I could not precisely analyse. But when I lay down on my couch, I

perceived that, although the splendour of the rites were but faint in my recollection, the image of the sweet girl kneeling before the altar was engraven on my heart. I felt an uneasiness, a restlessness, a vacuum in my bosom, which, like that in the atmosphere, is the forerunner of the tempest. I could not sleep; but, tossing from one side to the other during the whole night, rose the next morning feverish and unrefreshed.

Following, as usual, the impulse of my feelings, I repaired to her relative, who had taken me to witness the ceremony, and persuaded him to introduce me at the wicket of the convent.

As she had yet one year of probation previous to her taking the final vows, which were for ever to seclude her from the world, in seeing her there was no difficulty. Her duteous resignation to the will of her parents, her serene and beautiful countenance, her angelic smile,—all contributed to the increase of my passion; and, after an hour's conversation, I left her with my heart in a state of tumult, of which it is not easy to express the idea. My visits were repeated again and again. In a short time I declared my sentiments, and found that I was listened to without offending. Before I quitted Cadiz, which my engagements rendered imperative, I obtained from her a reciprocal acknowledgment. And as there were still nine months to pass away previous to her decision upon a monastic life, before that period had elapsed, I faithfully promised to return, and claim her as my own. As we professed the same faith, and she had only been sacrificed that the possessions of her brother might not be diminished by the fortune which her marriage would require, I did not anticipate any objections from her parents. I required no dower, having more than sufficient to supply her with every luxury. We parted; our hands trembled as we locked our fingers through the grating; our tears fell, but could not be mingled; our lips quivered, but could not meet; our hearts were beating with excess of love; but I could not strain her in my embrace. "In three months more, Rosina!" exclaimed I, as I walked backward from the grating, my eyes still fixed upon her. "Till then,

farewell, Henrique! Relying upon your faith and honour, I shall not hesitate to cherish your dear image in my heart;"—and, overcome by her feelings, Rosina burst into tears, and hurried from my sight.

I sailed with prosperous gales, and arrived safely at my own country. My ventures were disposed of: I realised a large sum of money, had completed all my arrangements, and in a few days intended to return to Cadiz, to fulfil my engagement with Rosina. I was in the metropolis, impatiently waiting for the remainder of the freight to be put on board of the vessel in which I had taken my passage, when, one evening, as I was sauntering in the Park, anticipating the bliss of rejoining the object of my affection, I was rudely pushed aside by a personage richly attired, who was escorting two of the ladies of the court. Fired at the insult, and, as usual, acting upon the first impulse, I struck him in the face, and drew my sword—forgetting, at the time that I was in the precincts of the Palace. I was seized and imprisoned: my offence was capital; my adversary a relation of the king's. I offered a large sum for my release; but when they found out that I was wealthy, they rejected, as I increased, my offers, until I was compelled to sacrifice one half of my worldly possessions to escape from the severity of the Star Chamber. But the loss of property was nothing; I had still more than enough: it was the dreadful length of my confinement, during which anxiety had swelled hours into days, and days into months of torture and suspense. I had been incarcerated more than a year before I could obtain my release. When in my imagination I conjured up Rosina lamenting my infidelity, reproaching me in her solitude for my broken vows, and (there was madness in the very thought) yielding in her resentment and her grief to the solicitations of her parents, and taking the veil,—I was frantic; I tore my hair, beat the walls of my prison, raved for liberty, and offered to surrender up every shilling that I possessed.

* * * * *

"By the beard of the prophet, this tires me," exclaimed the pacha. "Murakhas, you

are dismissed."

The Greek slave bowed and retired.

Chapter VIII

The next morning the pacha observed to Mustapha, "I have been thinking whether, as we have no story, it would not be as well to let the Greek finish the story of yesterday evening."

"True, O pacha," replied Mustapha, "better is hard fare than no food—if we cannot indulge in the pillau, we must content ourselves with boiled rice."

"It is well said, Mustapha, so let him proceed."

The Greek slave was then ordered in, and re-commenced as follows:—

* * * * *

Freedom was obtained at last; I flew to the sea-coast, chartered a small vessel, and chiding the winds as we scudded along, because they would not blow with a force equal to my impetuous desires, arrived at Cadiz. It was late in the evening when I disembarked and repaired to the convent; so exhausted was I by contending hopes and fears, that it was with difficulty I could support my own weight. I tottered to the wicket, and demanded my Rosina.

"Are you a near relation," inquired the portress, "that you request the presence of a sister?" Her interrogation decided the point; Rosina had taken the veil, had abjured the world and me for ever. My brain reeled, and I fell senseless on the pavement. Alarmed at the circumstance, the portress ran to the Lady Abbess, informing her that a person had asked for Sister Rosina, and, receiving her answer, had fallen senseless at the wicket. Rosina was present at the narration; her heart told her who it was; also told her that I had not been faithless. Joy at my fidelity, and grief at her own precipitancy, which rendered it unavailing, overpowered her, and she was led to her

cell in a state as pitiable as mine.

When I recovered my senses, I found myself in bed. I had been there for weeks in a state of mental alienation. With reason and memory, misery returned; but I was no longer in the frenzy of excitement; my mind was as exhausted as my body, and I felt a species of calm despair. Convinced that all was lost, that an insuperable bar was placed between Rosina and me, I reasoned myself into a kind of philosophy, and resolved, as soon as I could recover my strength, to fly from a place which had been the scene of so much anticipated happiness, and of so much real woe.

One desire still remained; it was to see Rosina previous to my departure, that I might explain the cause of my delay. Conviction told me that it was wrong; but the impulse I could not resist: had I not yielded to it, I should have been unfortunate, but not guilty.

I wrote to her upbraiding her for her precipitation, and imploring a final interview. Her answer was affecting—it brought showers of tears from my eyes, and again inflamed my love. The interview was refused, as it could be productive of no benefit, and would only call forth feelings in opposition to her duty; but it was so kindly, so gently negatived, that it was evident her inclination was at variance with her pen; and on my repeating the request, as a proof that her affection had been sincere, she unwillingly acceded.

We met—for our misery—for our guilt, we met.—From that moment, I resolved never to abandon her—religion, virtue, morality, every feeling was borne away by the re-appearance of the object of my adoration; and before the interview was over, I again dared to breathe vows of fidelity to one who had devoted herself to her God. "This cannot be, Henrique," said Rosina; "we must meet no more; reflect, and you will be convinced of its impropriety. No dispensation from the vow will be permitted by my parents—all hopes of union in this world are over—Oh! may we meet in heaven!" and she clasped her hands in anguish as she disappeared.

I returned home, every pulse beating to madness. Again I addressed her, imploring another meeting; but received a firm denial. So far from being baffled at this addition to the obstacles which presented themselves, it but increased my determination to surmount them. To overcome her duty to her parents, to induce her to trample on her vows to God, to defy the torments of the Inquisition, to release her from bolts and bars, to escape from a fortified and crowded city—each and every difficulty but inflamed my ardour—every appeal of conscience but added to my willful determination.

Although hitherto I had abhorred deceit, my first act was one of duplicity. I wrote to her, stating that I had been permitted an interview with her friends, and had made known to them what had passed; that they had listened to me, and were disposed to yield; and although it was kept a secret from her, in a few months her vows would be dispensed with.

How cruel—how selfish was my conduct! but it answered my intention. Buoyed up with the prospect of future happiness, Rosina no longer struggled against the fatal passion—no longer refused to see me, and listen to my vows of eternal fidelity. Deeper and deeper did she drink of the intoxicating draught, until it had effaced from her mind, as it had already done from mine, every other sensation than that of love. Although I could have kissed the ground which she trod upon, and have suffered the torments of a martyr for her sake, it was with the pleasure of a demon that I witnessed my success, and hailed her falling off from religion and from virtue.

Six months had passed away, during which, by bribes to the portress, and the yielding of my mistress, I had contrived to obtain admittance by night into the convent garden. One evening I informed her that her parents, menaced by their confessor, had rescinded their promise to me, and had decided upon not obtaining her dispensation. Every thing had been prepared, that she might have no time for reflection: hurried away by her own feelings, my persuasions, and my protestations,

she consented to fly with me to my own country. I bore the trembling, fainting girl in my arms—effected my escape from the convent and the city—embarked on board of a vessel which I had ready to weigh at a moment's warning, and was soon far distant from the port of Cadiz.

It was near midnight when we embarked, and I bore my treasure down into the cabin of the vessel, muffled up in my cloak. Her nun's dress had not been laid aside; for I had not provided myself with any other change of raiment.

Before morning it blew fresh. Rosina, who, as well as I, had abandoned herself to that powerful love which engrossed us, lay supported in my arms, when the captain of the vessel, coming down to speak to me, perceived that she was arrayed in the religious attire. He started when he viewed it, and hastily quitted the cabin. I had a presentiment that all was not right, and, removing my arms from Rosina, repaired on deck, where I found him in consultation with the crew. The subject in agitation was their immediate return to Cadiz to deliver us to the Inquisition. I resisted the suggestion; claimed the vessel as my own, having chartered her, and threatened immediate death to any one who should attempt to alter her course; but it was in vain. Their horror at the sacrilege, and their fear of being implicated in, and suffering the dreadful penalties attending it, bore down all my arguments; my promises and my threats were alike disregarded.

I was seized, overpowered, and the vessel steered in for land. I raved, stamped, and imprecated in vain: at last I declared that we all should suffer together, as I would denounce them as having been aware of my intentions, and state that it was only in consequence of my having refused to submit to farther extortion, that they had not fulfilled their agreement. This startled them; for they knew that the Inquisition gladly seized upon all pretexts; and that even if not convicted, their imprisonment would be long. Again they consulted; and heaving the vessel to the wind, they hoisted out the long boat. Having thrown into her a scanty supply of provisions and

water, with a few necessaries, they brought up the terrified Rosina from the cabin, and, placing her in the boat, released and ordered me to follow. As soon as I was in the boat, they cut the rope by which it was towed, and we were soon left at a distance astern.

Glad to escape from the cruelty of man, I cared little for the danger to which we were subjected from the elements. I consoled my frightened Rosina; I stepped the mast, hoisted the sail, and steered in a southerly direction, with the intention of landing on some part of the African coast. So far from being alarmed at my situation, I felt happy. I was in a frail bark; but I had within it all that I cared for in this world. I sailed I knew not where, but Rosina was in my company; I felt the uncertainty of our fate, but was more than compensated by the certainty of possession. The wind rose, the sea ran high, and curled in threatening foam; we darted with rapidity before it; and steering with one arm, while Rosina was clasped in the other, I delighted in our romantic situation; and, pleased with the excitement which it created, I was blind to the danger which we encountered.

For six days we ran before the wind, when an accumulation of clouds upon the southern horizon indicated that we should have a change. I had no compass in the boat, but had steered by the sun during the day, and by the stars during the night. I now considered myself well to the southward, and determined upon running eastward, that I might gain the African shore; but the gale was too strong to permit me to bring the broadside of my small bark to the wind, and I was compelled to continue my course in a southerly direction.

For the first time, a sensation of alarm came over me: we had but two days' more sustenance, and Rosina was worn out by constant exposure. I myself felt the necessity of repose: it was with difficulty that I could keep my eyelids raised; every minute Nature imperiously demanded her rights, and I nodded at the helm.

I was in a melancholy reverie, when I thought that I perceived, as the clouds on the

horizon occasionally opened, something that had the appearance of the summit of a precipice. They closed again; I watched them with anxiety until they gradually rolled away, and discovered a lofty island, covered with trees and verdure down to the water's edge. I shouted with delight, and pointed it out to Rosina, who answered my exultations with a faint smile. My blood curdled at the expression of her countenance: for many hours she had been in deep thought; and I perceived that the smile was forced to please me, the intelligence I had imparted affording her but little pleasure. I ascribed it to weariness and exhaustion; and hoping soon to be able to relieve her, I steered direct for the only part of the shore which promised us a safe descent. In an hour I was close to it; and, anxious to land before dark, I steered the boat with the sail hoisted through the surf, which was much heavier than I expected. As soon as her bow struck the beach, the boat was thrown on her broadside, and it required all my exertion to save my beloved, which I did not effect without our being completely washed by the surf, which, in a few minutes, dashed the boat to pieces. I bore her to a cave at a short distance from where we landed; and, wrapping her up in a cloak which I had saved from the boat, took away her nun's attire, and exposed it to dry in the powerful rays of the sun. I went in search of food, which I soon obtained: banana and cocoanuts grew in profusion and in beauty, and fresh water ran down in noisy rills. I bore them to her, and congratulated her that we were now beyond all pursuit, and in a spot which promised to supply us with all that we required. She smiled languidly; her thoughts were elsewhere. Her clothes were dry, and I brought them to her: she shuddered at the sight of them, and seemed to muster up her resolution before she could put them on. Night closed in upon us, and we remained in the cave: our bed was formed of the cloaks and the sail of the boat and, locked in each other's arms, separated from all the world, and living but for each other, we fell asleep. The morning broke: not a cloud was to be seen through the blue expanse. We walked out, and dwelt in silent admiration upon the splendour of the scene. The island was clothed in beauty; the sun poured his genial rays upon the

wild fertility of nature; the birds were warbling forth their notes of joy; the sea was calm and clear as a mirror, reflecting the steep hills which towered above each other. "Here then, Rosina," cried I, at last, with rapture, "we have all that we require, blessed in each other's love."

Rosina burst into tears: "All—all, Henrique, except an approving conscience, without which I feel that I cannot live. I love you—love you dearly—dote upon you, Henrique: you cannot doubt it after all that has occurred: but now that the delirium of passion has subsided, conscience has been busy—too busy, for it has embittered all; and I feel that happiness is flown for ever. I wedded myself to God; I chose my Saviour as my spouse; I vowed myself to him—was received by him at the altar; and I abandoned this world for that which is to come. What have I done?—I have been unfaithful to him—left him, to indulge a worldly passion, sacrificed eternity for perishable mortality, and there is a solemn voice within that tells me I am an outcast from all heavenly joys. Bear with me, dear Henrique! I mean not to reproach you, but I must condemn myself;—I feel that I shall not long remain here, but be summoned before an offended Lord.

"Merciful Saviour!" cried she, falling on her knees, with imploring eyes to heaven, "punish him not—pardon him his faults; for what are they, compared to mine? he made no vows, he has committed no infidelity, he is not the guilty one. Spare him, O Lord, and justly punish her who has seduced him into crime!"

My heart smote me; I threw myself on the ground, and wept bitterly. I felt that it had been my duplicity which had destroyed her virtuous resolutions; my selfishness which had ruined her peace of mind and had plunged her into guilt. She knelt by me, persuading me to rise, curbing her own feelings as she kissed the tears from my cheeks, promising never to wound my peace again. But it was gone—gone for ever; my crime burst on me in all its magnitude; I felt that I had been guilty of a grievous and unpardonable sin, and had ruined the one I loved as well as myself. She was still

on her knees; kneeling by her side, I prayed to offended heaven for mercy and forgiveness. She joined me in my fervent aspirations; and, with the tears of repentance flowing down our cheeks, we remained some time in the attitude of supplication. At last we rose, "Do you not feel happier, Rosina?" inquired I; Rosina smiled mournfully in reply, and we returned to the cave.

For many hours we spoke not, but remained in sad communion with our own thoughts. The night again closed in, and we lay down to repose; and, as I clasped her in my arms, I felt that she shuddered, and withdrew. I released her, and retired to the other side of the cave, for I knew her feelings and respected them. From that hour she was no more to me than a dear and injured sister; and, although her frame hourly wasted away, her spirits seemed gradually to revive. At the expiration of a fortnight, she was too much reduced to rise from her bed, and I passed day and night sitting by her side in repentance and in tears, for I knew that she was dying. A few hours before she breathed her last she appeared to recover a little, and thus addressed me:—

"Henrique, within this hour a balm has been poured into my breast, for a voice tells me we are both forgiven. Great is our crime; but our repentance has been sincere, and I feel assured that we shall meet in heaven. For your kindness—for your unceasing love, you have my thanks, and an attachment which heaven does not forbid—for now it is pure. We have sinned, and we have pleaded, and obtained our pardon together: together shall we be, hereafter. Bless you, Henrique! pray for my soul, still clinging to its earthly love, but pardoned by him who knows our imperfection. Pure Mother of God, plead for me! Holy Saviour, who despised not the tears and contrition of the Magdalen, receive an unfaithful, but repentant spouse unto your bosom; for when I made my vow, thou knowest that my heart—"

With what agony of grief did I hang over the body! with what bitter tears did I wash the clay-cold face, so beautiful, so angelic in its repose! In the morning, I dug her

grave; and cleansing my hands, which were bleeding, from the task, returned to the corpse, and bore it, in its nun's attire, to the receptacle which I had prepared. I laid it in; and, collecting the flowerets which blossomed round, strewed them over, and watched till sunset; when I covered her up, laying the earth, in small handfuls, as lightly on her dear remains, as the mother would the coverlid upon her sleeping babe. Long it was before I could prevail on myself to soil that heavenly face, or hide it from my aching eyes. When I had, I felt that Rosina was indeed no more, and that I was indeed alone.

For two years I remained in solitude. I erected a rude chapel over her grave, and there passed my days in penance and contrition. Vessels belonging to other nations visited the island, and returning home with the intelligence, it was taken possession of and colonised. To their astonishment, they found me; and, when I narrated my story and my wishes, allowed me a passage to their country. Once more I embarked on the trackless wave, no longer my delight; and as the shore receded, I watched the humble edifice which I had raised over the remains of my Rosina: it appeared to me as if a star had settled over the spot, and I hailed it as an harbinger of grace. When I landed, I repaired to the convent to which I now belong; and, taking the vows of abstinence and mortification, have passed the remainder of my days in masses for the soul of my Rosina, and prayers for my own redemption.

Such is the history of Henrique; and may it be a warning to those who allow their reason to be seduced by passion, and check not the first impulse towards wrong, when conscience dictates that they are straying from the paths of virtue!

* * * * *

"Holy Allah!" exclaimed the pacha, yawning; "is this the bulbul singing to the rose?—What is it all about, Mustapha? or what is it written for, but to send one asleep? Murakhas, you are dismissed," continued the pacha to the Greek slave, who retired.

Mustapha, who perceived that the pacha was disappointed in the entertainment of the evening, immediately addressed him:—"The soul of your sublime highness is sad, and the mind is wearied.—What says the sage? and are not his words of more value than large pearls? 'When thou art sick, and thy mind is heavy, send for wine. Drink, and thank Allah that he has given relief.'"

"Wallah Thaib!—it is well said," replied the pacha: "Is not the 'fire-water' of the Franks to be obtained?"

"Is not the earth, and what the earth contains, made for your sublime highness?" replied Mustapha, drawing from his vest a bottle of spirits.

"God is great!" said the pacha, taking the bottle from his mouth, after a long draught, and handing it to his vizier.

"God is most merciful!" replied Mustapha, recovering his breath, and wiping down his beard with the sleeve of his kalaât, as he respectfully passed the bottle over to his superior.

Chapter IX

"Hham d'illah! Praise be to God!" exclaimed the pacha, as the divan closed. "This is dry work, hearing petitions for three hours, and not a sequin to my treasury. Mustapha, has the renegade come back?"

"The Kafir waits to kiss the dust of your sublime feet," replied the vizier.

"Let him approach, then, Mustapha," said the pacha joyfully, and the renegade immediately made his appearance.

"Kosh amedeid, you are welcome, Huckaback. We have had our ears poisoned since you quitted us. I forget where it was that you left off."

"May it please your highness, at the ending of my second voyage, in which——"

"I remember—when the Frankish woman god, stopped the leak. You may proceed."

The renegade bowed, and commenced his third voyage, as follows:—

"I believe that I stated to your highness, at the end of my second voyage, I determined to go to Toulon, and make some inquiry after my dear Cerise."

"I recollect you did," interrupted the pacha, "but I tell you again, as I told you before, that I want to know nothing about her. Have the goodness to skip all that part, or it will be five sequins out of your girdle."

"Your highness shall be obeyed," replied the renegade, who, after musing a short time, continued.

THIRD VOYAGE OF HUCKABACK.

I was so affected at the intelligence of Cerise having destroyed herself, that I found it impossible to remain on shore. Having met with the captain of a whaler, who expatiated on the fortune which might be realised by embarking in the speculation, I purchased a large ship, and fitted it out for a voyage to Baffin's Bay. This consumed all the money I had left, but as I expected to return with ten times the sum, I made no scruple of parting with it.

My crew consisted of about thirty men, all strong fellows; ten of them Englishmen, and the remainder from my own country. We stood to the northward, until we reached the ice, which floated high as mountains, and steering in between it, we at last came to a fine open water, where a large quantity of whales were blowing in every direction. Our boats were soon hoisted out, and we were extremely fortunate, having twenty-three fish on board, and boiled down before the season was over.

I now considered my fortune made; and the ship being full up to the beams, we made all sail to return home. But a heavy gale came on from the southward, which drove all the ice together, and our ship with it, and we were in great danger of being squeezed to atoms. Fortunately, we made fast in a bight, on the lee side of a great iceberg, which preserved us, and we anxiously awaited for the termination of the

gale, to enable us to proceed. But when the gale subsided, a hard frost came on, and we were completely frozen up, where we lay—the ice formed round to the depth of several feet, and lifted the ship, laden as she was, out of the water.

The English, who were experienced fishermen, told us, that we had no chance of being released until next spring. I ascended to the mast-head, and perceived that for miles, as far as the eye could scan the horizon, there was nothing but one continued succession of icebergs and floes inseparably united. Despairing, therefore, of any release, until the cold weather should break up, I made all arrangements for remaining during the winter. Our provisions were very short, and we were obliged to make use of the whale oil, but it soon produced such dysenteries, that it was no longer resorted to.

After two months, the cold became intense, and our fuel ran short. At the end of three months the crew complained of scurvy, and could not move about the decks. At the end of the fourth month, they had all died except the chief harpooner, a fat porpus of an Englishman, and myself.

The bodies remained on the deck, for the cold was so intense that they would not have been tainted for centuries; and, as at the end of five months, the provisions were all expended, we were again obliged to resort to the whale oil.

The whale oil produced a return of our complaints, and having no other resource, we were forced by imperious hunger to make our repasts from one of the bodies of our dead shipmates. They were so hard, that it was with difficulty that we could separate a portion with an axe, and the flesh broke off in fragments, as if we had been splitting a piece of granite; but it thawed before the fire, which we had contrived to keep alight, by supplying it from the bulwarks of the quarter-deck, which we cut away as we required them. The old harpooner and I lived together on the best terms for a month, during which we seldom quitted the cabin of the vessel, having now drawn down the third dead body, which we cut up as we required it with less

difficulty than before, from the change in the weather.

The ice continued breaking up, and all day and night we were startled at the loud crashing which took place, as the icebergs separated from each other. But my disgust at feeding upon human flesh produced a sort of insanity. I had always been partial to good eating, and was by no means an indifferent cook; and I determined to try whether something more palatable could not be provided for our meals; the idea haunted me day and night, and at last I imagined myself a French restaurateur; I tied a cloth before me as an apron, put on a cotton nightcap instead of my fur cap, and was about to make a trial of my skill, when I discovered that I had no lard, no fat of any kind except train oil, which I rejected as not being suitable to the "cuisine Française." My messmates who lay dead, were examined one by one, but they had fallen away so much previous to their decease, that not a symptom of fat was to be perceived. Without fat I could do nothing; and as I thought of it in despair, my eye was caught by the rotundity of paunch which still appertained to the English harpooner, the only living being besides myself out of so many. "I must have fat," cried I fiercely, as I surveyed his unwieldy carcase. He started when he observed the rolling of my eyes, and perceiving that I was advancing towards him, sharpening my knife, he did not think it prudent to trust himself longer in my company. Snatching up two or three blankets, he ran on deck, and contrived to ascend to the main-top before I could follow him. There he held me at bay, and I continued watching him from below with my large carving knife in my hand, which I occasionally whetted. He remained aloft all night, and so did I on deck, to get possession of him when he should descend. I was so eager in my frenzy to obtain him, that I felt neither cold nor hunger; the weather during the day was now warm enough to be pleasant, but the nights were piercing. My fat shipmate remained in the top for three days and nights, during which period I never removed from my post. At the close of the third day he looked over the top brim, and implored my mercy. When he showed himself I hardly knew him, so much had he wasted away, and it then struck me, that if he

remained aloft much longer he would have no more fat than the others, and would not serve my purpose. I therefore pledged him my honour, that I would not attempt his life for ten days; and as he was perishing with the cold, he agreed to the armistice, and once more descended to the deck. But I was saved the crime of murder, for he was so ravenous when he came down, that he ate nearly the whole of a man's leg, and died from repletion during the night. I cannot express to your highness the satisfaction that I felt at finding that the carcase of the harpooner was in my possession. I surveyed my treasure over and over again with delight. I could now cook my French dishes. He was soon dissected, and all his unctuous parts carefully melted down, and I found that I had a stock which would last me as long as the bodies which I had remaining to exercise my skill upon. The first day I succeeded admirably—I cooked my dishes; and when they were ready I took off my night-cap and apron, passed my fingers through my hair, and fancied myself a garçon at a restaurateur's. I laid the cloth, put the dishes on the table, and when it was complete, went on deck and then returned as the bon vivant who had ordered the dinner.

Never was any meal so delicious to my insane fancy. I devoured every thing which I cooked, and drank water for champagne. I meditated upon what I should have for dinner on the ensuing day, and then retired to my bed. In the meantime the ice had separated, and the ship was again afloat; but I cared not: all my ideas were concentrated in the pleasures of the table—and the next morning I went on deck to obtain a piece of meat, when I was astonished at a terrific growl. I turned my head and perceived an enormous white bear, who was making sad depredations in my larder, having nearly finished the whole body of one of my dead shipmates. He was as large as an ox, so large that when he made a rush at me, and I slipped down the ladder, he could not follow me. I again looked up, and perceived that he had finished his meal. After walking round the decks two or three times, smelling at every thing, he plunged overboard and disappeared.

Glad to be rid of so unpleasant a visitor, I came up, and cutting off the meat I

required, again exerted my cookery, was again satisfied and went to sleep. I never felt so happy as I then did in my insane condition. All I thought of, all I wished, I could command—my happiness was concentrated in eating my fellow-creatures, cooked in a proper manner, instead of the usual method of bolting them down to satisfy the cravings of imperious hunger. I woke the next morning as usual, and when I crawled on deck, was again saluted with the angry growl of the bear, who was busy making a repast upon another body—when he had finished he plunged into the sea as before.

I now thought it high time to put an end to these depredations on my larder, which in a few days would have left me destitute. My invention was called into action, and I hit upon a plan, which I thought would succeed. I dragged all the bodies to the after part of the quarter-deck, and blocked it up before the cabin-hatch with swabs and small sails, so as to form a sort of dam about eight inches high. I then went below and brought up forty or fifty buckets of train oil, which I poured upon the deck abaft, so that it was covered with oil to the height of several inches. On the ensuing morning the bear came as I expected, and commenced his repast; I had stationed myself aloft, in the mizen-top, with several buckets of oil, which I poured upon him. His fur was otherwise well saturated with what he had collected when he lay down on the deck to devour one of the bodies more at his ease. When I had poured all my buckets of oil over him but one, I threw the empty buckets down upon him. This enraged him, and he mounted the rigging to be revenged. I waited until he had arrived at the futtock shrouds, when I poured my last bucket upon him, which quite blinded him, and then gained the deck by sliding down the back stays on the opposite side.

A bear can climb fast, but is very slow in his descent—the consequence was that I had plenty of time for my arrangements. I ran below, and lighting a torch of oakum, which I had prepared in readiness, placed it to his hinder quarters as he descended. The effect was exactly what I had anticipated; his thick fur, covered in every part

with oil, was immediately in a blaze, and burnt with such rapidity, that before he could recover his feet on deck, he was like an immense ball of fire. I retreated to the companion-hatch to watch his motions. His first act was to return to the quarter-deck and roll himself in the oil, with an idea of quenching the flames, but this added fuel to them, and the animal roaring in his agony at last jumped into the sea and disappeared.

Having thus rid myself of my intruder I returned to my cooking. The ship was now clear of ice, the weather was warm, the bodies of my shipmates emitted a fetid smell, but I saw and smelt nothing; all that I observed was that the barley which had been scattered on the deck by the fowls, had sprung up about the decks, and I congratulated myself upon the variety it would give to my culinary pursuits. I continued to cook, to eat, and to sleep as before, when a circumstance occurred, which put an end to all my culinary madness. One night I found the water washing by the side of my standing bed-place in the cabin, and jumping out in alarm to ascertain the cause, I plunged over head and ears. The fact was, that the ship, when lifted by the ice, had sprung a leak which had gradually filled her without my perceiving it. My fear of drowning was so great, that I ran into the very danger which I would have avoided. I darted out of the cabin windows into the sea, whereas had I gone upon deck I should have been safe: for a little reflection might have told me that a vessel laden with oil could not have sunk—but reflection came too late, and benumbed with the coldness of the waters, I could have struggled but a few seconds more, when I suddenly came in contact with a spar somewhat bigger than a boat's mast. I seized it to support myself, and was surprised at finding it jerked from me occasionally; as if there was somebody else who had hold of it, and who wished to force me to let it go; but it was quite dark, and I could distinguish nothing. I clung to it until daylight appeared, when what was my horror to perceive an enormous shark close to me. I nearly let go my hold and sunk, so paralysed was I with fear, I anticipated every moment to feel his teeth crushing me in half, and I shut my eyes

that I might not add to the horrors of my death by being a witness to the means. Some minutes had elapsed, which appeared to me as so many hours, when surprised at being still alive, I ventured to open my eyes. The shark was still at the same distance from me, and on examination I perceived that the boat's mast or spar, to which I was clinging, had been passed through his nose in a transverse direction, being exactly balanced on either side. The shark was of the description found in the North Seas, which is called by the sailors the blind shark. I now perfectly understood that he had been caught and spritsail yarded, as the seamen term it, and then turned adrift for their diversion. The buoyancy of the spar prevents the animal from sinking down under the water, and this punishment of their dreaded enemy is a very favourite amusement of sailors.

I summoned up all my courage, and being tired of holding on by the spar, resolved to mount upon his back, which I accomplished without difficulty, and I found the seat on his shoulders before the dorsal fin, not only secure but very comfortable. The animal, unaccustomed to carry weight, made several attempts to get rid of me, but not being able to sink I retained my seat. He then increased his velocity, and we went on over a smooth sea, at the rate of about three knots an hour. For two days I continued my course to the southward, upon my novel conveyance, during which I had nothing to eat except a few small barnacles, and some parasitical vermin, peculiar to the animal, which I discovered under his fins. I also found a small remora, or sucking fish, near his tail, but when I put it to my mouth, it fixed itself so firmly on both my lips that I thought they were sealed for ever. No force could detach it, and there it hung like a padlock for many hours, to my great mortification and annoyance, but at last it died from being so long out of water, and when it dropped off I devoured it.

On the third day I observed land at a distance; it appeared to be an island, but I had no idea what it could be. My steed continued his course straight towards it, and being blind ran his nose right upon the shore; before he found out his mistake I

slipped off his back, and climbing the steep side of the island, was once more, as I thought, on terra firm. Tired with long watching, I lay down and fell fast asleep.

I was awakened by something touching me on the shoulder, and opening my eyes, I perceived that I was surrounded by several people, whom I naturally inferred to be the natives of the island. They were clad in dresses, which appeared to me to be made of black leather, consisting of a pair of trousers, and a long pea-jacket, very similar to those worn by the Esquimaux Indians, which we occasionally fell in with in the Northern Ocean. They each held a long harpoon, formed entirely of bone, in their right hands.

I was not a little surprised at being addressed in the Patois dialect of the Basques in my own country, which is spoken about Bayonne and other parts adjacent to the Pyrennees. To their questions I answered that I was the only survivor of the crew of a whaler, which had been frozen up in the ice, during the winter; that she had filled with water, and that I had saved myself upon the back of a shark.

They expressed no surprise at my unheard-of conveyance to the island; on the contrary, they merely observed, that sharks were too vicious to ride; and asked me to accompany them to their town, an invitation which I gladly accepted. As I walked along I observed that the island was composed of white porous pumice stone, without the least symptoms of vegetation; not even a piece of moss could I discover—nothing but the bare pumice stone, with thousands of beautiful green lizards, about ten inches long, playing about in every part. The road was steep, and in several parts the rock was cut into steps to enable you to ascend. After an hour's fatiguing walk, which I never should have accomplished in my weak state, without the assistance of the islanders, we arrived at the summit. The view which met my eyes was striking. I was on the peak of a chain of hills, forming an immense amphitheatre, encircling a valley which appeared about fifteen miles in diameter, and the major part of which was occupied by a lake of water.

I could discern what appeared to be the habitations of men on different parts of the lake; but there was not a tree or a shrub to be seen.

"What," demanded I of the man who appeared to take the lead of the rest of the party, "have you no trees here?"

"None whatever; and yet we can do very well without them. Do you not observe that there is no mould; that the island is composed entirely of pumice stone?"

"I do," replied I. "Pray what is the name of your barren spot—and in what part of the world are we?"

"As for its name, we call it Whale Island," replied the man; "but as for where we are, we cannot exactly tell ourselves, for we are a floating island, being composed entirely of pumice stone, whose specific gravity, as you must know, is much lighter than that of water."

"How strange," observed I; "I cannot believe that you are in earnest."

"And yet not quite so strange as you imagine," replied my conductor. "If you examine the structure of this island, from where you now stand, you will perceive at once, that it has been the crater of some large volcano. It is easy to imagine, that after having reared its head above the surface of the sea, by some of those sudden caprices of ever-working nature, the base has again sunk down, leaving the summit of the crater floating on the ocean. Such is our opinion of the formation of this island; and I doubt whether your geologists on the continent would produce a more satisfactory theory."

"What? you have communicated with Europe, then?" cried I, delighted at the hopes of return.

"We have had communication, but we do not communicate again. In the winter time, this island, which, strange as it may appear to you, does not change its position many hundred miles in the course of centuries, is enclosed with the icebergs in the north: when the spring appears, we are disengaged, and then drift a degree or two to

the southward, seldom more."

"Are you not then affected by the winds and tides?"

"Of course we are: but there is a universal balance throughout nature, and everything finds its level. There is order, when there appears disorder—and no stream runs in one direction, without a counter stream, to restore the equilibrium. Upon the whole, what with the under currents, and the changes which continually take place, I should say that we are very little, if at all, affected by the tides—which may be considered as a sort of exercise, prescribed by nature to keep the ocean in good health. The same may be affirmed with respect to the winds. Wind is a substance, as well as water, capable of great expansion, but still a substance. A certain portion has been allotted to the world for its convenience, and there is a regularity in its apparent variability. It must be self-evident, when all the wind has been collected to the eastward, by the north-west gales which prevail in winter, that it must be crowded and penned up in that quarter, and, from its known expansive powers, must return and restore the equilibrium. That is the reason that we have such a long continuance of easterly winds, in the months of February and March."

"You said that you had communication with Europe?"

"We have occasionally visits perforce, from those who are cast away in ships or boats; but the people who come here, have never returned. The difficulty of leaving the island is very great: and we flatter ourselves, that few who have remained any time with us, have ever felt the desire."

"What—not to leave a barren rock, without even a blade of grass upon it."

"Happiness," replied my conductor, "does not consist in the variety of your possessions, but in being contented with what you have"—and he commenced the descent of the hill.

I followed him in a melancholy mood, for I could imagine little comfort in such a sterile spot.

"I am not a native of this island," observed he, as we walked along; "it is more than four hundred years since it was first inhabited, by the crew of a French vessel, which was lost in the Northern Ocean. But I do not wish to leave it. I was cast on it in a whale boat, when separated from the ship in a snow-storm, about twenty-five years ago. I am now a married man, with a family, and am considered one of the wealthiest inhabitants of the island, for I possess between forty and fifty whales."

"Whales!" exclaimed I, with astonishment.

"Yes," replied my conductor, "whales, which are the staple of this island, and without them we should not be so prosperous and so happy as we are. But you have much to see and learn; you will by-and-bye acknowledge that there is nothing existing in the world, which, from necessity and by perseverance, man cannot subject to his use. Yon lake which covers the bottom of our valley, is our source of wealth and comfort, and yields us an increase as plentiful as the most fertile plains of Italy or France."

As we arrived close to the foot of the hills, I perceived several black substances on the shores of the lake. "Are those whales?" inquired I.

"They were whales, but they are now houses. That one by itself is mine, which I hope you will consider as yours, until you have made up your mind as to what you will do."

We descended to the beach, and his companions, wishing me good-morning, left me with my conductor, who led the way to his house. It was composed of the skin of one entire whale, much larger than ever I had seen in the Northern Ocean. The backbone and ribs of the animal served as rafters to extend the skin, which wore the resemblance of a long tent; it was further secured by ropes, formed of the twisted sinews which passed over the top, and were made fast to stakes of bone firmly fixed in the ground on each side. When I entered, I found to my surprise that there was plenty of light, which was supplied from windows, composed of small panes of

whalebone ground down very thin, and at the further end the head and scull of the animal formed a kitchen, the smoke from the fire escaping through the spiracles or breathing-holes above.

On each side of the room into which I was ushered were raised seats, covered with seal skins, and the other end of the house was divided off with a species of black skin, into sleeping apartments for the master of the house and his family. There was not the least smell, as I anticipated before I entered this strange dwelling-place.

I was introduced to his wife, who welcomed me with cordiality. She was dressed in the same dark skin as her husband, but of a much finer texture, and had a scarlet cap on her head, as well as scarlet trimmings to the front and bottom of her dress, which on the whole was not only comfortable but becoming in its appearance.

A bowl of milk was presented to me, to refresh me after my walk and long abstinence.

"How!" observed I, "have you milk here without pasture?"

"Yes," replied my host, "drink it, and tell me if you think it palatable."

I did so, and found it very little different from the asses' milk of my own country—perhaps with a little more acidity of taste. In the meantime several varieties of shell-fish, and a large cheese, were placed upon the table, which, as well as the stools, was composed entirely of bone.

"And cheese, too?" said I.

"Yes, and you will find it not bad. It is the milk of the whale which you have drank, and the cheese is prepared from the same."

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"Friend Huckaback," observed the pacha, "I think you are telling me lies. Who ever heard of whale's milk?"

"Allah forbid that I should attempt to deceive a person of your highness's judgment;

it could only end in mortification and defeat to myself."

"That's very true," observed the pacha.

"Your highness has not called to mind, that the whale is what naturalists call a 'hot-blood animal,' with arteries and circulation of blood similar to the human species; and that it brings forth its young alive, and nurses it at the breast."

"Very true," observed the pacha. "I had forgot that."

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My conductor resumed as follows:—"As I told you before, the whale is the staple of this island. You observe that his skin serves us as a house; from his bones we form all our implements—from his sinews, our thickest ropes down to our finest thread. The dress we wear is composed of the belly part of the skin, dressed with a sort of soap, composed of the alkali obtained from the sea-weed which abounds in the lake, and the oil of the whale. His blubber serves us for fuel and candle; his flesh for meat, and the milk is invaluable to us. It is true, we have other resources; we have our lizards, and a variety of fish and shell-fish; and when we are shut up in the winter among the icebergs, we procure the flesh and skins of the seals and the polar bear. But we have no vegetable of any kind; and although the want of bread may at first be unpleasant, a few weeks will reconcile you to the privation. But it is time to repose after your fatigues—I will report your arrival to the great harpooner, after I have shown you to your chamber." He then conducted me to an inner room, where I found a couch, composed of the skins of the polar bears, on which I threw myself, and in a few minutes was fast asleep.

The next morning I was awakened by my host. "If you wish to see the whales milked, this is the hour that they are called in; a short walk will explain more to you than many hours' conversation."

I arose perfectly refreshed from my long nap, and followed my conductor. We passed a large tank. "This is our water; we are obliged not to waste it, although we

have a sufficiency; the tank is coated by a cement, formed of lime, obtained by the burning of the shells of fish. We make all our vessels that are submitted to the fire, of the same substance, mixed with pounded lava; it is burnt in the fire, and glazed with sea-salt."

We arrived at the edge of the lake, where we came to a large shallow dock, cut out of the lava in the side, in which were about two dozen young whales, who followed my host as he walked round the edge.

These are my calves; we do not admit the mothers until we have first drawn off what milk we require.

Several men now came down to the beach: one of them blew a horn, formed out of a part of the horn of a sea unicorn, and immediately a herd of whales collected at the sound, and swam towards the beach. They all answered to their names; and when the men waded in the water up to their knees, quietly grounded on their sides, so as to present one of their udders to them, clear of the water. This was squeezed by four men, and the contents received into a large pail, composed of the bones of a whale, neatly hooped together by the same substance.

As soon as the breast of the animal was empty, with a lash of its tail it recovered the deep water, and swam round and round in small circles, near to the spot.

"We always leave one breast for the calf," observed my host; "when they are all milked, I shall open the pen and let the mothers in."

"What are those enormous whales which are playing at a distance?"

"They are our whale oxen," answered my host; "we find that they grow to an enormous size. Our houses are built of their skins."

"Is that a dead whale on the beach?"

"It is one of our whale boats," replied he, "but formed, as you supposed, from the skin of a whale, hardened by frequent applications of oil and lime. We use them to

catch the whales when we want them."

"You do not use the harpoon, then?"

"Only when we kill; in general we noose the tail, and fasten the rope to one of these boats, which are so buoyant, that the whale cannot take it down, and soon tires with his own exertions. I am now speaking of the males reserved for breeding, or strange whales, who sometimes find their way into our lake during the winter: our own are so domesticated from their infancy, that we have little trouble with them; but it is time that we return."

"Here," observed my host, as we passed a whale-house, "is one of our manufactories; we will step in. This is the common stuff of the country, which is used for partitions in houses, &c. This is a finer sort, such as I wear at present. Here we have the skin of the whale calf, which is usually worn by the women. This is the most expensive article of our manufactures; it is the belly part of the calf's skin, which being white, admits of a dye from the murex—a shell fish, very common on our shores."

"Have you money?" inquired I.

"None—we exchange; but the chief article of exchange, and which serves as money, is the whale cheese, which keeps for years, and improves in quality. That fine cloth is worth eight new cheeses a square yard, which is very dear."

We arrived at the house, where we found our repast ready; an excellent stew received my commendation.

"It is one of our favourite dishes," replied my host; "it is made of lizards' tails."

"Lizards' tails!"

"Yes; I am about to procure some for dinner, and you shall see my preserve."

In the course of the day I walked with my host a short distance up the hill, when we stopped at a large pit, covered with a net work, made of whales' sinews. The man

who accompanied us, descended, and soon returned with a pail full of lizards, confined by a similar net over them. He then took them out one by one, and pulled their tails, which were immediately left in his hand. He then notched the stump, and threw the animal into the pit.

"Of what use is it to return the animals?" observed I.

"Because their tails will grow again, by next year."

"But why, then, were the stumps notched in the middle?"

"That they might have two tails instead of one, which is invariably the case," replied my host.

But I will not tire your highness with an account of all that I saw, and which occurred during my stay on that island. If I were to enter into the excellence of their government, which consisted of a Great Harpooner, and two councils of first and second Harpoons, or of the manners and customs of the inhabitants, ceremonies at births, and marriages, and deaths—of their amusements, and their ingenious supply of all their wants, it would afford materials for at least two volumes quarto, without margin. I shall therefore confine myself to stating, that after a sojourn of six months, I became so impatient to quit the island, that I determined to encounter any risk, rather than not accomplish it.

My host, and all the principal inhabitants, finding that no persuasions could induce me to stay, consented at last to furnish me with the means which I had hit upon to make my escape.

I omitted to mention to your highness, the whales had been rendered so docile, that they not only were used for draught on the lake, but even for carrying on their backs. I never could be persuaded to mount one, I had such a horror of being seated on a fish's back, after my travelling on the shark; but I had often crossed the lake in one of the great whale boats towed by one or two of the animals fastened to it by loops over their tails. This conveyance suggested to me the idea of my escape, which I

proposed to make by means of one of these large whale boats, covered completely in, and to be towed out of the mouth of the lake by one of the draught whales.

At my request, a boat was prepared, and covered in, with whalebone windows to admit light; a stock of provisions were supplied me sufficient for a long voyage; and the whale being put to, I departed amidst the tears and lamentations of the friendly islanders, who looked upon me as a man bent upon my own destruction. But I was aware that the fishery would soon commence, and had great hopes of being picked up by one of the vessels. I was soon clear of the lake; and the lad who was on the back of the draught whale, having towed me out in pursuance of his orders, until the island appeared like a cloud on the horizon, cast me loose and hastened back, that he might return home before dark.

For three weeks I remained in the inside of this enormous boat, or rather I may say fish tossed upon the waves, but without injury, from its extreme buoyancy. One morning I was awakened from a sound sleep by a sudden blow on the outside of my vessel. I imagined that I had come in contact with an iceberg, but the sound of voices convinced me, that at last I had fallen in with my fellow-creatures. A harpoon was now driven in, which I narrowly escaped, and a volley of execrations followed, by which I knew immediately that the people were English.

After a few minutes, they commenced sawing a hole in the side of my whale boat; and a piece being removed, a head was put in. Fearful of another harpoon, I had raised up my large white bear's skin as a defence, and the man perceiving it, immediately withdrew his head, swearing that there was a white bear in the belly of the whale. The boat shoved off, and they commenced firing musket balls, which pierced my boat through and through, and I was obliged to lie down at the bottom to save my life. After about twenty shots, the boat again came along side, and a man, putting his head in, and perceiving me at the bottom of the boat, covered over with the bear's skin, imagined that the animal had been killed, and reported to his

companions. With some degree of apprehension they climbed in at the hole which they had cut, when I lifted up my bear's skin, and made my appearance, dressed in the black skin worn by the inhabitants of Whale's Island. This frightened them still more; one roared out that it was the devil, and they all ran to make their escape at the hole by which they entered, but in their eagerness they prevented each other.

It was with difficulty that I convinced them that I was harmless, which I did at last; and having explained in a few words how I came there, they permitted me to go with them on board of the ship. The captain was very sulky when he heard the story; he had imagined it to be a dead whale, and had ordered it to be towed alongside, to cut off the blubber. Disappointed in his expectations, he swore that I was a Jonas, who had come out of the whale's belly, and there would be no luck in the ship, if I remained. The sailors, whose profits in the voyage were regulated by the number of fish taken, thought this an excellent reason for throwing me overboard; and had there not been two sail in sight, standing towards them, I certainly should have had some more adventures to narrate. At last they consented to put me on board of one which had hoisted French colours. She was from Havre, and having twelve fish on board, was returning home. The captain consented to give me a passage, and in two months I was once more in my native country.

Such, your highness, were the adventures of my Third Voyage.

"Well, the story of the Island was rather too long," observed the pacha, "but altogether, it was amusing. Mustapha, I think it is worth ten pieces of gold."

Chapter X

The next day the renegade commenced his fourth voyage in the following words.

FOURTH VOYAGE OF HUCKABACK.

Your highness may imagine, that I ought to have been pretty well tired of going to

sea, after so many mishaps; but there is a restlessness attending a person who has once been a rover, that drives him from comfort and affluence in possession, to seek variety through danger and difficulty in perspective. Yet I cannot say that it was my case in the present instance, for I was forced to embark against my inclination. I had travelled through France to Marseilles, with a small sum of money presented me by the captain of the ship who gave me a passage home, for I could no longer bear the idea of not again seeing my father, if he was alive; and I felt no apprehensions from the circumstance of the lady abbess, as I knew how soon every thing in this world is forgotten, and that I was so altered from time and hardship, that I was not likely to be recognised.

On my arrival at my native city, I proceeded to the well-known shop, where I had been accustomed to exercise my talents, under my father's superintendence. The pole was extended from the door, the basin still turned round in obedience to the wind; but when I entered the shop, which was crowded with people (for it was Saturday afternoon), I perceived that all the operators were unknown to me, and that my father was not there. One of the expectants, who waited his turn, politely made room for me beside him on the bench, and I had time to look about me before I made any interrogations.

The shop had been newly painted, a looking-glass of considerable dimensions had been added, and the whole wore the appearance of a more thriving establishment.

"You are a stranger, Monsieur?" observed my neighbour.

"I am," replied I; "but I have been at Marseilles before, and when I was last here I used to frequent this shop. There was a short stout man who was at the head of it, but I do not recollect his name."

"Oh—Monsieur Maurepas. He is dead; he died about two months since."

"And what has become of his family?"

"He had but one son, who had an intrigue with the daughter of an old officer in this

town, and was obliged to leave it. No one has heard of him since: he is supposed to have been lost at sea, as the vessel in which he embarked never arrived at the port to which she was bound. The old man died worth money, and there is a law-suit for his property now carried on between two distant relations."

"What became of the lady you were speaking of?"

"She retired to a convent, not three miles off, and is since dead. There was some mystery about the abbess, and she was supposed to be able to explain it. I believe she was pronounced 'contumacious' by the Inquisition, and put into prison, where she died from the severity of her treatment."

My heart smote me when I heard this. The poor girl had endured all this severity on my account, and was faithful even to the last. I fell into a reverie of most painful feelings. Cerise, too, whose fate I had before ascertained when I was at Toulouse—Dear, dear Cerise!

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"I tell you again, Huckaback, I wish to have no more of Cerise," cried the pacha. "She is dead, and there's an end of her."

* * * * *

The information that I received made me doubtful how to proceed; I could easily prove my identity, but I had a degree of apprehension that I might be catechised in such a manner as to raise suspicions. At the same time without a you in the world, I did not much like the idea of abandoning all claim to my father's property. I had formerly dressed the peruke of an elderly gentleman who practised in the law, and with whom I was a great favourite. Although five years had elapsed since I first ran away from my father, I thought it very likely that he might be still alive. I resolved to call at his house. When I knocked and asked if he was at home, the girl who opened the door replied in the affirmative, and I was shown into the same little study, littered with papers, into which I formerly used to bring him his peruke.

"Your pleasure, sir?" inquired the old man, peering at me through his spectacles.

"I wish," replied I, "to ask your opinion relative to a disputed succession."

"What is the property?"

"That of Monsieur Maurepas, who died some short time since."

"What, have we another claimant? If so, as I am employed by one party already, you must go elsewhere. I wish François would make his appearance and claim his own, poor fellow."

Delighted to find that the old gentleman had still a regard for me, I made no scruple of making myself known.

"I am François, sir," replied I.

The old gentleman rose from his seat, and coming close to me, looked at me earnestly in the face. After a minute's scrutiny,

"Well—I do believe you are; and pray, sir, where have you been all this while?"

"That's what I cannot very well tell, but I have seen and suffered much."

"But that's what you must tell, if you wish to obtain your property—that is to say, you must tell me. Don't be afraid, François: it is a part of our profession to be confidants to strange secrets, and I think there are many locked up in this breast of more importance than any which you can disclose."

"But, sir, if my life is concerned."

"What then—your life will be safe. If I told all I knew, I could hang half Marseilles. But laying my professional duty aside, I wish you well; so now sit down, and let me hear your narrative."

I felt that I could confide in my old acquaintance, and I therefore commenced a detail of my adventures. When I stated my being wrecked near Marseilles, he interrupted me, laughing—

"And you were the holy abbess?"

"I was."

"Well, I thought I recollected your face, when I came with the rest of the Tom Fools to pay my respects to you: and when it was whispered that a man had personified the holy abbess, I said to myself,'that it was either François or the devil, 'but I never mentioned my suspicions."

When I had finished my narrative, he observed, "Now, François, there will be some risk of proving your identity in a court of justice, which the other parties will insist upon. What I should advise you to do, is, to compromise with the party that employs me. Make over to him a conveyance of all the property, on condition of your receiving one half, or more if we can get it. I will represent you as a careless young man, anxious to obtain money and spend it. If he agrees, you will obtain a good round sum without risk, and I shall oblige both my clients, which is always my endeavour."

I agreed to the good sense of the proposal, and my old friend advanced me some louis to enable me to improve my appearance. Advising me not to show myself too much, he offered me a bed at his house. I left him to procure a more decent wardrobe; and for better disguise, fitted myself with an officer's undress suit, and having purchased a few other necessaries, returned to his house.

"Well, upon my honour, you do justice to your dress. I don't wonder at Mademoiselle de Fonseca falling in love with you. That is a sad story though—I don't know whether I ought to trust you with my housekeeper, for she is very young and very pretty. Promise me, on your honour, that you will not make love to the poor girl, for I have an affection for her, and will not have her added to your list of broken hearts."

"Mention it not, I beg, sir," replied I, mournfully; "my heart is dead and buried with her whose name I have just mentioned."

"Well, then, go up stairs and introduce yourself. I have people waiting in the next

room."

I obeyed his directions, and when I entered the parlour above, perceived a youthful figure working at her needle, with her back towards me. She turned her head at my approach—what was my amazement, what was my delight, when I beheld Cerise!

* * * * *

"Holy prophet," exclaimed the pacha, "is that woman come to life again?"

"She was never dead, your highness, and will occupy your attention more than once, if I am to proceed with my voyages."

"But I hope there will be no more love scenes."

"Only the present one, your highness: for after that we were married."

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Cerise looked at me for one moment, screamed, and fell lifeless on the floor. I caught her in my arms, and as she lay senseless, called her by her name, and imprinted a hundred kisses on her lips.

The noise had alarmed the old gentleman, who unobserved by me, came in, and witnessed the scene. "Upon my honour, sir, considering your promise to me just now, you are making rather free."

"'Tis Cerise, my dear sir—Cerise!"

"Cerise de Fonseca?"

"Yes, the same, the dear girl whom I have ever lamented."

"Upon my soul, Mr François, you've a talent for adventures," said the old gentleman, leaving the room, and returning with a tumbler of water. Cerise was soon restored, and lay trembling in my arms. Our old friend, who considered that he was 'de trop,' quitted the room, and left us together.

I will not dwell upon a scene which can have no charms to those, who, like your highness, buy love ready made; I shall therefore narrate the history of Cerise, which

at my request was imparted, previous to her receiving a similar confidence on my part.

"Allow me to observe, Felix (or what is your name, you impostor?"), said Cerise, half reproachfully, and half in jest.

"My name is François."

"Well, then, François; but I never shall like that name so well as Felix, for it was to Felix that—but there's nothing in a name after all—except that the first is engraven on my heart, and cannot be effaced. But let me tell my story, and allow me to commence with an observation, which my acquaintance with you, and subsequent reflections, have deeply impressed upon my mind. It unfortunately happens, that those who are highest in rank, in this world, pay dearly for it in a point upon which almost all the real happiness of life consists. I mean in the choice of the partner with whom they are destined to walk the pilgrimage of life hand in hand; and the higher their rank, the more strictly are they debarred from making a selection, which the meanest peasant can enjoy without control.

"A king has no choice, he must submit to the wishes of his subjects, and the interests of his country. The aristocracy in our country are little better off, at least the female part of it, for they are dragged from convents to the altar, and offered up as a sacrifice to family connection At the time that we were, or were supposed to be (for as yet it is a mystery to me), assisted by you on the road—"

"In one point not a supposition certainly, my Cerise, for I took off my only garment to cover you."

"You did—you did—I think I see you now, leaving the side of the chariot; I loved you from that moment—but to continue: I was then going down to the chateau, to be introduced to my future husband, whom I had never seen, although the affair had been long arranged.

"My father had no idea that any harm could result from a few days' acquaintance;

and he felt too grateful to forbid you the house; but he little knew how situation and opportunity will overcome time; and I knew more of you in a few days than I thought I could have known of any man in so many years. That I loved you—loved you dearly—you know well.

"But to proceed: (nay, don't kiss me so, or I shall never tell my story). The next morning I heard that you had gone, as you had told me it was your intention; but my father's horse did not come back—my father was grave, and the bishop more gloomy than usual. Two days afterwards I was informed by my father that you were an impostor, that all had been discovered, and that if taken you would probably be seized by the Inquisition; but you had fled the country, and were supposed to have embarked at Toulon. He added, that my intended husband would arrive in a few days.

"I considered all that he had told me, and I formed the following conclusions:—first, that you were not the person that you described yourself to be; and, secondly, that he had discovered our attachment, and had insisted upon your not re-appearing—but that you had deserted me, and left the country, I knew, after what had passed, to be impossible. But whether you were Monsieur de Rouillé or not, you were all I coveted, and all that I adored; and I vowed that for you I would live or die. I felt assured that one day or another, you would come back, and that conviction supported me. My future husband appeared—he was odious. The time fixed for our wedding drew nigh—I had but one resource, which was flight. A young girl who attended me (you recollect her, she came and told us the bishop was coming, when we were in the garden), I knew to be attached to me. I took her in confidence, and through her means I obtained a peasant's dress, with the promise of shelter in her father's cottage, some leagues distant. The night before the marriage was to take place, I ran down to the river that flows past the chateau, threw my bonnet and shawl on the bank, and then made my escape to where her father was waiting to receive me, in a cart which he had provided as a conveyance. The girl, who was left,

managed admirably: it was supposed that I had drowned myself, and as they had no further occasion for her services, she was dismissed, and joined me at her father's cottage. I remained there for more than a year, when I thought it advisable to move, and come to Marseilles, where I obtained the situation of housekeeper to this old gentleman, who has treated me more like a daughter than a domestic. Now, Mr François, can you give so good an account of yourself?"

"Not quite, Cerise; but I can honestly declare, that when I thought you alive, I never forgot you, and believing you dead, I never ceased to lament you, nor have I looked at a woman since. Our old friend below can prove it, by my answer when he cautioned me against the charms of his housekeeper."

I did not, your highness, tell the whole truth to Cerise; for I have always considered it perfectly justifiable to retain facts which cannot add to people's happiness. I declared that I left her because my life would have been forfeited if I had remained, and I valued it only for her sake. That I always intended to return, and when I quitted Valencia, and had become a man of property, I immediately proceeded to make inquiries, and heard the news of her death. Neither did I acquaint her with the profession which I had followed; I merely stated that my father was a man of eminence, and that he had died rich—for although people of good family will sometimes bow to love, taking the risk of high or low birth, they are always mortified when they discover that their ticket in the lottery has turned up a blank.

Cerise was satisfied—we renewed our vows—and the old gentleman, who declared that of all the secrets in his possession ours would be the most dangerous to him if discovered, was not sorry to see us united, and quit the house.

I obtained two-thirds of my fortune from the claimant, and with it and my wife repaired to Toulon.

For one year I enjoyed uninterrupted happiness. My wife was everything to me, and so far from leaving her in search of variety, I could not bear to go out of the house

unless she accompanied me: but we were living much too fast, and at the end of the year I found one-third of my property had been spent. My affection would not permit me to reduce my wife to beggary, and I determined to take some measures to secure the means of future existence. Consulting her on the occasion, with many tears Cerise acknowledged my prudence, and having divided the remainder of my property, one half of which I laid out in merchandise, and the other I gave to her, for her support during my absence, I embarked on board of a vessel bound to the West Indies.

We made the islands without any accident, and I was extremely successful in my speculations; I began to think that fortune was tired of persecuting me, but knowing how treacherous she was, I shipped one half of my return cargo in another vessel, that I might have more than one chance.

When our captain was ready to sail, the passengers repaired on board, and amongst others a rich old gentleman who had come from Mexico, and who had been waiting for a passage home to France. He was very ill when he came on board, and I recommended his losing a little blood, offering my services on the occasion. They were accepted; the old gentleman recovered, and we were very intimate afterwards. We had been about a fortnight clear of the island, when a hurricane came on, the equal to which in force I never beheld. The sea was one sheet of foam, the air was loaded with spray, which was thrown with such violence against our faces that we were blinded; and the wind blew so strong that no one could stand up against it. The vessel was thrown on her beam ends, and we all gave ourselves up for lost. Fortunately the masts went by the board, and the ship righted. But when the hurricane abated, we were in an awkward predicament; the spare spars had been washed overboard, and we had no means of rigging jury-masts and making sail. There we lay rolling in a perfect calm which succeeded, and drifting to the northward by the influence of what is called the Gulf Stream.

One morning, as we were anxiously looking out for a vessel, we perceived something at a distance, but could not ascertain what it was.

At first we imagined that it was several casks floating, which had been thrown overboard, or had forced their way out of the hold of some vessel which had foundered at sea. But at last we discovered that it was an enormous serpent, coming directly on towards the vessel, at the rate of fifteen or twenty miles an hour. As it approached, we perceived to our horror, that it was about a hundred feet long, and as thick as the main-mast of a seventy-four; it occasionally reared its head many feet above the surface, and then plunging it down again continued its rapid course. When it neared us to within a mile, we were so alarmed that we all ran down below. The animal came to the ship, and rearing its body more than half way out of the water, so that if our masts had been standing, his head would have been as high as our topsail-yards, looked down on deck. He then lowered his great diamond-shaped head, and thrusting it down the hatchway, seized one of the men in his teeth, plunged into the sea and disappeared.

We were all horror-struck, for we expected his reappearance, and had no means of securing ourselves below, every grating and skylight having been washed overboard in the hurricane. The old gentleman was more alarmed than the rest. He sent for me and said,

"I did look forward to once more seeing my relations in France, but that hope is now abandoned. My name is Fonseca, I am a younger brother of a noble family of that name, and I intended, if not to enrich my brother, at least to endow his daughter with the wealth I have brought with me. Should my fears be verified, I trust to your honour for the performance of my request. It is, to deliver this casket, which is of great value, into the hand of either one or the other. Here is a letter with their address, and here is the key; the remainder of my property on board, if saved, in case of my death, is yours, and here is a voucher for you to show in case of necessity."

I took the casket, but did not tell him that I was the husband of his niece—as he might have disinherited her for having married so much below her rank in life. The old gentleman was right in his supposition, the serpent returned in the afternoon, and seizing him as he had the sailor, in the morning, again, plunged into the sea; and so he continued bearing two or three off every day, until I was the only one left. On the eighth day he had taken off the last but me, and I knew that my fate must be decided in the evening; for large as he was, he could penetrate every part of the ship, and could draw you to him, when you were many feet distant, by sucking in his breath.

There happened to be two casks, of a material lately invented in England, which we were taking to France on trial; during the hurricane, one had burst, and the stench proceeding from it was intolerable. Although it had gradually evaporated, I perceived that whenever the serpent approached any thing that had been defiled with it, he immediately turned away, as if the smell was as unbearable to him as it was to us. I don't know what it was composed of, but the English called it coal tar. It struck me that I might save myself my means of this offensive composition. I knocked out the head of the remaining cask, and arming myself with a broom dipped in it, I jumped into the cask which contained the remainder, and awaited my fate with anxiety. The serpent came; as usual, forced his head and part of his body down the hatchway, perceived me, and with eyes darting fire reached out his head to seize me. I dashed the broom into his mouth, and bobbed my head immediately under the coal tar. When I lifted it up again, almost suffocated, the animal had disappeared. I crawled out, and looking over the side, perceived him lashing the ocean in his fury, plunging and diving to rid himself of the composition with which I had filled his mouth. After exhausting himself with his furious endeavours, he went down, and I saw him no more.

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"Did you never see him again?" inquired the pacha.

"Never but that once; nor has the animal been seen before or since, except by the Americans, who have much better eyes than the people of Europe can boast of."

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The vessel drifted to the northward with the Gulf Stream, until she was close to the land, when a pilot boat came out and boarded her. The people belonging to her were much annoyed to find me on board. Had there been no one in her, they would have claimed the whole vessel and cargo, whereas they were now only entitled to one-eighth. I understood English enough to hear them propose and agree to throw me overboard. I immediately ran down below to secure my casket, and when I returned on deck, they launched me over the side. I sank down, and diving under the counter, laid hold of the rudder chains, unperceived by them. In the meantime another pilot boat came to us, and sent her boat or board; I swam to it and was hauled in. The captains being rivals, I was taken to New York as evidence against the people who had attempted my life. I stayed there just long enough to sell my seven-eighths of the cargo, and see the men hung, and I then took a passage in a vessel bound to Bourdeaux, where I arrived in safety. From thence I repaired to Toulon, and found my dear Cerise as beautiful and as fond as ever.

I was now a rich man; I bought a large estate, with a marquisate attached to it. I also purchased the chateau of Fonseca, and made a gift of it to my dear wife. I was pleased at having the means of raising her again to that rank in society, which she had quitted for my sake. For some years we lived happily, although we had no children. After that, events happened which again sent me to sea. Such, your highness, is the history of my Fourth Voyage.

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"Well," observed the pacha, "I never heard of so large a snake before; did you, Mustapha?"

"Never, your highness; but travellers see strange things. What is to be the extent of

your highness' bounty?"

"Give him ten pieces of gold," said the pacha, rising from the throne, and waddling behind the curtain.

Mustapha told out the sequins. "Selim, if I might advise you, it would please his highness better, if you continued more at sea, and dealt a little more in the marvellous. That wife of yours, Cerise, as you call her, is rather a bore."

"Well, I'll get rid of her to-morrow; but I can tell you, vizier, that I deserve all my pay, for it's rather fatiguing work—besides, my conscience."

"Holy prophet! hear him—his conscience! go, hypocrite, drown it in wine to-night, and it will be dead to-morrow; and don't forget to kill your wife."

"Allow me to observe, that you Turks have very little taste; nevertheless, I will get rid of her after your own fashion, for she shall go to the bottom of the sea—Bashem ustun, on my head be it."

Chapter XI

The next morning the pacha hurried over the business of the day, for Mustapha had intimated that the renegade considered his fifth voyage to be one of great marvels. Selim was introduced as before, and commenced the narrative.

FIFTH VOYAGE OF HUCKABACK.

Your highness may be surprised, that being in the possession of wealth, rank, and my charming Cerise, I should have again ventured upon the treacherous ocean. Of course your highness has heard of the revolution which took place in France, and all the horrors which attended it.

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"France! Yes, I believe there is a country of that name; I can't say that I ever heard

of the revolution. Holy prophet! but these people have strange ideas," continued the pacha to the vizier; "to imagine that we must know or care about what is going on in their barbarous countries. You may proceed, Huckaback."

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It will be necessary to say a few words upon the subject, your highness, but I will be as concise as possible. One day, a party of men from my native city (Marseilles), dressed in red caps, their shirt sleeves tucked up, and armed with various weapons, surrounded my château, insisting upon my immediately informing them whether I was for the summoning of the estates-general. I answered, most certainly, if they wished it. They cheered me, and went away.

Shortly afterwards, they came to ascertain if I approved of the national convention. I answered, that I approved of it excessively. They were satisfied, and again disappeared. They came a third time, to inquire if I was a republican, to which I gave the affirmative. A fourth, to know whether I sided with the Girondists; I declared myself one of that party, and hoped that I should be asked no more questions. But before two or three months had passed away, another party came to ascertain whether I was a real Jacobin, which I solemnly pronounced myself to be;—a second time, to know whether I thought proper to be called citizen, or have my head cut off; I declared in favour of the former, and made them a present of my title of marquis. But at last they surrounded my house with loud cries, declaring that I was an aristocrat, and insisted upon carrying my head away upon a pike. This I considered a subject of remonstrance. I assured them that I was no aristocrat, although I had purchased the property, and that, on the contrary, I was a citizen barber from Marseilles; that I had relinquished the title of marquis, which I had bought with the property, and had therefore no claim whatever to aristocracy. But they insisted upon proofs, and ordering my valets to bring down the materials, desired me to shave a dozen of their party. I shaved for my life, and acquitted myself

so much to their satisfaction that they all embraced me, and were about to depart, when one of the women demanded that my wife (whose aristocratical descent was known) should be surrendered up, as a proof of my sincerity. We all have our moments of weakness; had I had the prudence to comply with the request, things would have ended happily, but I was foolish enough, although I had been married twelve years, to demur at the prospect of the head of my charming Cerise being carried away on a pike. I represented to them (as she clung to me for protection), that although of noble descent, she had reduced herself to my level by marrying a citizen barber. After a short consultation, they agreed that she was sufficiently degraded to live. They contented themselves with breaking open my cellar, that they might drink my health, and departed. But, your highness, I had soon cause to repent of my folly. Cerise was a charming woman, and an affectionate wife in adversity, but prosperity was her ruin, as well as mine. She had already had an affair with a Comte, who had lately been dismissed for a handsome young abbé; but we do not mind these little égaremens in our country, and I neither had leisure nor inclination to interfere with her arrangements. Satisfied with her sincere friendship for me, I could easily forgive a few trifling infidelities, and nothing had disturbed the serenity or gaiety of our establishment until this unfortunate exposé which I was obliged to make, and to prove the truth of in her presence, viz., that I had been a barber. Her pride revolted at the idea of having formed such a connection, her feelings towards me were changed to those of the most deadly hatred; and although I had saved her life, she ungratefully resolved to sacrifice mine. The little abbé's head had been taken off several weeks before, and she now formed a liaison with one of the jacobin associés, on condition that he would prove his attachment, by denouncing me as an aristocrat.

Fortunately, I had notice given to me in sufficient time to make my escape to Toulon. Leaving my wife, and, what was of more consequence, the whole of my property, in the hands of the jacobin, I joined the mob, and vowing vengeance upon

all aristocrats, became one of the most violent leaders of the sans culottes. Two months afterwards, when the gates of Toulon had been opened to the army, and I was assisting at a noyade, I had the pleasure of seeing my jacobin locum tenens, who had been denounced in his turn, tied back to back to a female; it was my adored Cerise. I had no time to speak to her, for they were hurried on board of the vessel. It sank with them, and some hundreds more; and as the beautiful auburn hair of my wife was borne up from her shoulders, upon which it had been hanging loose, and floated a second or two on the wave after her head had disappeared, I sighed at the remembrance of the transitory enjoyment of competence and love which I had shared with my charming Cerise.

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"And is she really dead now, Huckaback?" inquired the pacha.

"Yes, your highness, she is."

"Allah karim—God is most merciful. There is an end of that woman at last; now the story will go on."

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I have reason to believe that I should have become a person of some consequence if I had been able to remain in France, but another foolish attempt on my part to save the life of the old lawyer at Marseilles, who had assisted me in recovering part of my father's property, rendered me suspected. Aware that between suspicion and the guillotine there were but few hours of existence, I contrived to get on board of an Italian brig that had put in from stress of weather, and made my escape. The vessel was bound to North America for a cargo of salt fish, to be consumed on the ensuing Lent, and had a crew of fifteen men. The captain was very ill when we sailed, owing, as he said, to a cup of wine which his wife had mixed with her tears, and persuaded him to drink at their parting. He gradually declined as we proceeded on our voyage, until at last he was not able to quit his bed; and no person on board

except myself having any knowledge of keeping a ship's reckoning, that duty devolved upon me.

A few days before his death, the captain sent for me. "François," said he, "my wife has poisoned me, that I might not return to interrupt a connection which she had formed during my absence. I have no children, and no relations that have ever cared for me. I am the owner of the cargo, as well as the captain of this vessel, and it is my intention to make it over to you; I consider that you have the greatest claim to it, as there is nobody on board except yourself who can navigate her. Understand me, it is not out of any particular regard, so much as to prevent my wife from obtaining my property, that I select you as my heir; you have, therefore, to thank heaven for your good fortune, more than you have me. I have but one request to make in return, which is, that you will faithfully promise to cause five hundred masses to be said for my soul, upon your arrival in Italy."

I readily made the promise which he required, and the captain drew up a will, which he read and executed before the whole of the crew, by which the vessel and cargo were made over to me. Two days afterwards he expired. We sewed him up in a hammock, and threw him overboard. Although it was quite calm at the time, a gale sprung up immediately afterwards, which eventually increased to a hurricane.

We were obliged to bear up, and for several days scudded under bare poles, until I found that we were in the very centre of the Atlantic, out of the track of any vessels. Gradually the weather became more settled, and we again spread our canvas to the breeze. To my surprise, I observed, that although by my reckoning we were nearly one thousand miles from any land, several aquatic birds were hovering about the ship, of a description that seldom go far from the shore. I watched them as the sun went down, and perceived that they took their flight to the south-east. Anxious to discover any land, not hitherto described, I steered the ship in that direction during the night, and early on the next morning we found ourselves close to an island,

apparently ten or fifteen miles long, very high, and of a conical shape, which I knew was not laid down upon any chart. I resolved to examine it, and dropped my anchor in a small bay, at the bottom of which a few houses announced that it was inhabited; although I could not distinguish any thing like guns or fortification. We had not furled our sails, when a boat shoved off from the shore, and pulled towards us. She soon came alongside, and astonished us as much by the peculiarity of her structure, as by the appearance of the people who were on board.

She was a wide canoe, very beautifully carved and inlaid, or rather veneered, with gold ornaments. She had a flag, hoisted to a staff, hanging over the stern, the field of which was white, with a representation of a fountain, worked in gold thread, in the centre. The three men who were in her, particularly the one seated in the stern sheets, were very richly attired in dresses worked in gold thread. But what astonished us more than all was the peculiarity of their complexions, which, although they were very well-featured men, were of a beautiful light blue—their eyes black, and their hair of a rich auburn.

The personage in the stern sheets ascended the side, and addressing me in excellent Portuguese, inquired if I could speak the language.

I answered in the affirmative, and he then welcomed us in the name of the king, upon my arrival at the island—asking me the number of my crew, whether I had any sick on board, and many other particulars, all of which he noted down upon tablets of gold, with a piece of red cinnabar.

Having replied to all his interrogations, I then obtained from him the following particulars, viz., that the island had been originally peopled by one of the ships belonging to Vasco de Gama's squadron, which, returning from the East Indies laden with the produce of the east, and specimens of the various inhabitants of the newly discovered territories, had been cast away and utterly wrecked. That the island, which otherwise was fertile and well stocked, was one mine of gold, which in the

absence of other metals, they were necessitated to employ for every article and utensil in common use. But the greatest curiosity which the island contained, was a fountain of water at the foot of the centre peak, of a beautiful colour, and producing longevity to those who drank of it; from which it had received the name of the Isle of the Golden Fountain. That when they had landed, about three hundred years ago, they consisted of various nations and colours, male and female; but the climate and the use of the waters, had, in the course of time, produced the change in their complexions which we beheld, and all the inhabitants were now of that peculiar tint, with the exception that the females were not so dark as the men. Few ships had ever touched there; and the crews of those who had fallen in with the island, had preferred remaining, which accounted for its being so totally unknown; that the king was very partial to strangers, and always received them at his palace, which was built close to the Golden Fountain. He concluded by requesting me to accompany him on shore, and pay my respects—stating, that if I wished to quit the island, his majesty would permit me to load my vessel with as much as she could carry, of the metal so precious in other countries, but so little valued in this.

I must acknowledge that I was quite overjoyed at his narration. I considered my fortune to be made, and hastened to accompany the ambassador, who stated that the king would not be pleased if I did not permit the major part of my ship's company to attend me to the palace. As the men were very eager to go on shore after the account which they had heard, and he assured me that the wind never blew home in the bay, which was on the lee side of the island, I consented to their wishes, and allowed all but two to quit the vessel.

We were much surprised when we landed at the village, to perceive that even the pig-troughs, posts, and rails, and indeed every article in which metal could be employed, were of solid gold; but we had not time for examination, as we found several sledges, drawn by small bullocks, waiting for us near the beach.

We mounted, and the animals set off in a swift canter, upon a smooth and ascending road, and in less than two hours we arrived at the king's palace, which was an extensive building, not very remarkable in its structure, excepting the unusual sight of the large columns of gold, supporting the porticos, which extended from it on every side. But when we had alighted and were proceeding through the porticos, I was astonished at the wonderful finish of the statues which embellished them. They were mounted on plinths of the burnished metal, and carved out of a sort of light blue chalcedony, which, joined with their masterly execution, gave them the appearance of life. I was surprised at the strange attitudes which the sculptors had chosen to represent, all more or less distorted, although the human proportions were admirable. Some appeared as if they had been placed on their legs when asleep, others laughing or crying, nay, one or two were represented in the act of vomiting. Amongst the whole I could not perceive one image in which the human form was represented in a noble or graceful posture, and I pitied the taste of those who could have employed workmen of such extraordinary talents in representing the image of his Maker, under such a degrading variety of postures. I was about to make this remark to my conductor, but I was checked by the remembrance, that I was in a king's palace, not in a studio; and that kings have their fancies, which they are not inclined to submit to public criticism.

When we arrived at the end of the portico, two lofty doors were thrown open, and we were struck dumb with the magnificence of the scene which presented itself to our eyes.

The king was seated on a throne of the most splendid workmanship; the precious metal had been oxydised to every shade of colour, and was wrought in beautiful Mosaic: the walls and ceiling were entirely covered with the same, in some parts burnished, to reflect as mirrors, in others elaborately carved in ornamental fretwork, as peculiar from the elegance of its design, as from the superiority of its execution. On each side of the throne extending to the door at which we entered, were a row of

ladies, and behind them raised on a platform about two feet higher, another row of courtiers—all dressed in stuffs of cloth of gold, which were embroidered with flowers of variously coloured metal, so as to present the most perfect imitation of nature. The women were very fair compared to the men, and their cerulian tint was far from being disagreeable, as it gave a transparency to their complexions; but none of them could be compared to the king's daughter, who was nearly white, and of the most perfect symmetry in feature and in form; her auburn hair was so long, that it hung down to the bottom of her dress, and was ornamented with small chains and ornaments of polished steel, which were entwined in its tresses. She sat at the foot of the throne, near to the king, and I was so astonished at her heavenly appearance, that I could not remember the compliments which I had intended to pay his majesty, but remained speechless before him.

The king received us very graciously, asking me many questions, and broke up the audience (after half an hour), desiring some of the handsomest ladies to select one of my companions, and each hold herself responsible for his comfort and amusement. I forgot to mention, that as every country has its peculiar customs, one here appeared to me very singular. When I asked the Gentleman usher what was the usual homage paid to the king of the country, he informed me that you advanced your hand before you, on a level with your face, and snapped your fingers at him. That the louder you could snap them, the more accomplished and elegant you were considered. But in my confusion I quite forgot his injunctions; and it was not until the ladies all snapped their fingers in obedience to the commands of their sovereign, that I recollected the omission which I had been guilty of. Before the king retired, he intimated that he expected we should take up our abodes at the palace for some days, and we should have the honour of sitting at his table, in the afternoon's banquet.

The whole of the company separated; those who had charge of my companions leading them different ways, leaving me alone with the princess, who had risen from her seat when directed by her father to take charge of me. I could have fallen down

and worshipped her: as it was, I involuntarily dropped on one knee, and looked up in her face as if I had been contemplating a celestial visitant.

She smiled and addressed me: "I am ordered to attend to your happiness and comfort, and I obey my father's commands with pleasure. I only trust that your happiness may be more lasting than it usually is in this deceitful world," and she sighed deeply.

I continued in my position at her feet, and encouraged by her urbanity, poured forth a torrent of what to the many are considered compliments, but which to her were but truths. I became eloquent from excitation, and being at this time, as I before observed to your highness, a very personable man, I perceived that she was pleased with my efforts to obtain her favour.

"I have more than once had this duty allotted to me, when strangers have visited the island," observed she; "but I have always been wearied, and have called in my women to assist me. I never yet have seen one like you; you are gentle, and of a very different description from those who generally have been introduced as the captains of vessels which have arrived here. I then was indifferent, if not glad, when my duty was at an end; but I feel otherwise now"—and she again sighed.

"If it depended upon me, fair princess, and upon my wishes, I am afraid that you would consider the duration of it to be most tedious. Never have I beheld any creature so perfect and so beautiful! O that your task might be continued for the term of my existence!"

"It probably may," answered she, gravely, and then, as if recollecting herself, she assumed a more cheerful air, and continued: "but we are losing time, which should be otherwise employed. Come, sir, permit me to obey my father's commands, and try to beguile the hours by contributing to your amusement."

Offering me her hand, which I respectfully raised to my lips, she then conducted me over the palace, directing my attention to every object that she considered worthy of

notice; and we had passed two or three hours in conversation, and remarks upon the objects before us, when I expressed my wish to behold the curious fountain from which the island took its name.

"I shall obey you," replied she: and again her face assumed a mournful cast. She led the way to a hall of black marble, in the centre of which the fountain threw up its water to the height of twelve or fourteen feet, and fell into a spacious basin. The water of it, when in a body, shone with all the colours of the rainbow, and the sparkling drops which were thrown out on every side, were brilliant as the purest gold.

"How beautiful!" exclaimed I, after some minutes of silent admiration. "These, then, are the waters of longevity."

"And also of intoxication," replied the princess. "They will be produced at the banquet of the king, and, O sir! be temperate, very temperate, in the use of them."

I promised that I would, and we continued our walk to the porticos of the palace, where I pointed to the statues of blue chalcedony, and begged her to inform me by whom they had been executed, and why they were all in such grotesque and absurd positions.

"That is a question which I cannot answer, further than that they were made in the island. We must now return, as the king's banquet will be ready."

We sat down at the table of the king, that is to say, I and my companions; for no courtiers, male or female, were permitted to have the same honour. Each lady stood behind the person who had been intrusted to her charge, and waited upon him. My gallantry, as a Frenchman, was sorely wounded at the idea of my charming princess performing the duties of a menial, and I expressed my feelings to her in a low tone of voice. She shook her head, as if to rebuke me, and I said no more. When we had finished the banquet, his majesty ordered the water of the golden fountain to be produced, which it immediately was, by those in attendance, and extolling its

virtues, desired a cup to be filled for each guest, which was handed to him by the attendant ladies.

As the princess presented the cup, she contrived to press one of her fingers against mine, before she removed them, to remind me of my promise. I drank but sparingly, but the effects were instantaneous—my spirits rose buoyant, and I felt a sort of intellectual intoxication. At a sign made by the king, the ladies now took their seats beside us, and by their attentions and caresses, increased the desire for the water, which they supplied in abundance. I must confess that at each sip that I took, the princess, who had taken her seat by me, appeared so much more charming in my eyes, that notwithstanding the repeated pressure of her foot to remind me of my promise, I could not resist the impulse to drink.

The boatswain and one of the seamen were very drunken characters, and had very soon poured down so much of the water, that they dropped off their stools on the marble pavement, without sense or motion. This recalled me to my senses, which were rapidly stealing away; I rose from my seat, and pointing out to my companions that it would ill become them to intoxicate themselves in the presence of his majesty, requested that they would drink no more, but leave the table before they were incapacitated from paying the proper attentions to their fair conductors. The last argument had more weight than the first, and notwithstanding the remonstrances of the king, who showed the greatest anxiety that we should remain, the party rose from the table and separated. The two men who were intoxicated were carried away by some of the courtiers, and the king with marks of displeasure quitted the hall. I was again left alone with my charming princess, and inflamed with the exhilarating draught which I had taken, I threw myself at her feet, declaring my violent passion, and my wish never to quit the island, if I could be blessed with a reciprocal feeling on her part. I perceived that I had made an impression, and following up my success, I protested and she listened, until the evening closed in and found us still seated upon the steps of the throne. At last, she rose and said, "I know not whether you be

sincere in what you say, but I must acknowledge that I hope you are; and I shall be very miserable if it should prove otherwise. But you are now under the effects of the intoxicating water, and may deceive yourself. Come, sir, it is time that I conduct you to your chamber, where you must sleep away the exhilarating effects of the golden fountain. To-morrow morning, if you are of the same opinion, I may be induced to make a discovery."

The next morning I awoke without any headache from the intemperance of the previous night. As soon as I quitted the apartment I met the princess outside. "I am still in the same mind, dear princess," said I, implanting a kiss upon her hand, "to live for you alone, or die if I cannot remain with you."

She smiled and answered, "Then for you will I sacrifice every thing; for until I beheld you, I never was aware that I had a heart. Rise and follow me, and you shall know all."

"We passed the large hall, with which the whole of the bed-chambers communicated, and she conducted me through a dark passage to a room, in which were several golden plinths without statues. At the further end of it I perceived, to my horror, that two of them were already occupied with the forms of the boatswain and sailor who had been intoxicated the night before. They were now changed into the same blue chalcedony of which the statues in the porticos were composed.

"Do you recognise these figures?" inquired the princess.

"I do, indeed," answered I with amazement.

"Such are the effects," continued she, "of intoxication from the water of the golden fountain. They contain in solution so large a quantity of the matter which by mineralogists is denominated silex, that once allow the senses to be overpowered by repeated draughts, and in a few hours the effects which you behold will be produced. It is by these means that my father has obtained the variety and number of statues which you have seen—all of whom were once visitors to the island in different

ships, not one of the crews of which have ever returned. It has also the power of producing longevity, and hardening the hearts of those who use it in moderation. My father's cruelty, therefore, is not thought of by his subjects, who, if convicted of any heinous crime, are forced to drink this water, and are erected as monuments of his displeasure in various parts of the island. You may ask, how is it that I have not as little remorse as the other inhabitants? The fact is, that I was naturally of a kind and tender heart; and my mother, who lamented it because she felt that it would not add to my happiness in this world of cruelty and deceit, was more than ever anxious that I should drink the waters; but what is forced upon us in childhood, is generally remembered as we grow up with disgust. The consequence is, that I have never used the waters since her death, which happened when I was but seven years old. Had I not made this discovery, in all probability you and all your companions would have fallen victims this evening, when the banquet will be spread and the water will be produced as before. My prepossession in your favour has, I trust, been the means of preserving the lives of those who remain."

"Cursed treachery!" exclaimed I; "and now, what is to be done?"

"You must escape. Caution your men not to drink this evening, and make some excuse to repair on board for an hour or two in the forenoon of to-morrow. As for me——"

"Without you, princess, I cannot—will not go. Either consent to accompany me, or here I stay, risking all; for I had sooner be a senseless statue upon a plinth in the portico of your abode, than quit the island with a broken heart."

"Then he is true; and there are some who are good—some who are not deceitful in this world;" exclaimed the princess, falling on her knees, as the tears trickled down her cheeks. "I am sure you'll treat me kindly," continued she, holding my hand in hers; "if you do not, I shall die."

I pressed her to my bosom, and vowed to love her till death; and we hastened back

to my chamber, that we might consult upon our arrangements. I found an opportunity, in the course of the forenoon, to acquaint all my companions of their danger, except one whom I could not meet with.

In the evening we again sat down to the banquet, and soon after the water had been produced, the one who had not been warned fell off his chair in a state of intoxication. I made this an excuse for drinking no more. Assuming an angry tone towards my companions, I apologised to the king for their want of respect in his presence, and rose from the table in spite of all his remonstrances. The next morning I stated to the king that I wished to return to my ship for an hour or two, that I might bring him a present of ivory, which I had been informed would be acceptable. The princess offered to attend us, and the king, satisfied with her surveillance, consented to our departure, on condition that we would not fail to return in time for the banquet, which we most faithfully promised. While the sledges were preparing, I requested the princess to obtain several flasks of the golden water, that I might present them as curiosities to all the learned societies in Europe. This she accomplished, and stowing them in her own sledge with several articles of wearing apparel, not only took them from the palace unperceived, but they were carried on board without the knowledge of my companions. I immediately cut my cables, and made all sail out of the bay without any molestation, as the natives did not suspect my intentions; I never felt more happy than when I found myself once more floating on the wave, in company with my beautiful princess, whose affectionate manners endeared me to her more and more every day.

Unfortunately, in our hurry to escape, we quite overlooked the circumstance of our water casks being nearly empty, and we were soon reduced to half a pint per diem. To render our situation more disastrous, the weather became intensely hot, and the people, in spite of all my remonstrances, contrived every night to steal a part of the water which was not yet expended, so that at last we found ourselves becalmed, without a drop of water on board.

But all my apprehensions were now swallowed up by one of greater interest. A fever seized my dear princess, who, accustomed to every luxury, and a beautiful climate, could not bear up against the close confinement of a vessel under a tropical sun. Notwithstanding all my care and attention, in three days after she was attacked she expired in my arms, blessing me for my attachment and my love, and regretting that she was summoned from the world so soon after she had discovered that there was an object in it worth living for. I threw myself upon——

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Here the renegade appeared to be much affected; he covered his face with the wide sleeve of his under garment, and was silent.

"By God and his prophet, these Franks are great fools about women," observed the pacha to Mustapha. "I must own, though, that I like this princess better than Cerise, and I am very sorry that she is dead. Come, Huckaback, go on. Where did you throw yourself?"

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On her body (continued the renegade, mournfully), where I remained for many hours. At last I rose in a frenzy quite indifferent as to life or death. I went on deck, where I found my crew much in the same condition, from their agonising thirst; but I mocked them, and laughed at the smooth expanse of water, which, far as the eye could reach, was not rippled by the slightest breeze, and turned my eyes up in derision to the sun, who poured down his vertical streams of light and heat, as if he would consume us with his powerful rays. I thought but of one subject, I had but one desire, which was, to rejoin the object of my adoration. On a sudden I called to mind the flasks of golden water, which till then I had forgotten, and rushing down into the cabin, I determined to intoxicate myself, and quit this world of disappointment and unrealised fruition. As if fearful that the spirit of my loved princess should have already so far journeyed to the realms of bliss, that I might not be able to discern her

when I had shaken off the incumbrance of an earthly body, and was at liberty to pursue, I seized a flask, and pouring out the water with a hand trembling with anxiety, drank off a glass. I was hastily refilling it, when the gurgling sound struck upon the ears of my companions, who rushing down like the fainting animals who hear the music of the fountain in the desert, poured tumultuously into the cabin, and in spite of all my remonstrances to leave me sufficient for the completion of my desires, seized upon the flask in my hand, as well as upon all those that remained, emptied them in a few seconds with their copious draughts, and returned laughing and shouting to the deck above.

The water which I had already drunk produced one good effect; it hardened my heart for the time, and I fell into a sort of stoical indifference, which lasted many hours. I then repaired on deck, where I found all my companions changed into blue chalcedony—not one alive. The heavens, too, had changed; clouds obscured the sun, the wind was rising, and ever and anon a mournful gust blew through the shrouds; the birds were screaming on the wing, and the water line of the black horizon was fringed with a narrow ridge of foam. The thunder rolled at a distance, and I perceived that convulsion of the elements was at hand. The sails were all set, and without assistance I could not reduce them; but I was indifferent to my fate. The lightning now darted in every direction, and large drops of rain pattered on the deck. With the means of existence, the desire of life returned: I spread out the spare sails, and as the torrents descended, and the vessel bowed to her gunwale in submission of the blast, I filled the empty casks. I thought of nothing else until my task was completed. I strode carelessly over the bodies of my companions, the sails were blown from the yards, the yards themselves were snapped asunder, the topmasts fell over the sides, the vessel flew before the boiling surge; but I heeded not—I filled the casks with water. When I had finished my labours, a reaction took place, and I recollected the loss which I had sustained. I descended to the cabin. There she lay in all her beauty. I kissed the cold cheek, I wrapped up the adored image, carried it on

deck, and launched it into the wave; and, as it disappeared under the raging billows, I felt as if my heart, in its struggles to escape, had burst the strings which confined it in my bosom, and had leapt into the angry flood to join her. Exhausted with my feelings, I fell down in a swoon; how long I remained I cannot exactly say, but it was nearly dark when I lost my recollection, and broad daylight when I recovered. The vessel was still flying before the gale, which now roared in its resistless fury; the tattered fragments of the sails were blown out before the lower yards like so many streamers and pennants, and the wrecks of the topmasts were still towing alongside through the foaming surge. The indurated bodies of my companions were lying about the decks, washed by the water which poured into the vessel, as she rolled deeply from one side to the other, presenting her gunwales as if courting the admittance of the wave. "Are you, then, tired of your existence, as well as I?" thought I, apostrophising the vessel. "Have you found out at last, that while you swim you've nought to encounter but difficulty and danger? That you enter your haven but to renew your tasks, and again become a beast of burthen; that when empty you must bow to the slightest breeze, and when laden must groan and labour for the good of others. Have——"

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"Holy prophet! I never heard of people talking to ships before, and I don't understand it," observed the pacha. "Leave out all you said to the ship, and all the ship said to you in reply, and go on with your story."

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The gale lasted for three days, and then it as suddenly fell calm. I had observed by the compass that we had been running to the eastward, and I supposed that we were not very far from the Western Isles. As I surveyed the bodies of my companions, it occurred to me that they ought to fetch a high price in Italy as specimens of art, and I resolved to dispose of them as the work of men. Having no other employment, I

brought up the spare planks from below, and made packing-cases for them all. It was with some difficulty that I contrived, by means of tackles, to lower them to the hold, which I succeeded in accomplishing with safety excepting in one instance, when, from the tackle-fall giving way, the image fell to the bottom of the vessel, and being very brittle, was broken into pieces. As it was no longer of any value as a statue, I broke it up to examine it, and I can assure your highness that it was very wonderful to witness how every part of the human body was changed into flint, of a colour corresponding with that which it had been when living. The heart was red, and on my arrival in Italy I had several seals made from it, which were pronounced by the lapidaries who cut them to be of the finest blood-red cornelian. I have now a piece of the dark stone of which the liver was composed, which I keep for striking a light. As it afterwards proved, almost all of it was valuable, for the alternate fat and lean formed a variety of beautiful onyxes and sardonyx, which I disposed of very advantageously to the cameo engravers. I was several days employed in packing up, but I had plenty of provisions and water, and had no doubt but that I should be seen by some vessel before they were expended. Three weeks had elapsed, when one morning I went on deck, and saw land on both sides of me. I immediately recognised the Rock of Gibraltar, and the Straits, through which I was drifting. I was boarded by a Spanish gun-boat from Algesiras, and having stated that all my crew had died two months before of the yellow fever, I was towed in, put into quarantine for forty days, and then permitted to equip my vessel and procure sailors. This I was enabled to do by selling two of the flasks which held the water, and which, like all the other utensils of the island from which I had escaped, were of pure gold.

I did not think it prudent to go to Leghorn, where not only the vessel might be recognised, and the widow give me some trouble, but the statues also might have been identified as the men who had sailed in the vessel, and occasion my being burnt as a necromancer by the Inquisition. I directed my course for Naples, where I arrived in safety. Having disembarked my metamorphosed crew, I hired a large room to

exhibit them, and expected to realise a considerable sum; but as I could not name the artist, and the figures had not the grace which the Italians admire, they remained on my hands, and were even found fault with as not being well executed. I sold two of the least prepossessing to a Sicilian nobleman, who I understood had a large country seat decorated with monstrosities; and I then determined, as I had received a high price for the pieces of the one which had been broken up, to retail the others in the same way. It answered admirably, and I received more money for the fragments than I had asked for the images in an unmutilated state. The remainder of the golden flasks also realised a large sum; I produced them one by one, and disposed of them to English collectors, as having been purloined by the excavators from the ruins of Pompeii. I had now plenty of money, and resolved to return to my native city. An opportunity offering, I embarked, and safely arrived at Marseilles.

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"Did you fulfil your promise to the Italian captain, by having five hundred masses said for his soul?" inquired Mustapha.

"Upon my salvation! I never thought of it to this moment," replied the renegade.

"Such, your highness, are the adventures of my Fifth Voyage; and I trust that the narration of them has afforded you entertainment."

"Yes," observed the pacha, rising, "that was something like a voyage. Mustapha, give him thirty pieces of gold. Huckaback, we will hear your sixth voyage to-morrow"—and the pacha retired behind the screen, and, as usual, went into the apartment of the women.

"Pray, Selim, was there any truth in that history of the princess? I thought at first that it was all invention; but when you wept——"

"That was for the sake of effect," answered the renegade: "when I get warmed with my story, I often work myself up to a degree that I almost believe it myself."

"Holy prophet! what a talent!" rejoined Mustapha. "What an excellent prime

minister you would have made in your own country! Here's your money; will your next voyage be as good?"

"I'll try, at all events; as I find that the principal increases with the interest" said the renegade, chinking the sequins in his hand. "Au revoir, as we say in France"—and the renegade quitted the divan.

"Allah—what a talent!" muttered the vizier to himself, as the renegade disappeared.

Chapter XII

On the ensuing day, after the usual business of the divan had been gone through, the renegade was called in, and taking his seat, commenced the narrative of his sixth voyage.

SIXTH VOYAGE OF HUCKABACK.

May it please your highness.

It was my intention to have remained quietly on shore, after so many hairbreadth escapes and singular adventures; but I found France so changed, that I was disgusted with my own country. Every thing was upside down—the nobles, the wealthy, the talented, either were murdered, or living in abject poverty in other countries, while the lower classes had usurped their place, and governed the land. But what decided me once more to go to sea, was that the continual demands for fresh levies to recruit the republican armies, convinced me that I had no chance of long remaining in quiet. Of two evils I preferred what I considered to be the least, and rather than die in a ditch on shore, I preferred the dangers which might be incurred afloat. I bought a large ship, and fitted her for a voyage of speculation to Lima in South America. As the English cruisers covered the seas, and I was resolved that I would not be taken by a vessel of small force, I shipped with me a complement of forty men, and had twelve guns mounted on her decks. We escaped through the gut of Gibraltar, and

steered our course for Cape Horn, the southernmost point of America. Nothing worth narrating occurred until we made the land, when a strong adverse gale came on, which, after attempting in vain to beat against it, blew away most of our sails and finally obliged us to bear up, and run away to the southward and eastward.

From the working and straining of the vessel, the decks had become so leaky, that the water ran through every part of the ship. Our provisions (particularly our bread) being spoiled, and obliged to be thrown overboard, we were necessitated to be put upon short allowance. As we had no hopes of being able to support ourselves upon what was left until our arrival at Lima, I determined to run for the nearest island, where I might obtain a fresh supply, and then renew our attempt to beat round the Cape. I was in some doubts where to proceed, but after running eastward for a fortnight, we discovered land on the lee bow, which I considered to be the uninhabited Island of New Georgia; but as we approached it, we thought that we perceived people on the beach, and when within five miles we could plainly distinguish that they were soldiers in their uniforms, ranged up, rank and file. The colour of their clothes could not be made out with the glass, but it was easy to be distinguished that they had yellow facings; from which I inferred that they were our enemies the English. "Peste!" thought I, "is it possible that these grasping islanders have made a settlement on this place? Where will they go to next?" The different companies appeared to be from one to two dozen in number; sometimes they stood quite still, at others they walked a little way on the beach; but they constantly adhered to their rank-and-file position, and as I could not perceive that they had any muskets in their hands, I inferred that they were merely practising the marching evolutions. No houses or fortifications were distinguishable, and I determined to run the ship nearer in, that I might observe their motions. I did so, and when within two miles, I again rounded to, and putting my eye to the glass, perceived to my astonishment that a whole regiment of them ran into the surf, and reappeared on the outside of it, in the form of aquatic birds, swimming and diving in every direction. I

now began to suspect, that it was an enchanted island, and not forgetting the lesson of the Golden Fountain, I made all sail, and we soon left it out of sight astern. I think it right to state to your highness, that on mentioning this circumstance to an Englishman, who had been employed in the spermaceti whale fishery, he asserted that they really were birds, called Patagonian penguins, who had often deceived others by their martial appearance. He stated that they had no wings, but only flappers, and when on shore, invariably stood upright like men in ranks—that they were about three or four feet high when in this posture, and had two broad yellow streaks on each side of their necks. How far his assertions were true I do not know, for the people of that country, who have doubled the Cape, consider themselves entitled to tell any falsehoods which they think proper, and to shoot you if you venture to express a doubt as to their veracity; one of my chief reasons for disliking the English is, that they are such abominable liars.

We now steered more to the southward, and in three days discovered another small island. It was apparently well wooded, although not large. We hove to, to windward of it, and not perceiving any inhabitants, I lowered down a boat, and sent the first mate on shore to reconnoitre. He returned in an hour, informing me that the island was covered with cocoa-nut trees in full bearing, and that he had seen several wild pigs, but no symptoms of its being inhabited—that there was no anchorage that he could discover, as the shore rose perpendicularly, like a wall, from the ocean. We therefore ran to leeward, and discovered that a reef of coral rocks extended nearly two miles from that side of the island. The boats were again lowered, and after surveying, the mate reported that there was a passage, with plenty of water, for the ship, through the very centre of the reef, which would bring her into a small bay, where she might lay in perfect security. Before night we had gained the anchorage, and furled sails. The next morning I went on shore to reconnoitre; we found some springs of fresh water, cocoa-nuts and other trees in abundance, and occasionally fell in with herds of wild pigs, which appeared, with the exception of birds, to be the

only animals that existed upon the island. Satisfied that I now had an opportunity of revictualling my ship, I unbent my sails, struck my topmasts, unrove my running rigging, and, in short, made every preparation for a long stay. I then sent parties on shore to erect tents, and shoot the wild pigs, while I superintended the fixing of coppers on the beach to boil the salt out of the sea water, which would be necessary for curing the provisions. I also dug shallow pans in the rock, close to the water's edge, that I might gain as much salt as possible by means of evaporation. Every thing was prepared in the course of the day, and the major part of my ship's company were landed, and slept in the tents. In three days we had salted down several casks of pork, and had collected a large quantity of cocoa-nuts.

On the fourth morning I heard a dispute among the men, some of them swearing that they would not remain, and that the ship ought to go to sea immediately. Astonished at these remarks, after they had expressed themselves so well pleased, I inquired the reason. They answered, that there was magic in the island, and on my requiring an explanation, they took me to the salt pans, which, upon our arrival, had been cut in the rocks within a foot of the water's edge, but had now receded from the shore to a distance of nine or ten feet. I must own that I was surprised at the circumstance, which was quite unaccountable: but still did not feel inclined to leave the island, without first obtaining the necessary supply of provisions. I pointed out to the men, that although I could not explain so strange an incident, yet as we had seen and heard nothing, and should certainly starve if we went to sea without provisions, it would be better to remain until we had procured a supply: observing that it was not impossible that the water might have receded, instead of the island having advanced. The latter remark seemed to quiet them, although at the time that I made it, I knew it to be incorrect, as the rocks above water near the beach were not higher out of it than before. This the seamen did not pay attention to, and I took care not to point it out to them. They agreed with my supposition, that the water had receded, and said no more about it.

We remained a fortnight longer, during which the same phenomenon continued, each day the salt pans and coppers being further off from the beach. At last the men perceiving that the rocks did not rise higher from the water again became alarmed, and broke out into open mutiny. By this time I had cured a sufficiency of provisions, and I made no objection, indeed I must confess that I was by no means easy in my own mind at these supernatural appearances. We struck our tents, sent every thing on board, rove the rigging, bent the sails, and prepared for our departure. Soon after we repaired on board, I happened to cast my eyes upon the lead line, which was hanging over from the main chains, and observed that it lay in a bight; hauling up the slack, I found, to my surprise, that instead of five fathoms water in which we had anchored, we were in less than three.

At first it occurred to me that this was a floating island, like the one I before described, and that it was gradually rising more to the surface; but this idea did not satisfy me. Throwing the lead and line in the boat, I pushed off, and sounded in several directions, and had the mortification to find that in the passage which the ship had entered, there was now not sufficient water for her to go out again, even if we were to have discharged the whole cargo. I soon discovered the cause of this apparent mystery; for as I went further out on the reef, I found that whole trees and solid masses of coral had sprung up to the water's edge, in parts which I knew were several fathoms deep when we entered. I had often heard that the islands in these seas were formed by corals, but I had no idea of the rapidity with which they were extended.

Your highness must know that all the zoophite, or animal plants, are composed of small insects, who work in millions under the water, until they rise to the top. Such was the case in the present instance, and thus by the labours of the minutest of the creation, in the short space of three weeks my ship was shut up so as to render escape hopeless.

I returned on board, and explained to the men the real cause of the apparently supernatural effects of what we had witnessed. Satisfied that my assertions were correct, they seemed to care little at being obliged to remain on an island which afforded them the means of such comfortable subsistence. As nothing could be done for the ship, we went on shore again, and repitching the tents, waited quietly until we might be taken off by some vessel who should chance to pass that way.

In a fortnight the ship was aground, and the island continued to increase so rapidly, that in two months she was raised high and dry out of the water, about half a mile from the beach. The vegetation seemed to advance as regularly and as rapidly as the island, and after the rainy season the trees had grown up so high, that the ship was completely hid in a large wood, and it was just possible to see her lower masts above the branches. For some time the men seemed perfectly contented. We had plenty of stores in the ship of every description; the cargo I had taken on board was chiefly manufactures, and as the island provided fresh meat, fish, and fruit, they were in want of nothing. But sailors are such changeable and restless beings, that I really believe they would soon be tired of paradise itself. After a sojourn of nine months, during which they perhaps lived better than they ever had before, they began to murmur and talk of getting away in some manner or another. As my cargo was valuable, I was in hopes that a vessel would visit the island, and take it on board: I therefore made every remonstrance that I could imagine to induce them to wait some time longer; but they would not listen to me, and made preparations for building a vessel at the weather side of the island, out of the materials that the ship afforded. The reason why they chose the weather side was, that they perceived that the island only increased to leeward; whereas to windward it was a perpendicular rock of coral, which you could not obtain bottom along-side of, with two hundred fathoms of line. They had cut a slip out of the rock, and were already occupied with driving out the bolts and fastenings of the ship that was shored up in the woods, when one evening we perceived a large fleet of canoes coming towards us. As I knew that I could not

be far from the Sandwich Islands, I immediately pronounced them to come from that quarter, in which supposition I was correct; for although the island was not inhabited, the islanders had for some years been aware of its existence, and came to gather the crop of cocoa-nuts which it annually produced. I advised my men to keep quiet in the woods, removing the tents and every object that might create suspicion of our being on the island; but they were of a different opinion, and as they had lately discovered the means of collecting the toddy from the cocoa-nut trees, and distilling arrack, they had been constantly drunk, mutinous, and regardless of my authority. They thought it would be much easier to take the large canoes from the islanders, and appropriate them to their own use, than to build a vessel, and notwithstanding my entreaties, they persisted in their resolution to make the attempt.

As the canoes approached, we counted fourteen, all of a very large size, and with my glass I could distinguish that they had fifty or sixty persons on board of each, including the women. I pointed this out to the sailors, stating that I did not believe there were more than ten women in each canoe, so that the men must amount to seven hundred, a force much too large to give them any chance of success in their rash intentions. But I did more harm than good; the mention of the women seemed to inspire them with fresh ardour, and they vowed that they would kill all the men, and then would be content to remain on the island with the women. They armed themselves with muskets, and retired among the trees as the canoes approached, fearful that the islanders would not land if they were discovered. The canoes ran between the reefs, and in a few minutes the whole of the islanders disembarked; not conceiving it necessary to leave any but the women in the canoes, the water being as smooth as a fish-pond.

The arrangements of my men were certainly very good: they allowed the islanders to go up to the tents, which were now more than a mile from the beach, and then walking down under cover of the trees, rushed to the canoes, and putting one man in each with their muskets and ammunition, shoved them off and made them fast to the

coral rocks, about two hundred yards distant. The screams of the women, and the shoving off of the canoes, alarmed the men, who hastened down to ascertain the cause. As soon as they came within half musket shot, the sailors who were on shore, amounting to twenty-five, fired a volley out of the wood, which killed and wounded a great number. The islanders retreated in confusion, then gave a loud shout and advanced. Another volley was fired, and they again retreated, bearing off their killed and wounded. They now held a consultation, which ended in their dividing into two bodies, one of which separated from the other, so that they might attack the party in the wood from two different points.

In the meantime several of the women leaped overboard and swam on shore, and the men in the boats were so busy in preventing the others from following, that they could give no assistance to the party in the wood, although they were within musket-shot. The conduct of the islanders puzzled our men, and although I had taken no part in this murderous attack, yet as I now considered my life at stake, I thought that I must assist. I therefore advised them to retreat to the ship, which, if they once gained possession of, they would be enabled to keep the islanders at bay. My advice was followed, and creeping through the thick underwood, we reached the ship in safety, having climbed up by rope-ladders, which were hanging from her, to enable us to go on board, to fetch any articles we required. We hauled them up after us, and waited the issue. In a few minutes, one of the parties of the islanders came up, and seeing the ship with us on board, gave a loud yell, and let fly their spears. We returned a volley which killed many, but they were very brave, and continued the attack although we fired twenty or thirty rounds with great execution.

The other party now came up, and the conflict continued; they made every attempt to climb the stern and sides of the vessel, but were repulsed; and as the evening closed in, they retired, taking away their killed and wounded, which we estimated at two hundred men. When they retreated, we fired some of our large guns in that direction, as much to frighten the islanders, as to let our comrades in the canoes

know where we were.

We kept a sharp look out till dark, but saw no more of them. I proposed that we should attempt to communicate with the men in the canoes, and desire them to permit some of them to drift on shore after taking out the women, as the islanders would then in all probability go away. But as the men very justly remarked, nobody in the first place would venture on such a dangerous service, and in the next, if the islanders obtained some of their canoes, they would attack the others and overpower the sailors that were in them. This plan was therefore justly overruled. I then proposed that one man should steal down to the beach, swim off, and desire the fourteen men to take all the women into one canoe, and pull round to the north side of the island during the night, leaving the remainder for the islanders to go away in. This was considered a good scheme, but no one would volunteer, and, as I had proposed it, I thought that I was in honour bound to go, as otherwise the men would, in future, have had no opinion of me. I therefore stated my intention, and taking my musket and ammunition, I slipped down by a rope. As soon as I was on my legs, I perceived something crawling out of the wood towards the ship. I could not exactly decipher what it was, so I crept under the counter of the vessel, where it was so dark that I could not be distinguished. As it approached, I made it out to be one of the islanders with a faggot of wood on his back; he placed it close to the side of the vessel, and then crawled back as before. I now perceived that there were hundreds of these faggots about the ship, which the islanders had contrived to carry there during the night; for although the moon was up, yet the vessel was so inclosed with trees that the light did not penetrate. I immediately comprehended that it was their intention to set fire to the vessel, and I was thinking of communicating the information to my companions on board, when two more crawled from the woods, and deposited their bundles so close to me, that we were nearly in contact. I therefore was obliged to leave those who were on board to make the best of it, and imitating the islanders, I crawled from the vessel into the brushwood, trailing the

gun after me. It was fortunate that I took this precaution, for in the very part of the wood where I crept to, there were dozens of them making up faggots, but it was too thick with underwood, and too dark to distinguish anything, although I heard them close to me breaking off the branches. I did the same as I went on, to avoid discovery, until I had passed by them, when I continued my route to where the canoes had been left. I arrived in safety at the outskirts of the wood close to the beach, and perceived the canoes still lying at the rocks, to which they had been taken; but the moon shone bright, and I hesitated to walk out in the light, until I ascertained whether there were any islanders on the beach. As I waited a short time in the dark shade of the trees, close to one of the springs of fresh water, I heard a moan close to me, and looking in that direction I perceived a body on the ground. I went towards it, and could distinguish very plainly that it was one of the women who had swam on shore. She was nearly lifeless, and feeling, as every man must have done, compassion at her unfortunate condition, I knelt down by her to see if I could afford her any assistance. As she had very little clothes round her body, I discovered, by passing my hand over her, that she was wounded with a musket-ball above the knee, and was exhausted from pain and loss of blood. I tore my neckcloth and shirt into bandages, and bound up her leg; I then fetched some water from the spring in my hat, which I poured into her mouth, and threw over her face. She appeared to recover, and I felt happy that I had been of some use, and not being able to descry any of the islanders, was proceeding to the beach, that I might swim off to the canoes, when just as I walked out of the shade, two or three muskets were fired by those on board. These were followed by others, and loud yells from the islanders, who had swum off in hundreds, and were attacking our people. The conflict was very short, for the men, not being able to load their muskets quickly enough, were overpowered by the islanders, who climbed into the canoes, and in a few minutes they were all paddled to the beach.

I now thought that it was all over with my men on board of the ship, and so it

proved; for an hour before daylight the islanders lighted the faggots, and, at the same time, attacked the vessel with great fury. The fire continued to blaze higher and higher, the muskets were constantly discharging, and the shouts and yells continued for about an hour, when I heard no more reports from the muskets, and took it for granted that my men were overcome, which was the case, as I afterwards found out; many were killed by the spears when on board, others when they leaped from the vessel to avoid the flames, and the remainder had been suffocated.

As the sun rose above the horizon, a loud explosion took place, by which I knew that the flames had communicated with the magazine, and that the ship had been blown to atoms. I determined to hide myself in the bushes, with the hope of not being discovered. Before I went, I made a hasty visit to the poor wounded woman, to see how she was. It was broad daylight, and I found that I had afforded succour to a very beautiful young girl, about sixteen or seventeen years old. As she still appeared faint, I brought her some more water, and when I gave it to her, she expressed her gratitude with her eyes. Examining the bandages, which had slipped a little on one side, I replaced them, and then darted into the thickest of the underwood. As I pressed on, bent half double, my head suddenly came in contact with something hard; I looked up, and found that it was the head of one of the islanders, who was also forcing his way through the bushes, an immense, powerful man, who immediately sprung upon me, and pinned me to the ground. He was followed by several others who came to his assistance, and all resistance was useless. They pulled some of the creeping withies, that grow in those countries, and bound me hand and foot; then selecting a large pole, they made me fast to it, and carried me away. When they arrived at the beach, I was laid down on my back, exposed to the burning sun. Left to my own reflections, and calling to mind all that I could recollect from the voyages and travels which I had read, I concluded that I was to be made a sacrifice of to their gods. I prayed to heaven for mercy, and resigned myself to my fate, which appeared inevitable.

The islanders had all assembled on the beach close to where I lay. The dead bodies of their companions, who had fallen in the conflict, and the wounded, were carried into the canoes. They formed a circle round the fire, which they had kindled, made several speeches, and danced a war-dance. I turned round on my side, and perceived to my horror, that they had collected all the bodies of my companions, and were devouring them. What they did not feel inclined to eat, they packed up in baskets, and put into the canoes. I anticipated that such would be my own fate—not at present, as they had more than they could consume—but that I should be reserved for a festival, after their arrival in their own country. Nor was I incorrect in my supposition; they collected together all the bones, which they carried with them, and putting me on board, hoisted their mat sails, and steered away for their own islands.

On the third day we arrived, when I was carried on shore and confined in what I believe was a burying ground. They stuffed me every day with pork and other victuals to keep me alive, and in good condition, but they never cast me loose from the pole to which I was bound. I heard processions, shouts, and lamentations for the dead; but I could see nothing, for I was now too weak to turn on my side. When I had been a week in this confined state, the agony arising from the swelling of my limbs, and from the increased tightness of the ligatures was so great, that I called for death to relieve me from my sufferings; and when I once more found myself raised upon the shoulders of men, I was as impatient for my approaching fate, as I should have been, under other circumstances, for my release. My senses were gradually overpowered by the pain, which was so much increased by the renewed suspension of my body.

I have a distinct recollection of being placed on the ground in a large circle—of the screams of a woman, and of a confused uproar, which followed. When I came to my senses, I found myself in a hut, unbound, and lying upon soft mats, with fomentations applied to my limbs; and when my eyes opened, I beheld, hanging over me with an air of the tenderest solicitude, the beautiful savage, whom I had

found wounded, and had succoured on the night of the affray. I subsequently learnt, that when I had been brought into the circle, she had recognised me as the person who had assisted her; that she claimed my life, pointing to her wound, and producing the bandages with which I had bound it up, and which were identified with the remainder, as part of the dress which I still wore. A council was held, and as it appeared that I could not have been with the party in the ship, for I had been taken prisoner in the woods, near to where the girl lay, after many speeches pro and con, it was decided that my life should be spared, and that I should be married to the girl who had been the means of preserving it. She had carried me away to her hut, and was now returning the debt of gratitude which she had incurred.

Owing to her unwearied kindness and attention, I soon recovered, and before I was aware that I was to be her husband I courted her by signs, and all the little attentions that could be suggested by gratitude and love. As soon as I was supposed to be sufficiently recovered I was led into a large circle of the islanders, to be formally admitted into their society. A venerable old man made a speech, which I presume was not a very good one from its extreme length, and then several men laid hold of me, and throwing me on the ground, face downwards, sat astride on me, and commenced running needles into the upper part of my thighs. The pain was excessive, but as all the islanders were tattooed about the loins, I presumed it was an operation that I must submit to, and I bore it with fortitude.

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"And pray what is that tattooing?"

"Tattooing, may it please your highness, is puncturing the skin with needles or sharp points—and then rubbing Indian ink or gun-powder into the wounds. This leaves an indelible mark of a deep blue tint. All the islanders in those seas practise it, and very often the figures that are drawn are very beautiful."

"Mashallah! How wonderful is God! I should like to see it," rejoined the pacha.

"Allah forbid," replied the renegade, "that I should expose my person to your highness. I know my duty better."

"Yes, but I must see it, yaha bibi, my friend!" continued the pacha, impatiently; "never mind your person. Come—obey my orders."

The renegade was a little at a nonplus, as he never had undergone the operation which he had described. Fortunately for the support of his veracity, it happened that during one of his piratical excursions, in an idle fit, he had permitted one of his companions to tattoo a small mermaid on his arm.

"Min Allah! God forbid," rejoined the renegade; "my life is at the disposal of your highness, and I had sooner that you should take it, than I would affront your august eyes with the exposure in question; fortunately I can gratify your highness's curiosity without offending decency—as, after they had finished the operation I was describing, they made the figure of their most respected deity upon my arm." The renegade then pulled up his sleeve, and showed the figure of a mermaid, with a curling tail, a looking-glass in one hand and a comb in the other. "Here your highness will perceive a specimen of their rude art. This is a representation of their goddess, Bo-gee. In one hand she holds an iron rake, with which she tattoos those who are good, and the mark serves as a passport when they apply for admittance into the regions of bliss. In the other, she brandishes a hot iron plate, with which she brands those who are sentenced to be punished for their sins."

"Allah Karim—God is merciful! And why has she a fish's tail?" inquired the pacha.

"The people I am describing, inhabit a cluster of islands, and it is to enable her to swim from one to the other, as her presence may be required."

"Very true," observed the pacha—"now you may go on with your story."

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As I mentioned to your highness, they tattooed me without mercy; the operation lasted an hour, when they put me on my feet again. Another speech was made,

which I understood as little of as the former; they left me with my wife, and the ceremony was at an end.

I must say I wished that I had not been naturalised and married both on the same day. I was so swelled and so stiff with the tattooing, that it was with difficulty I could, with the assistance of my wife, walk back to my hut. However, by the remedies which she constantly applied, in the course of three days I felt no further inconvenience.

I now considered myself settled for the remainder of my life. I was passionately attached to Naka-poop, for such was the name of my young wife, and notwithstanding my French education, could not but acknowledge that her natural and unsophisticated manners were more graceful and more fascinating, than is all the studied address of my own country-women. She was of high rank in her own country, being nearly allied to the king; and for two years my life slipped away, in uninterrupted happiness and peace. But alas!—and the renegade covered up his face.

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"Come, Huckaback, you surely have been too much accustomed to lose your wives by this time, to make a fuss about it. These Franks are strange people," observed the pacha to the vizier; "they've a tear for every woman."

"Your highness must excuse me; I shall not offend again, for I never married afterwards. My charming Naka-poop died in child-bed, and the island became so hateful to me, that I determined to quit it. An opportunity occurred by an American vessel, which arrived with some Missionaries."

"What are Missionaries?" inquired the pacha.

"People who came to inform the islanders, that Bo-gee was not a goddess, and to persuade them to embrace the true faith."

"Very right," replied the pacha, "there is but one God, and Mahomet is his prophet. Well——"

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As I understood both languages, I was employed as an interpreter, but it was impossible to explain what the Missionaries intended to convey, as the language of the islanders had not words that were analogous. A council was held, and the answer which the Missionaries received was as follows:—

"You tell us that your God rewards the good and punishes the wicked—so does Bo-gee. We speak one language, you speak another. Perhaps the name of your God means Bo-gee in ours. Then we both worship the same God, under different names. No use to talk any more; take plenty of pigs and yams, and go home."

The Missionaries took their advice, their pigs and their yams, and I went home with them. We arrived at New York, where I claimed and received from the Bible Society my pay as interpreter to the Missionaries from the time that they landed up to the day of our return. I never should have thought of claiming it, had it not been for the advice of one of the Missionaries, who took a fancy to me.

With the money that I received I paid my passage in a vessel bound to Genoa, where I arrived in safety, but without the means of subsistence. But what doth the poet say, "Necessity is a strong rider with sharp stirrups, who maketh the sorry jade do that which the strong horse sometimes will not do." Having no other resource, I determined once more to try my fortune upon the ocean.

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"Allah wakbar—God is everywhere! It was your talleh—your destiny, Huckaback."

"It was his kismet—his fate, your sublime highness," rejoined Mustapha, "that he should go through those perils to amuse your leisure hours."

"Wallah Thaib—well said, by Allah! Let the slave rejoice in our bounty. Give him ten pieces of gold; we will open our ears to his next voyage to-morrow. Murakhas, you are dismissed."

"May your sublime shadow never be less," replied Huckaback, as he salaamed out of the pacha's presence.

Chapter XIII

THE LAST VOYAGE OF HUCKABACK.

Your highness will be surprised at the unheard-of adventures that occurred to me in my last voyage, and I think I can boldly assert that no man, either before or since, has explored so much, or has been in the peculiarly dangerous situations in which I have been placed by destiny.

Notwithstanding the danger which I incurred from my former expedition to the Northern Ocean, I was persuaded to take the command of a whaler about to proceed to those latitudes: we sailed from Marseilles early in the year that we might arrive at the northward in good time, and be able to quit the Frozen Ocean before the winter had set in. We were very fortunate on our arrival at Baffin's Bay, and very soon had eighteen fish on board. The autumn was hardly commenced before I proposed to return, and we were steering in a southerly direction, when we encountered two or three large icebergs, upon the edges of which the walruses or sea-horses were lying in herds. As we had some casks still empty, I determined to fill them with the oil to be obtained from these animals, and hoisted out my boats to attack them. We killed a large number, which we sent on board, and continued our fishery with great success, having only lost one boat, the bottom plank of which had been bitten out by the tusks of one of these unwieldy animals. Of a sudden the wind changed to the southward, and the small icebergs which were then to windward rapidly closed with the large one upon which we were fishing. The harpooners observed it, and recommended me to return to the ship, but I was so amused with the sport that I did not heed their advice. A sea-horse was lying in a small cave accidentally formed on the upright edge of the iceberg, and wishing to attack him, I directed my boat to pull

towards it. At this time there was not more than twenty yards of water between the two icebergs, and a sudden squall coming on, they closed with great rapidity. The men in the other boats immediately pulled away, and, as I afterwards learnt, when I arrived at Marseilles, they escaped, and returned home in the ship; but those in mine, who were intent upon watching me, as I stood in the bow of the boat with the harpoon to strike the animal, did not perceive the danger until the stern of the boat was touched by the other iceberg. The two now coming within the attraction of cohesion of floating bodies, were dashed like lightning one against the other, jamming the men, as well as the boat, into atoms.

Being in the bow of the boat, and hearing the crash, I had just time, in a moment of desperation, to throw myself into the cave upon the back of the sea-horse, when the two enormous bodies of ice came in contact—the noise I have no doubt was tremendous, but I did not hear it, as I was immediately enclosed in the ice. Although at first there were interstices, yet, as the southerly gale blew the icebergs before it into the northern region, all was quickly cemented together by the frost, and I found myself pent up in an apartment not eight feet square, in company with a sea-horse.

I shall not detain your highness by describing my sensations: my ideas were, that I was to exist a certain time, and then die for want of fresh air; but they were incorrect. At first, indeed, the cave was intolerably hot from the accumulation of breath, and I thought I should soon be suffocated. I recollected all my past sins, I implored for mercy, and lay down to die; but I found that the ice melted away with the heat, and that, in so doing, a considerable portion of the air was liberated, so that in a few minutes my respiration became more free. The animal in the meantime, apparently frightened at his unusual situation, was perfectly quiet; and, as the slightest straw will be caught at by the drowning man, so did the idea of my preservation come into my head. I considered how much air so enormous an animal must consume, and determined upon despatching him, that I might have more for my own immediate wants. I took out my knife, and inserting it between the vertebral

bones that joined his head to his neck, divided the spinal marrow, and he immediately expired.

When I found that he was quite dead, I crawled from his shoulders, and took up a more convenient berth in that part of the cave which was before his head, to which I had been afraid to venture while the animal was alive, lest he should attack me with his enormous tusks. The air soon became more pure, and I breathed freely. Your highness may be surprised at the assertion; but, whether I obtained air from the ice itself, or whether the ice was sufficiently porous to admit of it, I know not; but from that time I had no difficulty of respiration. In our country we have had instances of women and children, who have been buried in the snow for two months, and yet have been taken out alive, and have recovered, although they had little or no nourishment during their inhumation. I recollected this, and aware that the carcase of the animal would supply me for years, I began to indulge a hope that I might yet be saved, if driven sufficiently to the southward to admit of my being thawed out. I was convinced that the ice about me could not be more than six or eight feet thick, as I had sufficient light to distinguish the day from the night. Afterwards my eye-sight became so much more acute, that I could see very well to every corner of the cave in which I was embedded.

During the first month the calls of hunger obliged me to make frequent attacks upon the carcase of the sea-horse; after that, my appetite decreased, until at length I would not touch a mouthful of food in a week,—I presume from the want of fresh air and exercise, neither of which I could be said to enjoy. I had been about two months in this hole, when a violent shock like that of an earthquake took place, and I fell from the top of the cave to the bottom, and for a minute was knocked about like a pea in a rattle. I had almost lost my senses before it was over, and I found myself lying upon what was before the top of the cave. From these circumstances I inferred that the iceberg in which I was inclosed had come in contact with another, and that I had been broken off from it, and was floating on the sea with other pieces, which, when

collected in large quantities, are termed a floe of ice. Whether my situation was changed for the better I knew not, but the change inspired me with fresh hopes. I now calculated that five months had elapsed, and that it was the depth of winter, therefore I had no chance of being released until the ensuing spring.

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"Allah Wakbar, God is every where!" interrupted the pacha. "But I wish to know, Huckaback, how you were so exactly aware of the time which had passed away."

"Min Bashi, and head of thousands!" replied Huckaback, "I will explain to your highness. I once jammed my nail at the bottom, and I expected to lose it. It did not however come off, but grew up as before, and I had the curiosity to know how often people changed their nails in the course of a year. It was exactly two months, and from this I grounded my calculations. I observed specks on my nails, and as they grew up, so did I calculate time."

"Mashallah, how wonderful is God! Wallah Thaib! Well said, by Allah! I never should have thought of that," observed the pacha. "Proceed with your story."

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The five months had elapsed, according to my calculations, when one morning I heard a grating noise close to me; soon afterwards I perceived the teeth of a saw entering my domicile, and I correctly judged that some ship was cutting her way through the ice. Although I could not make myself heard, I waited in anxious expectation of deliverance. The saw approached very near to where I was sitting, and I was afraid that I should be wounded, if not cut in halves; but just as it was within two inches of my nose, it was withdrawn. The fact was, that I was under the main floe, which had been frozen together, and the firm ice above having been removed and pushed away, I rose to the surface. A current of fresh air immediately poured into the small incision made by the saw, which not only took away my breath from its sharpness, but brought on a spitting of blood. Hearing the sound of voices, I

considered my deliverance as certain. Although I understood very little English, I heard the name of Captain Parry frequently mentioned—a name, I presume, that your highness is well acquainted with.

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"Pooh! never heard of it," replied the pacha.

"I am surprised, your highness; I thought every body must have heard of that adventurous navigator. I may here observe that I have since read his voyages, and he mentions, as a curious fact, the steam which was emitted from the ice—which was nothing more than the hot air escaping from my cave when it was cut through—a singular point, as it not only proves the correctness of his remarks, but the circumstance of my having been there, as I am now describing it to your highness."

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But, alas! my hopes soon vanished: the voices became more faint, I felt that I was plunged under the floe to make room for the passage of the ship, and when I rose, the water which had filled the incision made by the saw, froze hard, and I was again closed in—perhaps for ever. I now became quite frantic with despair, I tore my clothes, and dashed my head against the corners of the cave, and tried to put an end to my hated existence. At last, I sank down exhausted with my own violent efforts, and continued sullen for several days.

But there is a buoyant spirit in our composition which raises our heads above the waters of despair. Hope never deserts us, not even in an iceberg. She attends us and supports us to the last; and although we reject her kind offices in our fury, she still watches by us, ready to assist and console us, when we are inclined to hearken to her encouraging whispers.

I once more listened to her suggestions, and for six months fed upon them, aided by occasional variations of the flesh of the sea-horse. It was now late in the summer, and the ice in which I was bound up had evidently melted away. One morning I was

astonished by perceiving that the light of the sun seemed to change its position regularly every quarter of an hour. Had it done so occasionally during the day, and at no stated intervals, I should have imagined that the ice that I was inclosed in, altered its position from the winds and currents; but the regularity astonished me. I watched it, and I found that the same phenomenon occurred, but at shorter intervals, and it continued until the light shifted from side to side every minute.

After some reflection, the horrid idea occurred to me that I must have been drifted to the coast of Norway, and was in the influence of the dreadful whirlpool, called the Maelstroom, and that, in a few minutes, I should be engulfed for ever, and, whilst I was thinking that such might be the case, the light revolved each fifteen seconds. "Then it is!" cried I in despair, and, as I uttered the words, it became quite dark, and I knew that I had sunk in the vortex, and all was over.

It may appear strange to your highness, that after the first pang, occasioned by the prospect of perdition, had passed away, that so far from feeling a horror at my situation, I mocked and derided it. I could feel no more, and I waited the result with perfect indifference. From the marks in my nails, I afterwards found out that I was nearly six months in the interior of the earth. At last, one day I was nearly blinded by the powerful light that poured through my tenement, and I knew that I was once more floating on the water.

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"Allah Kebir! God is most powerful!" exclaimed the pacha. "Holy prophet, where was it that you came up again?"

"In the harbour of Port Royal in Jamaica. Your highness will hardly credit it, but on my honour it is true."

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The heat of the sun was so great, that in a very short time the ice that surrounded me was thawed, and I found myself at liberty; but I still floated upon the body of the

sea-horse, and the ice which was under the water. The latter soon vanished, and striding the back of the dead animal, although nearly blind by the rays of the sun, and suffocated with the sudden change of climate, I waited patiently to gain the shore, which was not one mile distant; but, before I could arrive there, for the sea breeze had not yet set in, an enormous shark, well known among the English by the name of Port Royal Tom, who had daily rations from government, that by remaining in the harbour he might prevent the sailors from swimming on shore to desert, ranged up alongside of me. I thought it hard that I should have to undergo such new dangers, after having been down the Maelstroom, but there was no help for it. He opened his enormous jaws, and had I not immediately shifted my leg, would have taken it off. As it was, he took such a piece out of my horse, as to render it what the sailors call lopsided. Again he attacked it, and continued to take piece after piece off my steed, until I was afraid that he would come to the rider at last, when fortunately a boat full of black people, who were catching flying fish, perceived me and pulled to my assistance. They took me on shore and carried me to the governor, to whom I gave a history of my adventures; but Englishmen suppose that nobody can meet with wondrous adventures except themselves. He called me a liar, and put me in the Clink, and a pirate schooner having been lately taken and the crew executed, I was declared to have been one of them; but, as it was clearly proved that the vessel only contained thirty men, and they had already hung forty-seven, I was permitted to quit the island, which I did in a small vessel bound to America, on condition that I would work my passage.

We had gained to the northward of the Bahama Isles, and were standing to the westward before a light breeze, when early one morning several waterspouts were observed to be forming in various directions. It was my watch below, but as I had never seen one of these curious phenomena of nature, I went on deck to indulge my curiosity.

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"Pray what is a waterspout?" inquired the pacha; "I never heard of one before."

"A waterspout, your highness, is the ascent of a large body of water into the clouds—one of those gigantic operations by which nature, apparently without effort, accomplishes her will, pointing out to man the insignificance of his most vaunted undertakings."

"Humph! that's a waterspout, is it?" replied the pacha; "I'm about as wise as before."

"I will describe it more clearly to your highness, for there is no one who has a better right to know what a waterspout is, than myself."

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A black cloud was over our heads, and we perceived that for some time it was rapidly descending. The main body then remained stationary, and a certain portion of it continued bellying down until it had assumed the form of an enormous jelly-bag. From the end of this bag a thin, wiry, black tongue of vapour continued to descend until it had arrived half way between the cloud and the sea. The water beneath, then ruffled on its surface, increasing its agitation more and more until it boiled and bubbled like a large cauldron, throwing its foam aside in every direction. In a few minutes a small spiral thread of water was perceived to rise into the air, and meet the tongue which had wooed it from the cloud. When the union had taken place, the thread increased each moment in size, until it was swelled into a column of water several feet in diameter, which continued to supply the thirsty cloud until it was satiated and could drink no more. It then broke, the sea became smooth as before, and the messenger of heaven flew away upon the wings of the wind, to dispense its burthen over the parched earth in refreshing and fertilising showers.

While I was standing at the taffrail in admiration of this wonderful resource of nature, the main boom jibbed and struck me with such force, that I was thrown into the sea. Another waterspout forming close to the vessel, the captain and crew were alarmed and made all sail to escape, without regarding me; for they were aware that

if it should happen to break over them, they would be sent to the bottom with its enormous weight. I had scarcely risen to the surface, when I perceived that the water was in agitation round me, and all my efforts to swim from the spot were unavailing, for I was within the circle of attraction. Thus was I left to my fate, and convinced that I could not swim for many minutes, I swallowed the salt water as fast as I could, that my struggles might the sooner be over.

But as the sea boiled up, I found myself gradually drawn more to the centre, and when exactly in it, I was raised in a sitting posture upon the spiral thread of water, which, as I explained to your highness, forced itself upwards to join the tongue protruded by the cloud. There I sat, each second rising higher and higher, balanced like the gilt ball of pith, which is borne up by the vertical stream of the fountain which plays in the inner court of your highness's palace. I cast my eyes down, and perceived the vessel not far off, the captain and crew holding up their eyes in amazement at the extraordinary spectacle.

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"I don't wonder at that," observed the pacha.

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I soon reached the tongue of the cloud, which appeared as if impatient to receive me—the hair of my head first coming within its attractive powers was raised straight on end—then seized as it were and twisted it round. I was dragged up by it each moment with increased velocity, as I whirled round in my ascent. At last I found myself safely landed, and sat down to recover my breath which I had nearly lost for ever.

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"And, pray, where did you sit, Huckaback?"

"On the cloud, your highness."

"Holy prophet! What, a cloud bear your weight?"

"If your highness will call to mind that at the same time the cloud took up several tons of water, you cannot be surprised at its supporting me."

"Very true," replied the pacha. "This is a very wonderful story, but before you go on, I wish to know what the cloud was made of."

"That is rather difficult to explain to your highness. I can only compare it to a wet blanket. I found it excessively cold and damp, and caught a rheumatism while I was there, which I feel to this day."

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When the cloud was saturated, the column divided, and we rapidly ascended until the cold became intense. We passed a rainbow as we skimmed along, and I was very much surprised to find that the key of my chest and my clasp knife, forced themselves through the cloth of my jacket, and flew with great velocity towards it, fixing themselves firmly to the violet rays, from which I discovered that those peculiar rays were magnetic. I mentioned this curious circumstance to an English lady whom I met on her travels, and I have since learnt that she has communicated the fact to the learned societies as a discovery of her own. However, as she is a very pretty woman, I forgive her. Anxious to look down upon the earth, I poked a hole with my finger through the bottom of the cloud, and was astonished to perceive how rapidly it was spinning round. We had risen so high as to be out of the sphere of its attraction, and in consequence remained stationary. I had been up about six hours, and although I was close to the coast of America when I ascended, I could perceive that the Cape of Good Hope was just heaving in sight. I was enabled to form a very good idea of the structure of the globe, for at that immense height I could see to the very bottom of the Atlantic Ocean. Depend upon it, your highness, if you wish to discover more than other people can, it is necessary to be "up in the clouds."

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"Very true," replied the pacha, "but go on."

I was very much interested in the chemical process of turning the salt water into fresh, which was going on with great rapidity while I was there. Perhaps your highness would like me to explain it, as it will not occupy your attention more than an hour.

"No, no, skip that, Huckaback, and go on."

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But as soon as I had gratified my curiosity, I began to be alarmed at my situation, not so much on account of the means of supporting existence, for there was more than sufficient.

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"More that sufficient! Why, what could you have to eat?"

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Plenty of fresh fish, your highness, which had been taken up in the column of water at the same time I was, and the fresh water already lay in little pools around me. But the cold was dreadful, and I felt that I could not support it many hours longer, and how to get down again was a problem which I could not solve.

It was however soon solved for me, for the cloud having completed its chemical labours, descended as rapidly as it had risen, and joined many others, that were engaged in sharp conflict. As I beheld them darting against each other, and discharging the electric fluid in the violence of their collision, I was filled with trepidation and dismay, lest, meeting an adversary, I should be hurled into the abyss below, or be withered by the artillery of heaven. But I was fortunate enough to escape. The cloud which bore me descended to within a hundred yards of the earth, and then was hurried along by the wind with such velocity and noise, that I perceived we were assisting at a hurricane.

As we neared the earth, the cloud, unable to resist the force of its attraction, was compelled to deliver up its burthen, and down I fell, with such torrents of water, that it reminded me of the deluge. The tornado was now in all its strength. The wind roared and shrieked in its wild fury, and such was its force that I fell in an acute angle.

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"What did you fall in?" interrupted the pacha. "I don't know what that is."

"I fell in a slanting direction, your highness, describing the hypotenuse between the base and perpendicular, created by the force of the wind, and the attraction of gravitation."

"Holy prophet! who can understand such stuff? Speak plain, do you laugh at our beards?"

"Min Allah! God forbid! Your servant would indeed eat dirt," replied Huckaback.

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I meant to imply, that so powerful was the wind, it almost bore me up, and when I first struck the water, which I did upon the summit of a wave, I bounded off again and ricochetted several times from one wave to another, like the shot fired from a gun along the surface of the sea, or the oyster-shell skimmed over the lake by the truant child. The last bound that I gave, pitched me into the rigging of a small vessel on her beam ends, and I hardly had time to fetch my breath before she turned over. I scrambled up her bends, and fixed myself astride upon her keel.

There I remained for two or three hours, when the hurricane was exhausted from its own violence. The clouds disappeared, the sun burst out in all its splendour, the sea recovered its former tranquillity, and Nature seemed as if she was maliciously smiling at her own mischief. The land was close to me, and the vessel drifted on shore. I found that I was at the Isle of France, having, in the course of twelve hours thus miraculously shifted my position from one side of the globe unto the other. I

found the island in a sad state of devastation; the labour of years had been destroyed in the fury of an hour—the crops were swept away—the houses were levelled to the ground—the vessels in fragments on the beach—all was misery and desolation. I was however kindly received by my countrymen, who were the inhabitants of the isle, and, in four-and-twenty hours, we all danced and sang as before. I invented a very pretty quadrille, called the Hurricane, which threw the whole island into an ecstacy, and recompensed them for all their sufferings. But I was anxious to return home, and a Dutch vessel proceeding straight to Marseilles, I thought myself fortunate to obtain a passage upon the same terms as those which had enabled me to quit the West Indies. We sailed, but before we had been twenty-four hours at sea, I found that the captain was a violent man, and a most dreadful tyrant. I was not very strong, and not being able to perform the duty before the mast, to which I had not been accustomed, I was beat so unmercifully, that I was debating in my mind, whether I should kill the captain and then jump overboard, or submit to my hard fate; but one night as I lay groaning on the forecastle after a punishment I had received from the captain, which incapacitated me from further duty, an astonishing circumstance occurred which was the occasion, not only of my embracing the Mahomedan religion, but of making use of those expressions which attracted your highness's attention when you passed in disguise. "Why am I thus ever to be persecuted?" exclaimed I in despair. And, as I uttered these words, a venerable personage, in a flowing beard, and a book in his hand, appeared before me, and answered me. "Because, Huckaback, you have not embraced the true faith."

"What is the true faith?" inquired I, in fear and amazement.

"There is but one God," replied he, "and I am his prophet."

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"Merciful Allah!" exclaimed the pacha, "why, it must have been Mahomed himself."

"It was so, your highness, although I knew it not at the time."

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"Prove unto me that it is the true faith," said I.

"I will," replied he; "I will turn the heart of the infidel captain," and he disappeared. The next day the captain of the vessel, to my astonishment, came to me as I lay on the forecastle, and begging my pardon for the cruelty that he had been guilty of, shed tears over me, and ordered me to be carried to his cabin. He laid me in his own bed, and watched me as he would a favourite child. In a short time I recovered; after which he would permit me to do no duty, but insisted upon my being his guest, and loaded me with every kindness.

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"God is great!" ejaculated the pacha.

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I was lying in my bed, meditating upon these things, when the venerable form again appeared to me.

"Art them now convinced?"

"I am," replied I.

"Then prove it by submitting to the law the moment that you are able. You shall be rewarded—not at once, but when your faith has been proved. Mark me, follow your profession on the seas, and, when once you find yourself sitting in the divan at Cairo, with two people originally of the same profession as yourself, without others being present, and have made this secret known, then you shall be appointed to the command of the pacha's fleet, which under your directions shall always meet with success. Such shall be the reward of your fidelity."

It is now four years that I have embraced the true faith, and, sinking under poverty, I was induced to make use of the exclamation that your highness heard; for how can I ever hope to meet two barbers at the divan without other people being present?

"Holy prophet! how strange! Why Mustapha was a barber, and so was I," cried the pacha.

"God is great!" answered the renegade, prostrating himself. "Then I command your fleet?"

"From this hour," replied the pacha. "Mustapha, make known my wishes."

"The present in command," replied Mustapha, who was not a dupe to the wily renegade, "is a favourite with the men."

"Then send for him and take off his head. Is he to interfere with the commands of Mahomed?"

The vizier bowed, and the pacha quitted the divan.

The renegade, with a smile upon his lips, and Mustapha with astonishment, looked at each other for a few seconds; "You have a great talent, Selim," observed the vizier.

"Thanks to your introduction, and to my own invention, it will at last be called into action. Recollect, vizier, that I am grateful—you understand me;" and the renegade quitted the divan, leaving Mustapha still in his astonishment.

Chapter XIV

"Mustapha," said the pacha, taking his pipe out of his mouth, after half an hour's smoking in silence, "I have been thinking it very odd that our holy prophet (blessed be his name!) should have given himself so much trouble about such a son of Shitan as that renegade rascal, Huckaback, whose religion is only in his turban. By the sword of the prophet, is it not strange that he should send him to command my fleet?"

"It was the will of your sublime highness," replied Mustapha, "that he should command your fleet."

"Mashallah! was it not the will of the prophet?"

Mustapha smoked his pipe, and made no reply.

"He was a great story-teller," observed the pacha, after another pause.

"He was," drily replied Mustapha. "No Kessehgou of our true believers could equal him; but that is now over, and the dog of an Isauri must prove himself a Rustam in the service of your sublime highness. Aware that your highness would require amusement, and that it was the duty of your slave, who shines but by the light of your countenance, to procure it, I have since yesterday, when the sun went down, despairing to find his glory eclipsed by that of your sublime highness, ordered most diligent search to be made through the whole of the world, and have discovered, that in the caravan now halted on the outskirts of the town, there was a famous Kessehgou proceeding to Mecca to pay his homage to the shrine of our prophet; and I have dispatched trusty messengers to bring him into the presence of the Min Bashi, to whom your slave, and the thousands whom he rules, are but as dust:" and Mustapha bowed low.

"Aferin, excellent:" exclaimed the pacha; "and when will he be here?"

"Before the tube now honoured by kissing the lips of your highness shall have poured out in ecstasy the incense of another bowl of the fragrant weed, the slippers of the Kessehgou will be left at the threshold of the palace. Be chesm, on my eyes be it."

"'Tis well, Mustapha. Slave," continued the pacha, addressing the Greek who was in attendance, with his arms folded and his eyes cast down to the ground; "coffee—and the strong water of the Giaour."

The pacha's pipe was refilled, the coffee was poured down their respective throats, and the forbidden spirits quaffed with double delight, arising from the very circumstance that they were forbidden.

"Surely there must be some mistake, Mustapha. Does not the Koran say, that all that

is good is intended for true believers; and is not this good? How then can it be forbidden? Could it be intended for the Giaours? May they, and their fathers' graves, be eternally defiled!"

"Amen!" replied Mustapha, laying down the cup, and drawing a deep sigh.

Mustapha was correct in his calculations. Before the pacha had finished his pipe, the arrival of the story-teller was announced; and after waiting a few minutes from decorum, which seemed to the impatient pacha to be eternal, Mustapha clapped his hands, and the man was ushered in.

"Kosh amedeid! you are welcome," said the pacha, as the Kessehgou entered the divan: he was a slight, elegantly moulded person, of about thirty years of age.

"I am here in obedience to the will of the pacha," replied the man in a most musical voice, as he salaamed low. "What does his highness require of his slave Menouni?"

"His highness requires a proof of thy talent, and an opportunity to extend his bounty."

"I am less than dust, and am ready to cover my head with ashes, not to feel my soul in the seventh heaven at the condescension of his highness; yet would I fain do his bidding and depart, for a vow to the prophet is sacred, and it is written in the Koran——"

"Never mind the Koran just now, good Menouni; we ask of thee a proof of thy art. Tell me a story."

"Most proud shall I be of the honour. Will not my face be whitened to all eternity? Shall your slave relate the loves of Leilah and Majnoun?"

"No, no," replied the pacha; "something that will interest me."

"Then will I narrate the history of the Scarred Lover."

"That sounds well, Mustapha," observed the pacha.

"Who can foresee so well as your sublime highness?" replied Mustapha. "Menouni,

it is the pleasure of the pacha that you proceed."

"Your slave obeys. Your sublime perspicuity is but too well acquainted with geography——?"

"Not that I know of. Hath he ever left his slippers at our threshold, Mustapha?"

"I suspect," replied Mustapha, "that he goes all over the world, and therefore he must have been here. Proceed, Menouni, and ask not such questions. By virtue of his office, his sublime highness knows every thing."

"True," said the pacha, shaking his beard with great dignity and satisfaction.

"I did but presume to put the question," replied Menouni, whose voice was soft and silvery as a flute on a summer's silent eve, "as, to perfectly understand the part of the world from which my tale has been transmitted, I thought a knowledge of that science was required; but I have eaten dirt, and am covered with shame at my indiscretion, which would not have occurred, had it not been that the sublime sultan, when I last had the honour to narrate the story, was pleased to interrupt me, from his not being quite convinced that the parts of the world were known to him. But I will now proceed with my tale, which shall go forward with the majestic pace of the camel, proud in his pilgrimage over the desert, towards the shrine of our holy prophet."

THE SCARRED LOVER.

In the north-eastern parts of the vast peninsula of India, there did exist a flourishing and extended kingdom, eminent for the beauty of the country, the fertility of the soil, and the salubrity of the climate. This kingdom was bounded on the east by a country named Lusitania, that lies northerly towards the coast of Iceland, so called from the excessive heat of the winter. On the south it was bounded by a slip of land, the name of which has slipped my memory; but it runs into the seas under the dominion of the Great Cham of Tartary. On the west it is bounded by another kingdom, the name of

which I have also forgotten; and on the north, by another kingdom, the name of which I do not remember. After this explanation, with your sublime highness's knowledge, to which that of the sage Lochman was but in comparison as the seed is to the water-melon, I hardly need say that it was the ancient kingdom of Souffra.

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"Menouni, you are quite right," observed the pacha. "Proceed."

"Fortunate is your slave to stand in the presence of so much wisdom," continued Menouni, "for I was in doubt: the splendour of your presence had startled my memory, as the presence of the caravan doth the zebra foal of the desert."

* * * * *

In this delightful kingdom, where the nightingales sang away their existence in their love for the rose, and the roses gave forth their perfume until the air was one continued essence of delight, such as is inhaled by the true believers when they first approach the gates of paradise, and are enchanted by the beckoning of the Houris from the golden walls, there lived a beautiful Hindu princess, who walked in loveliness, and whose smile was a decree to be happy to all on whom it fell; yet for reasons which my tale shall tell, she had heard the nightingale complain for eighteen summers, and was still unmarried. In this country, which at that time was peopled by Allah with infidels, to render it fertile for the true believers, and to be their slaves upon their arrival, which did occur some time after the occurrences which I now relate; it was not the custom for the females of Souffra to lead the life of invisibility, permitted only to those who administer to the delights of the followers of the Koran; and although it was with exceeding modesty of demeanour, still did they, on great occasions, expose their charms to the public gaze, for which error, no doubt if they had had souls, beautiful as they were, they would have been damned to all eternity. Civilisation, as Menou hath said, must extend both far and wide, before other nations will be so polished as to imitate us in the splendour, the security, and the

happiness of our harems; and when I further remark to your highness——

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"Proceed, good Menouni," interrupted Mustapha; "his highness is not fond of remarks."

"No, by our beard," rejoined the pacha; "it is for you to tell your story, and for me to make remarks when it is over."

"I stand in the presence of wisdom," said Menouni, who bowed low and proceeded.

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The beauteous Babe-bi-bobu, for such was the name of the princess, and which, in the language of the country, implied "the cream-tart of delight," was left Queen of the Souffrarians by the death of her father; and by his will, sworn to by all the grandees of the empire, she was enjoined, at twelve years of age, to take to herself a husband; but it was particularly expressed that the youth so favoured should be of the same high caste as herself, and without scar or blemish. When, therefore, two years after her father's death, the beautiful Babe-bi-bobu had attained the age of twelve years, swift runners on foot, and speedy messengers mounted upon the fleetest dromedaries and Arab horses of the purest race, were dispatched through all the kingdom of Souffra to make known the injunctions of the will; the news of which at last flew to the adjacent kingdoms, and from them to all the corners of the round world, and none were ignorant. In the kingdom of Souffra, from which the choice was to be made, all the youth of caste were in a state of fermentation, because they had a chance of obtaining the honour; and all those of lower caste were in a state of fermentation, to think they had no chance of obtaining such an honour; and all the women of high caste, or low caste, or no caste, were all in a state of fermentation, because—because——

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"Because they always are so," interrupted the pacha. "Proceed, Menouni."

"I thank your sublime highness for having relieved me in my case of difficulty; for who can give reasons for the conduct of women?"

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It is sufficient to say, that the whole country was in a state of fermentation, arising from hope, despair, jealousy, envy, curiosity, surmising, wondering, doubting, believing, disbelieving, hearing, narrating, chattering, interrupting, and many other causes, too tedious to mention. At the first intelligence every Souffrarian youth new-strung his mandolin, and thought himself sure to be the happy man. Hope was triumphant through the land, roses advanced to double their price: the attar was adulterated to meet the exorbitant demand; and nightingales were almost worshipped; but this could not last. Doubt succeeded to the empire of hope, when reflection pointed out to them, that out of three millions of very eligible youths, only one could be made happy. But when the counsellors are so many, the decision is but slow; and so numerous were the meetings, the canvassings, the debates, the discussions, the harangues, and the variety of objections raised by the grandees of the country, that at the age of eighteen, the beauteous bird of paradise, still unmated, warbled her virgin strain in the loneliness of the royal groves.

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"But why," interrupted the pacha, "why did they not marry her, when there were three millions of young men ready to take her? I can't understand the cause of six years' delay."

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The reason, most sublime, was, that the grandees of Souffra were not endowed with your resplendent wisdom, or the beautiful Babe-bi-bobu had not so long languished for a husband. All this delay was produced by doubt, which the poets truly declare to be the father of delay. It was a doubt which arose in the mind of one of the Brahmins, who, when a doubt arose in his mind, would mumble it over and over, but

never masticate, swallow, or digest it; and thus was the preservation of the royal line endangered. For years had the aspirants for regal dignity, and more than regal beauty, hovered round the court, each with his mandolin on his arm, and a huge packet of love-sonnets borne behind him by a slave, and yet all was doubt; and the beautiful Princess Babe-bi-bobu remained unmarried.

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"I doubt whether we shall ever come to the doubt," interrupted the pacha impatiently, "or the princess to a husband."

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The doubt shall now be laid at your excellency's feet. It was, as to the exact meaning of the words, without scar or blemish, and whether moles were to be considered as scars or blemishes. The Brahmin was of opinion that moles were blemishes, and many others agreed with him; that is, all those who had no moles on their persons were of his opinion; while, on the other hand, those who were favoured by nature with those distinguishing marks, declared that so far from their being scars or blemishes, they must be considered as additional beauties granted by heaven to those most favoured. The dispute ran high, and the beautiful Princess Babe-bi-bobu remained unmarried. This great question was at last very properly referred to the mufti; these sages handled it, and turned it, and twisted it, added to it, multiplied it, subtracted from it, and divided it, debated it fasting, debated it on a full stomach, nodded over it, dreamt on it, slept on it, woke up with it, analysed it, criticised it, and wrote forty-eight folio volumes, of which twenty-four were advocates of, and twenty-four opponents to, the question; the only conclusion which they could come to at last was, that moles were moles: and the beautiful Princess Babe-bi-bobu remained unmarried.

The question was then taken up by the dervishes and fakirs of the country in a religious point of view; they split into two parties, tried the question by a dispute

under a banyan tree, which lasted eighteen months, and still not half of the holy men had given their sentiments upon the question; tired of talking, they proceeded to blows, and then to anathematisation and excommunication of each other; lastly, they had recourse to impalement to convince each other; more than a thousand perished on each side: and still the beautiful Princess Babe-bi-bobu remained unmarried.

The colleges and schools of the kingdom took up the question, and argued it metaphysically, and after having irrecoverably lost, between the two sides, twenty-two millions of threads of arguments, the question was as fresh as ever, and the beautiful Princess Babe-bi-bobu remained unmarried.

But this was not all; for at last the whole nation joined in the quarrel, splitting into violent and angry factions, which divided town against town, inhabitants against inhabitants, house against house, family against family, husband against wife, father against son, brother against sister; and in some cases, where he had doubts on both sides, a man against himself. The whole nation flew to arms, distinguishing themselves as Molists and Anti-Molists; four hundred insurrections, and four civil wars, were the consequence; and what was a worse consequence, the beautiful Princess Babe-bi-bobu remained unmarried. Your sublime highness must allow that it was a very nice question——

"What is your opinion, Mustapha?" demanded the pacha.

"Is your slave to speak? Then I would say, that it was absurd to make such a mountain of a mole-hill."

"Very true, Mustapha. This princess will never be married; so proceed, good Menouni."

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I should observe to your sublime highness, that the Molists were the strongest party, and the most arrogant; not content with wearing the marks of nature, they stuck upon their faces fictitious moles of every hue and colour, and the most violent

partisans appeared as if they were suffering from some cutaneous disorder. It was also a singular circumstance, that no Molist was ever known to change sides, whereas, after bathing, many of the Anti-Molists were found most shamefully to apostatise. Everything was disastrous, and the country in a state of anarchy and confusion, when the question was most fortunately settled by the remark of a little slave about twelve years old, who was regularly flogged by his master every morning that he got up, upon a suspicion of Molism, and as regularly every evening by his mistress, on a second suspicion of Anti-Molism. This poor little fellow whispered to another boy, that moles were blemishes or not, just as people happened to think them, but, as for his part, he thought nothing about the matter. The espionage at that time was so strict, that even a whisper was to be heard at the distance of miles, and this observation was reported; it certainly was new because it was neutral, when neutrality was not permitted or thought of; it was buzzed about; the remark was declared wonderful, it ran like wildfire through the suburbs, it roared through the city, it shook the very gates of the palace; at last it reached the holy in divan, who pronounced it to be inspiration from the Deity, and immediately there was issued a solemn edict, in which it was laid down as a most positive and important article of Souffrarian faith, that moles were not scars, and only blemishes when they were considered so to be. Everyone praised the wisdom of this edict; it was read and subscribed to as an article of faith; towns greeted towns, house congratulated house, and relations shook hands; what was still stranger was, husbands and wives were reconciled—and what was even more delightful, there was now some chance of the beautiful Princess Babe-bi-bobu no longer remaining unmarried.

This fortunate edict, by which it was clear that those who believed a mole to be a blemish were quite safe, and those who did not believe it, were in no manner of danger, set everything to rights; the metropolis was again filled with aspirants, the air tortured with the music of the mandolins, and impregnated with the attar of roses.

Who can attempt to describe the sumptuousness of the palace, and the splendour of the hall in which the beautiful princess sat, to receive the homage of the flower of the youth of her kingdom. Soothingly soft, sweetly, lovingly soft, were the dulcet notes of the warbling Asparas, or singing girls, now ebbing, now flowing in tender gushes of melody, while down the sides of the elegant and highly pillared hall, now advancing, now retreating, the dancing girls, each beautiful as Artee herself in her splendour, seemed almost to demand, in their aggregate, that gaze of homage due only to the peerless individual who at once burned and languished on her emerald throne. Three days had the princess sat in that hall of delight, tired and annoyed with the constant stream of the Souffra youths, who prostrated themselves and passed on. The fourth morning dawned, and none could say that either by gesture, sigh, or look, they had been distinguished by even a shadow of preference. And the noble youths communed in their despair, and murmured among themselves; many a foot was stamped with unbecoming impatience, and many a moustache twisted with a pretty indignation. The inhabitants of the capital blamed the impetuosity of the youths; to say the least of it, if it were not disloyal, it was ungallant, and what was worse, they showed no regard for the welfare of the citizens, over whom they each aspired to reign as sovereign, for they must be aware that now was the time that the citizens, from such an influx of aspirants, were reaping a golden harvest. And they added, with great truth, that a princess who had been compelled to wait six years to satisfy the doubts of others, had a most undeniable right to wait as many days to satisfy her own. On the fourth day, the beautiful Babe-bi-bobu again took her seat on the golden cushions, with her legs crossed, and her little feet hidden under the folds of her loose, azure-coloured satin trousers, and it was supposed that there was more brightness in her eyes, and more animation in her countenance than on the previous days; but still the crowd passed on unnoticed. Even the learned Brahmins, who stood immovable in rows on each side of her throne, became impatient: they talked about the fickleness of the sex, the impossibility of inducing them to make up their minds;

they whispered wise saws and sayings from Ferdistan and others, about the caprice of women, and the instability of their natures, and the more their legs ached from such perpetual demand upon their support, the more bitter did they become in their remarks. Poor, prosing old fools! the beauteous princess had long made up her mind, and had never swerved from it through the tedious six years during which the doubts and discussions of those venerable old numskulls had embroiled the whole nation in the Molean and Anti-Molean controversy.

It was about the first hour after noon that the beautiful Babe-bi-bobu, suddenly rising from her recumbent attitude, clapped her pretty little hands, the fingers of which were beautifully tipped with henna, and beckoning to her attendants, retired gracefully from the hall of audience. The surprise and commotion was great, and what made her conduct more particular was, that the only son of the chief Brahmin who had first raised the question, and headed the Anti-Molist party, was at the moment of the princess's departure, prostrate before the throne, with his forehead, indeed, to the ground, but his bosom swelling high with hope and ambition.

Within a bower of orange trees, in the deep recesses of the royal gardens, to which she had hastened, sat the panting princess. She selected some flowers from those which were scattered round her, and despatched them to her favourite musician and attendant, Acota. Who was there in the whole kingdom of Souffra who could so sweetly touch the mandolin as Acota? Yet, who was there, not only in Souffra, but in all the adjacent countries, who struck such occasional discordant notes as Acota, and that in the ear of the beautiful princess Babe-bi-bobu, who, far from being displeased, appeared to approve of his occasional violence, which not only threatened to crack the strings of the instrument, but the tympanums of those who were near, who longed to escape, and leave the princess to enjoy the dissonance alone, little thinking that the discord was raised that their souls' harmony might be undisturbed by the presence of others, and that the jarring of the strings was more than repaid to the princess, by the subsequent music of Acota's voice.

Acota seated himself, at a signal from the princess, and commenced his playing, if such it could be called, thrumming violently, and jarring every chord of his instrument to a tone of such dissonance, that the attendant girls put their fingers into their ears, and pitied the beautiful Babe-bi-bobu's bad taste in music.

"Ah! Acota," said the princess, opening upon him all the tenderness of her large and beaming eyes, "how weary am I of sitting on my cushion, and seeing fop after fop, fool after fool, dawdle down upon their faces before me; and, moreover, I am suffocated with perfumes. Strike your mandolin again louder, beloved of my soul—still louder, that I may be further relieved of this unwished-for crowd."

Thereupon, Acota seized his mandolin, and made such an unaccountable confusion of false notes, such a horrid jarring, that all the birds within one hundred yards shrieked as they fled, and the watchful old chamberlain, who was always too near the princess, in her opinion, and never near enough, in his own, cried out, "Yah—yah—baba senna, curses on his mother, and his mandolin into the bargain!" as his teeth chattered; and he hastened away, as fast as his obesity would permit him. The faithful damsels who surrounded the princess could neither stand it nor sit it any longer—they were in agonies, all their teeth were set on edge; and at last, when Acota, with one dreadful crash, broke every string of his instrument, they broke loose from the reins of duty, and fled in every direction of the garden, leaving the princess and Acota alone.

"Beloved of my soul," said the princess, "I have at last invented a plan by which our happiness will be secured!" and in a low tone of voice, but without looking at each other, that they might not attract the observation of the chamberlain, they sweetly communed. Acota listened a few minutes to the soft voice of the princess, and then took up his broken-stringed mandolin, and with a profound reverence for the benefit of the old chamberlain, he departed.

In the meantime, a rumour was spread abroad that at sunset a public examination of

all the candidates was to take place on the bank of the rapid-flowing river, which ran through a spacious meadow near to the city, in order to reject those candidates who might prove, by any scar or blemish not to come expressly within the meaning of the old king's will. Twelve old fakirs, and twenty-four mollahs with spectacles, were appointed as examining officers. It was supposed, as this was a religious ceremony, that all the females of Souffra, who were remarkable for their piety, would not fail to attend—and all the world were eager for the commencement of the examination. O then it was pleasant to see the running, and mounting, and racing, among the young Souffrarian rayahs, who were expected to be examined; and a stranger would have thought that a sudden pestilence had entered the city, from the thousands upon thousands who poured out from it, hastening to the river side, to behold the ceremony. But to the astonishment of the people, almost all the rayahs, as soon as they were mounted, left the city in an opposite direction, some declaring, that they were most surely without scar or blemish, but still they could not consent to expose their persons to the gaze of so many thousands; others declared, that they left on account of scars and honourable wounds received in battle, and until that afternoon, the Souffrarians were not aware of how much modesty and how much courage they had to boast in their favoured land; and many regretted, as they viewed the interminable line of gallant young men depart, that the will of the late king should have made scars received in battle to be a bar to advancement; but they were checked by the Brahmins, who told them that there was a holy and hidden mystery contained in the injunction of the old king's will.

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"By the beard of the prophet, it takes a long time to get a husband for this princess of yours, Menouni," observed the pacha with a yawn.

"Your sublime highness will not be surprised at it, when you consider the conditions of the old king's will."

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The examination was most strict, and even a small cut was sufficient to render a young man ineligible; a corn was considered as a blemish—and a young man even having been bled by a leech to save his life, lost him all chance of the princess.

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"Pray may I ask, if a barber had cut the skin in shaving their heads, was that considered as a scar?"

"Most decidedly, your highness."

"Then those fakirs and mollahs, with their spectacles, and the Brahmins, were a parcel of fools. Were they not, Mustapha?"

"Your highness's wisdom is like the overflowing of the honey pot," replied Mustapha.

"Your know, Mustapha, as well as I do, that it is almost impossible not to draw blood, if there happens to be a pimple, or a bad razor; but, however, proceed, Menouni, and if possible marry this beautiful princess."

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About two hours before sunset the beautiful Babe-bi-bobu, "the cream-tart of delight," more splendidly dressed than before, again entered the hall of audience, and found to her surprise, that there remained out of the many thousands of young rayahs, not fifty who could pretend to the honour of her hand and throne. Among them, no longer dressed as a musician, but robed in the costume of his high caste, stood the conscious and proud Acota, and, although his jewels might not have vied with those worn by others who stood by him, yet the brightness of his eyes more than compensated. Next to Acota stood Mezrimbi, the son of the chief Brahmin, and he, only, could be compared to Acota in personal beauty; but his character was known—he was proud, overbearing, and cruel. The beauteous Babe-bi-bobu feared

him, for there was a clause in her father's will, by which, if the first choice of the princess should prove by any intermediate accident to be ineligible, his father, the chief Brahmin, was empowered to make a selection for the princess, and his decision was to be equally inviolable. The beauteous eyes of the princess first lighted upon the form of Mezrimbi, and she trembled, but the proud bearing of Acota reassured her, and waving her hand as she sat, she addressed the assembled youths as follows:—

"Faithful and gentle rayahs, impute it to no want of modesty that, for once, I sink the graceful bashfulness of the virgin, and assume the more forward deportment of the queen. When all appear to possess such merit, how can I slight all but one by my decision? Let me rather leave it to the immortal Vishnu to decide who is most worthy to reign over this our kingdom of Souffra. Let Vishnu prompt you to read your destiny; I have placed a flower in this unworthy bosom, which is shortly to call one of you its lord. Name then, the flower, and he who first shall name it, let him be proclaimed the lawful king of Souffra. Take then, your instruments, noble rayahs, and to their sounds, in measured verse, pour out the name of the hidden flower, and the reason for my choice. Thus shall fate decide the question, and no one say that his merits have been slighted."

Having finished her address, the beauteous princess let fall her veil, and was silent. A shout of applause was followed by wild strummings and tunings of mandolins, and occasional scratching of heads or turbans, to remember all that Hafiz had ever written, or to aid their attempts at improviso versification. Time flew on, and no one of the young rayahs appeared inclined to begin. At last one stepped forward, and named the rose, in a borrowed couplet. He was dismissed with a graceful wave of the hand by the princess, and broke his mandolin in his vexation, as he quitted the hall of audience. And thus did they continue, one after another, to name flower after flower, and quit the hall of audience in despair. Then might these beautiful youths, as they all stood before the princess, be compared, themselves, to the most

beauteous flowers, strong rooted in their hopes, and basking in the sun of her presence; and, as their hopes were cut off, what were they but the same flowers severed from their stalks, and drooping before the sunny beams, now too powerful to be borne, or loaded with the dew of tears, removed to fade away unheeded? There were but few left, when Mezrimbi, who had, as he thought, hit upon the right name, and who, watching the countenance of Acota, which had an air of impatient indifference upon it, which induced Mezrimbi to suppose that he had lighted upon the same idea, and might forestall him, stepped forward with his mandolin. Mezrimbi was considered one of the best poets in Souffra; in fact, he had every talent, but not one virtue. He bent forward in an elegant attitude, and sang as follows:—

"Who does the nightingale love? Alas! we Know. She sings of her love in the silence of Night, and never tells the name of her adored one.

"What are flowers but the language of love? And does not the nightingale rest her breast Upon the thorn as she pours out her plaintive notes?

"Take then out of thy bosom the sweet flower of May Which is hidden there, emblematical of thy love, And the pleasing pain that it has occasioned."

When Mezrimbi had finished the two first verses, the beauteous princess started with fear that he had gained her secret, and it was with a feeling of agony that she listened to the last; agony succeeded by a flow of joy, at his not having been successful. Impatiently she waved her hand, and as impatiently did Mezrimbi depart from her presence.

Acota then stepped forward, and after a prelude, the beauty of which astonished all those around the queen's person, for they had no idea that he could play in tune, sang in a clear melodious voice the following stanzas:—

"Sweet, blushing cheek! the rose is there, Thy breath, the fragrance of its bowers; Lilies are on thy bosom fair, And e'en thy very words seem flowers.

"But lily, rose, or flower, that blows In India's garden, on thy breast Must meet its death—by breathing sweets Where it were ecstasy to rest.

"A blossom from a nettle ta'en, Is in thy beauteous bosom bound, Born amid stings, it gives no pain, 'Tis sweetness among venom found."

Acota was silent. The beauteous princess, as the minstrel finished, rose slowly and tremulously from her cushions, and taking the blossom of a nettle from her bosom, placed it in the hands of the happy Acota, saying, with a great deal of piety, "It is the will of Heaven."

"But how was it possible for Acota to find out that the princess had a nettle blossom in her bosom?" interrupted the pacha. "No man could ever have guessed it. I can't make that out. Can you, Mustapha?"

"Your sublime highness is right; no man ever could have guessed such a thing," replied Mustapha. "There is but one way to account for it, which is, that the princess must have told him her intentions when they were alone in the royal garden."

"Very true, Mustapha—well, thank Allah, the princess is married at last."

"I beg pardon of your sublime highness, but the beauteous princess is not yet married," said Menouni; "the story is not yet finished."

"Wallah el nebi!" exclaimed the pacha. "By God and his prophet, is she never to be married?"

"Yes, your sublime highness, but not just yet. Shall I proceed?"

"Yes, Menouni, and the faster you get on the better."

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"Amidst the cries of 'Long live Acota, Souffraria's legitimate king.'"

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"Legitimate. Pray, good Menouni, what may that word mean?"

"Legitimate, your sublime highness, implies that a king and his descendants are

chosen by Allah to reign over a people."

"Well, but I don't see that Allah had much to do with the choice of Acota."

"Nor with the choice of any other king, I suspect, your sublime highness; but still the people were made to believe so, and that is all that is sufficient. Allah does not interfere in the choice of any but those who reign over true believers. The Sultan is the Holy Prophet's vicegerent on earth—and he, guided by the prophet, invests virtue and wisdom with the Kalaats of dignity, in the persons of his pachas."

"Very true," said the pacha, "the Sultan is guided by Allah, and," continued he in a low tone to Mustapha, "a few hundred purses to boot. Menouni, you may proceed."

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Amidst the cries of "Long live Acota, Souffraria's legitimate king!" Acota was led to the throne by the attendant grandees of the nation, where he received the homage of all present. It was arranged by the grandees and mollahs that the marriage should take place the next day. The assembly broke up, and hastened in every direction to make preparations for the expected ceremony.

But who can describe the jealousy, the envy, and the indignation which swelled in the breasts of Mezrimbi and his father, the chief Brahmin? They met, they consulted, they planned, and they schemed. Acota was not yet king, although he was proclaimed as such—he was not king until his marriage with the beautiful Princess Babe-bi-bobu, "the cream-tart of delight," and should he be scarred or blemished before the marriage of the ensuing day, then must the Brahmin, by the will of the old king, choose his successor; and who could he choose but his own son?

"Father," said young Mezrimbi, his beautiful countenance distorted by the vilest passions of Jehanum, "I have planned as follows:—I have mutes ready to obey my wishes, and a corrosive burning acid, which will eat deeply into the flesh of the proud Acota. I know that he will pass the time away in the garden of the royal grove. I know even the bower in which he hath wooed and won the fair princess. Let us call

these mutes, explain to them what we wish, and by to-morrow's sun the throne of Souffraria will fall to the race of Mezrimbi. Are we not of the purest blood of the plains, and is not Acota but a rayah of the mountains?"

And the chief Brahmin was pleased with his son's proposal; the mutes were summoned, the black, tongueless, everythingless, hideous creatures, bowed in their humility, and followed their master, who, with the chief Brahmin, ventured by a circuitous route to invade the precincts of the royal grove. Slowly and cautiously did they proceed towards the bower, where, as Mezrimbi had truly said, Acota was waiting for his beloved princess. Fortunately, as they approached, a disturbed snake, hissing in his anger, caused an exclamation from the old Brahmin, which aroused Acota from his delicious reverie. Through the foliage he perceived and recognised Mezrimbi, his father, and the mutes. Convinced that they meditated mischief towards himself, he secreted himself among the rose-bushes, lying prostrate on the ground; but in his haste, he left his cloak and mandolin. Mezrimbi entered the bower, and explained to the mutes by signs what it was which he desired, showed them the cloak and mandolin to make known the object of his wrath, and put into their hands the bottle of corrosive acid. They satisfied him that they comprehended his wishes, and the party then retired, the chief Brahmin quitting the grove for his own house, the mutes lying in wait under some bushes for the arrival of Acota, and Mezrimbi walking away into the recesses of the grove, anxious as to the issue of the plot. Acota, perfectly aware of what was intended, laughed in his sleeve, and thanked Allah for this fortunate discovery; he crawled away on his hands and knees, so as not to be perceived, and hid himself, with his cloak and mandolin, watching in turn the motions of the others—and thus did all parties watch until the sun descended behind the blue hills which divided the kingdom of Souffraria from that of the other kingdom, which my treacherous memory has dared to forget in your highness's sublime presence. Mezrimbi was the only one who was not motionless: he paced up and down in all the anxiety of anticipation and doubt, and at last he

stopped, and, tired out with contending feelings, sat down at the foot of a tree, close to where Acota was concealed. The nightingale was pouring forth her sweet melody, and, friendly to lovers, she continued it until Mezrimbi, who had listened to it, and whose angry feelings had been soothed with her dulcet strains, fell fast asleep. Acota perceived it, and approaching him softly, laid his cloak over him, and taking up his mandolin, struck a chord, which he knew would not be lost upon the quick-eared mutes, although not so loud as to awake Mezrimbi. Acota was right; in a minute he perceived the dark beings crawling through the underwood like jackals who had scented out their prey, and Acota was again concealed in the thick foliage. They approached like shadows in the dark, and perceived the sleeping Mezrimbi with the cloak of Acota and the mandolin, which Acota, after striking it, had laid by his side. It was sufficient. Mezrimbi's face was covered with the burning acid before even he was awakened; his screams were smothered in a shawl, and satisfied with having obeyed the injunctions of their master, the mutes hastened back to report their success, taking, however, the precaution of tying the hands and feet of Mezrimbi, that he might not go home to receive any help in his distress. They escaped out of the gardens, and reported to the chief Brahmin the success of the operations, and how they had left him, Acota, in the woods. The old Mezrimbi, upon reflection, thought it advisable that the person of Acota should be in his power, that he might be able to produce him when required upon the ensuing day. He therefore desired the mutes to go back and bring Acota to the house, keeping a strict guard that he might not escape.

When the mutes had quitted Mezrimbi, Acota rose from his hiding place, and went towards the unfortunate wretch, who still groaned with pain, but his face was muffled up in the shawl, so that his features were hidden. At first Acota had intended to have reviled and scoffed at his treacherous enemy, but his good heart forbade it. Another idea then came into his head. He took off the cloak of Mezrimbi, and substituted his own; he exchanged turbans and scimitars, and then left him and

went home. Shortly after Acota had quitted the wood, the mutes returned, lifted the miserable Mezrimbi on their shoulders and carried him to the house of the chief Brahmin, who having ordered him to be guarded in an outhouse, said his prayers and went to bed.

The sun rose and poured his beaming rays upon the land of Souffraria, and thousands and thousands of the inhabitants had risen before him, to prepare for the day of delight, the day on which they were to be blessed with a king—the day on which the beauteous Princess Babe-bi-bobu, the cream-tart of delight, was no longer to remain unmarried. Silks and satins from China, shawls and scarfs from Cashmere, jewels, and gold, and diamonds—horses, and camels, and elephants, were to be seen spread over the plains, and the city of Souffra. All was joy, and jubilee, and feasting, and talking, for the beautiful Princess Babe-bi-bobu was that day to be married.

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"I wish to heaven she was," observed the pacha, impatiently.

"May it please your sublime highness, she soon will be."

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At an early hour the proclamation was made that the princess was about to take unto herself a husband from the high caste youths of Souffra, and that all whom it might concern should repair to the palace, to be present at the ceremony. As it concerned all Souffra—all Souffra was there. The sun had nearly reached to the zenith, and looked down almost enviously upon the gay scene beneath, broiling the brains of the good people of Souffra, whose heads paved, as it were, the country for ten square miles, when the beauteous Princess Babe-bi-bobu made her appearance in the hall of audience, attended by her maidens and the grandees of Souffra, who were the executors to her father's will. At the head of them was the chief Brahmin, who looked anxiously among the crowd for his son Mezrimbi, who had not made his appearance that morning. At last he espied his rich dress, his mantle, his turban and

jewelled scimitar, but his face was muffled up in a shawl, and the chief Brahmin smiled at the witty conceit of his son, that of having his own beauteous person muffled as well as that of the now scarred Acota. And then silence was commanded by a thousand brazen trumpets, and enforced by the discharge of two thousand pieces of artillery, ten square miles of people repeated the order for silence, in loud and reiterated shouts—and at last silence obeyed the order, and there was silence. The chief Brahmin rose, and having delivered an extemporaneous prayer, suitable to the solemnity and importance of the occasion, he proceeded to read the will of the late king—he then descanted upon the Molean controversy, and how it was now an article of the Souffrarian faith, which it was heresy and impalement not to believe, that "moles were not scars, and only blemishes when they were considered so to be." The choice of the princess, continued the learned Brahmin, has however not been made; she has left to chance that which was to have proceeded from her own free will, and that without consulting with the ministers of our holy religion. My heart told me yesterday that such was not right, and contrary not only to the king's will, but the will of Heaven; and I communed deeply on the subject after I had prayed nine times—and a dream descended on me in my sleep, and I was told that the conditions of the will would be fulfilled. How to explain this answer from above I know not: perhaps the youth who was fortunate in discovering the flower, is also the youth of the princess's choice.

"Even so," replied the princess, in a soft, melodious voice, "and therefore is my father's will obeyed."

"Where, then, is the fortunate youth?" said the chief Brahmin; "let him appear."

Babe-bi-bobu, who, as well as others, had in vain looked round for Acota, was astonished at his not making his appearance, and still more so when he did, as they thought, appear, led in by the four black mutes, with his face enveloped in a shawl.

"This, then," said the chief Brahmin, "is the favoured youth, Acota. Remove the

shawl, and lead him to the princess."

The mutes obeyed, and to the horror of Babe-bi-bobu, there stood Acota, as she thought, with a face so scarred and burnt, that his features were not distinguishable. She started from her throne, uttered one wild shriek, which was said to have been heard by the whole ten square miles of population, and fainted in the arms of her attendants.

"We know his dress, most noble grandees," continued the chief Brahmin, "but how can we recognise in that object, the youth without scar or blemish? It is the will of Heaven," continued the chief Brahmin, piously and reverently bending low. And all the other grandees replied in the same pious manner, "It is the will of Heaven." "I say," continued the chief Brahmin, "that this must have been occasioned by the princess not having chosen as ordained by the will of her father, but having impiously left to chance what was to have been decided by free will. Is not the hand, the finger of Providence made manifest?" continued he, appealing to the grandees. And they all bowed low, and declared that the hand and finger of Providence were manifest; while the mutes, who knew that it was their hands and fingers which had done the deed, chuckled as well as they could with the remnants of their tongues. "And now," continued the chief Brahmin, "we must obey the will of the late king, which expressly states, that if any accident should happen after the choice of the princess had been made, that I, the chief of our holy religion, should select her husband. By virtue, then, of my power, I call thee forth, my son, Mezrimbi, to take his place. Bow down to Mezrimbi, the future king of Souffraria."

Acota, muffled up to the eyes, and dressed in the garments of Mezrimbi, stepped forth, and the chief Brahmin, and all present, in pursuance to his order, prostrated themselves before Acota, with their foreheads in the dust. Acota took that opportunity of removing the shawl, and, when they rose up, stood by the throne, resplendent in his beauty and his pride. At the sight of him, the chief Brahmin raised

a cry, which was heard, not only further than the shriek of the beautiful Princess Babe-bi-bobu, but had the effect of recalling her to life and recollection. All joined in the cry of astonishment when they beheld Acota in the garments of Mezrimbi.

"Who, then, art thou?" exclaimed the chief Brahmin, to his son, in Acota's dress.

"I am," exclaimed his son, exhausted with pain and mortification, "I am—I was Mezrimbi."

"Grandees," cried Acota, "as the chief Brahmin has already asserted, and as you have agreed, in that you behold the finger of Heaven, which ever punishes hypocrisy, cruelty, and injustice;" and the chief Brahmin fell down in a fit, and was carried out, with his unfortunate son Mezrimbi.

In the meantime the beauteous Princess Babe-bi-bobu had recovered, and was in the arms of Acota, who, resigning her to her attendant maidens, addressed the assembly in a speech of so much eloquence, so much beauty, and so much force, that it was written down in letters of gold, being considered the ne plus ultra of the Souffrarian language; he explained to them the nefarious attempt of Mezrimbi to counteract the will of Heaven, and how he had fallen into the snare which he had laid for others. And when he had finished, the whole assembly hailed him as their king; and the population, whose heads paved, as it were, a space of ten square miles, cried out, "Long life to the king Acota, and his beautiful princess Babe-bi-bobu, the cream-tart of delight!"

Who can attempt to describe the magnificent procession which took place that evening, who can describe the proud and splendid bearing of king Acota, or the beaming eyes of the beautiful Princess Babe-bi-bobu. Shall I narrate how the nightingales sang themselves to death—shall I——

"No, pray don't," interrupted the pacha, "only let us know one thing—was the beautiful Babe-bi-bobu married at last?"

"She was, that very evening, your sublime highness."

"Allah be praised!" rejoined the pacha. "Mustapha, let Menouni know what it is to tell a story to a pacha, even though it is rather a long one, and I thought the princess would never have been married." And the pacha rose and waddled to his harem.

Chapter XV

On the ensuing day, the pacha was sitting at his divan, according to his custom, Mustapha by his side, lending his ear to the whispers of divers people who came to him in an attitude of profound respect. Still they were most graciously received, as the purport of their intrusion was to induce the vizier to interest himself in their behalves when their cause came forward to be heard and decided upon by the pacha, who in all cases was guided by the whispered opinion of Mustapha. Mustapha was a good-hearted man: he was always grateful, and if any one did him a good turn, he never forgot it. The consequence was, that an intimation that a purse of so many sequins would be laid at his feet if the cause to be heard was decided in favour of the applicant, invariably interested Mustapha in the favour of that party; and Mustapha's opinion was always coincided in by the pacha, because he had (or supposed that he had) half of the sequins so obtained. True, the proverb says, "you should be just before you are generous;" but Mustapha's arguments when he first proposed to the pacha this method of filling the royal treasury, were so excellent, that we shall hand them down to posterity. "In the first place," said Mustapha, "it is evident that in all these causes the plaintiffs and defendants are both rascals. In the second place, it is impossible to believe a word on either side. In the third place, exercising the best of your judgment, you are just as likely to go wrong as right. In the fourth place, if a man happens to be wronged by our decision, he deserves it as a punishment for his other misdeeds. In the fifth place, as the only respectability existing in either party consists in their worldly wealth, by deciding for him who gives most, you decide for the most respectable man. In the sixth place, it is our duty to be grateful for good

done to us, and in so deciding, we exercise a virtue strongly inculcated by the Koran. In the seventh place, we benefit both parties by deciding quickly, as a loss is better than a lawsuit. And in the eighth and last place, we want money."

On this day a cause was being heard, and, although weighty reasons had already decided the verdict, still, pro formâ, the witnesses on both sides were examined; one of these, upon being asked whether he witnessed the proceedings, replied, "That he had no doubt, but there was doubt on the subject, but that he doubted whether the doubts were correct."

"Doubt—no doubt—what is all this? do you laugh at our beards?" said Mustapha sternly, who always made a show of justice. "Is it the fact or not?"

"Your highness, I seldom met a fact, as it is called, without having half a dozen doubts hanging to it," replied the man: "I will not, therefore, make any assertion without the reservation of a doubt."

"Answer me plainly," replied the vizier, "or the ferashes and bamboo will be busy with you very shortly. Did you see the money paid?"

"I believe as much as I can believe any thing in this world, that I did see money paid; but I doubt the sum, and I doubt the metal, and I have also my other doubts. May it please your highness, I am an unfortunate man, I have been under the influence of doubts from my birth; and it has become a disease which I have no doubt will only end with my existence. I always doubt a fact, unless——"

"What does the ass say? What is all this but Bosh?—nothing. Let him have a fact."

The pacha gave the sign—the ferashes appeared—the man was thrown, and received fifty blows of the bastinado. The pacha then commanded them to desist. "Now, by our beard, is it not a fact that you have received the bastinado? If you still doubt the fact, we will proceed."

"The fact is beyond a doubt," replied the man, prostrating himself. "But excuse me, your sublime highness, if I do continue to assert that I cannot always acknowledge a

fact, without such undeniable proofs as your wisdom has been pleased to bring forward. If your highness were to hear the history of my life, you would then allow that I have cause to doubt."

"History of his life! Mustapha, we shall have a story."

"Another fifty blows on his feet would remove all his doubts, your highness," replied Mustapha.

"Yes; but then he will be beaten out of his story. No, no; let him be taken away till the evening, and then we shall see how he will make out his case."

Mustapha gave directions, in obedience to the wish of the pacha. In the evening, as soon as they had lighted their pipes, the man was ordered in, and in consideration of his swelled feet, was permitted to sit down, that he might be more at ease when he narrated his story, which was as follows.

THE STORY OF HUDUSI.

Most sublime pacha, allow me first to observe, that, although I have latterly adhered to my own opinions, I am not so intolerant as not to permit the same licence to others: I do not mean to say that there are not such things as facts in this world, nor to find fault with those who believe in them. I am told that there are also such things as flying dragons, griffins, and other wondrous animals, but surely it is quite sufficient for me, or any one else, to believe that these animals exist, when it may have been our fortune to see them; in the same manner, I am willing to believe in a fact, when it is cleared from the mists of doubt; but up to the present, I can safely say, that I seldom have fallen in with a fact, unaccompanied by doubts, and every year adds to my belief, that there are few genuine facts in existence. So interwoven in my frame is doubt, that I sometimes am unwilling to admit, as a fact, that I exist. I believe it to be the case, but I feel that I have no right to assert it, until I know what death is, and may from thence draw an inference, which may lead me to a just

conclusion.

My name is Hudusi. Of my parents I can say little. My father asserted that he was the bravest janissary in the sultan's employ, and had greatly distinguished himself. He was always talking of Rustam, as being a fool compared to him; of the number of battles he had fought, and of the wounds which he had received in leading his corps on all desperate occasions; but as my father often bathed before me, and the only wound I could ever perceive was one in his rear, when he spoke of his bravery, I very much doubted the fact.

My mother fondled and made much of me, declared that I was the image of my father, a sweet pledge of their affections, a blessing sent by Heaven upon their marriage; but, as my father's nose was aquiline, and mine is a snub, or aquiline reversed; his mouth large, and mine small; his eyes red and ferrety, and mine projecting; and, moreover, as she was a very handsome woman, and used to pay frequent visits to the cave of a sainted man in high repute, of whom I was the image, when she talked of the janissary's paternity, I very much doubted the fact.

An old mollah taught me to read and write and repeat the verses of the Koran—and I was as much advanced as any boy under his charge—but he disliked me very much for reasons which I never could understand, and was eternally giving me the slipper. He declared that I was a reprobate, an unbeliever, a son of Jehanum, who would be impaled before I was much older; but here I am, without a stake through my body at the age of forty-five; and your highness must acknowledge that when he railed all this in my ears, I was justified in very much doubting the fact.

When I was grown up, my father wanted me to enrol myself in the corps of janissaries, and become a lion-killer like himself; I remonstrated, but in vain; he applied, and I was accepted, and received the mark on my arm, which constituted me a janissary. I put on the dress, swaggered and bullied with many other young men of my acquaintance, who were all ready, as they swore, to eat their enemies

alive, and who curled their mustachios to prove the truth of what they said. We were despatched to quell a rebellious pacha—we bore down upon his troops with a shout, enough to frighten the devil, but the devil a bit were they frightened, they stood their ground; and as they would not run, we did, leaving those who were not so wise, to be cut to pieces. After this, when any of my companions talked of their bravery, or my father declared that he should be soon promoted to the rank of a Spahi, and that I was a lion's whelp, I very much doubted the fact.

The pacha held out much longer than was at first anticipated; indeed, so long as to cause no little degree of anxiety in the capital. More troops were despatched to subdue him; and success not attending our efforts, the vizier, according to the custom, was under the disagreeable necessity of parting with his head, which was demanded because we turned tail. Indeed, it was to oblige us, that the sultan consented to deprive himself of the services of a very able man; for we surrounded the palace, and insisted that it was all his fault, but, considering our behaviour in the field of battle, your highness must admit that there was reason to doubt the fact.

We were again despatched against this rebellious pacha, who sat upon the parapets of his stronghold, paying down thirty sequins for the head of every janissary brought to him by his own troops, and I am afraid a great deal of money was spent in that way. We fell into an ambuscade, and one half of the corps to which my father belonged were cut to pieces, before we could receive any assistance. At last the enemy retired. I looked for my father, and found him expiring; as before, he had received a wound on the wrong side, a spear having transfixed him between the shoulders. "Tell how I died like a brave man," said he, "and tell your mother that I am gone to Paradise." From an intimate knowledge of my honoured father's character, in the qualities of thief, liar, and coward, although I promised to deliver the message, I very much doubted these facts.

That your highness may understand how it was that I happened to be left alone, and

alive on the field of battle, I must inform you, that I inherited a considerable portion of my father's courageous temper, and not much liking the snapping of the pistols in my face, I had thrown myself down on the ground, and had remained there very quietly, preferring to be trampled on, rather than interfere with what was going on above.

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"By the sword of the prophet! there is one fact—you were a very great coward," observed the pacha.

"Among my other doubts, your highness, I certainly have some doubts as to my bravery."

"By the beard of the pacha, I have no doubts on the subject," observed Mustapha.

"Without attempting to defend my courage, may I observe to your highness, that it was a matter of perfect indifference to me whether the sultan or the pacha was victorious; and I did not much admire hard blows, without having an opportunity of putting a few sequins in my pocket. I never knew of any man, however brave he might be, who fought for love of fighting, or amusement; we all are trying in this world to get money; and that is, I believe, the secret spring of all our actions."

"Is that true, Mustapha?" inquired the pacha.

"May it please your sublime highness, if not the truth, it is not very far from it. Proceed, Hudusi."

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The ideas which I have ventured to express before your sublime highness, were running in my mind, as I sat down among the dead and dying, and I thought how much better off were the pacha's soldiers than those of our sublime sultan, who had nothing but hard blows, while the pacha's soldiers received thirty sequins for the head of everyone of our corps of janissaries; and one idea breeding another, I

reflected that it would be very prudent, now that the pacha appeared to be gaining the advantage, to be on the right side. Having made up my mind upon this point, it then occurred to me, that I might as well get a few sequins by the exchange, and make my appearance before the pacha, with one or two of the heads of the janissaries, who were lying close to me. I therefore divested myself of whatever might give the idea of my belonging to the corps, took off the heads and rifled the pockets of three janissaries, and was about to depart, when I thought of my honoured father, and turned back to take a last farewell. It was cruel to part with a parent, and I could not make up my mind to part with him altogether, so I added his head, and the contents of his sash, to those of the other three, and smearing my face and person with blood, with my scimitar in my hand and the four heads tied up in a bundle, made my way for the pacha's stronghold; but the skirmishing was still going on outside of the walls, and I narrowly escaped a corps of janissaries, who would have recognised me. As it was, two of them followed me as I made for the gate of the fortress; and, encumbered as I was, I was forced to turn at bay. No man fights better than, and even a man who otherwise would not fight at all, will fight well, when he can't help it. I never was so brave in my life. I cut down one, and the other ran away, and this in the presence of the pacha, who was seated on the embrasure at the top of the wall; and thus I gained my entrance into the fort. I hastened to the pacha's presence, and laid at his feet the four heads. The pacha was so pleased at my extraordinary valour, that he threw me a purse of five hundred pieces of gold, and ordered me to be promoted, asking me to what division of his troops I belonged. I replied, that I was a volunteer. I was made an officer, and thus did I find myself a rich man and a man of consequence by merely changing sides.

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"That's not quite so uncommon a method of getting on in the world as you may imagine," observed Mustapha, drily.

"Mustapha," said the pacha, almost gasping, "all these are words, wind—bosh. By the fountains that play round the throne of Mahomet, but my throat feels as hot and as dry with this fellow's doubts, as if it were paved with live cinders. I doubt whether we shall be able ever to moisten it again."

"That doubt, your sublimity ought to resolve immediately. Hudusi, murakhas—my friend, you are dismissed."

Hardly had the doubter gathered up his slippers, and backed out from the presence, when the pacha and his minister were, with an honest rivalry, endeavouring to remove at once their doubts and their thirst, and were so successful in their attempts, that they, in a short time, exchanged their state of dubiety into a very happy one of ebriety.

Chapter XVI

The next morning the pacha and his minister, after the business of the divan, with their heads aching from the doubts of Hudusi, or the means that they had taken to refute them, in not the best humour in the world listened to the continuation of them as follows:—

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I have heard it observed, continued Hudusi, that the sudden possession of gold will make a brave man cautious, and he who is not brave, still more dastardly than he was before. It certainly was the case with me; my five hundred pieces of gold had such an effect, that everything in the shape of valour oozed out at my fingers' ends. I reflected again, and the result was that I determined to have nothing more to do with the business, and that neither the sultan nor the pacha should be the better for my exertions. That night we made a sally; and as I was considered a prodigy of valour, I was one of those who were ordered to lead on my troop. I curled my moustachios, swore I would not leave a janissary alive, flourished my scimitar, marched out at the

head of my troop, and then took to my heels, and in two days arrived safely at my mother's house. As soon as I entered, I tore my turban, and threw dust upon my head, in honour of my father's memory, and then sat down. My mother embraced me—we were alone.

"And your father? Is it for him that we are to mourn?"

"Yes," replied I, "he was a lion, and he is in Paradise."

My mother commenced a bitter lamentation; but of a sudden recollecting herself, she said, "But, Hudusi, it's no use tearing one's hair and good clothes for nothing. Are you sure that your father is dead?"

"Quite sure," replied I. "I saw him down."

"But he may only be wounded," replied my mother.

"Not so, my dearest mother, abandon all hope, for I saw his head off."

"Are you sure it was his body that you saw with the head off?"

"Quite sure, dear mother, for I was a witness to its being cut off."

"If that is the case," replied my mother, "he can never come back again, that's clear. Allah acbar—God is great. Then must we mourn." And my mother ran out into the street before the door, shrieking and screaming, tearing her hair and her garments, so as to draw the attention and sympathy of all her neighbours, who asked her what was the matter. "Ah! wahi, the head of my house is no more," cried she, "my heart is all bitterness—my soul is dried up—my liver is but as water; ah! wahi, ah! wahi," and she continued to weep and tear her hair, refusing all consolation. The neighbours came to her assistance; they talked to her, they reasoned with her, restrained her violence, and soothed her into quietness. They all declared that it was a heavy loss, but that a true believer had gone to Paradise; and they all agreed that no woman's conduct could be more exemplary, that no woman was ever more fond of her husband. I said nothing, but I must acknowledge that, from her previous

conversation with me, and the quantity of pilau which she devoured that evening for her supper, I very much doubted the fact.

I did not remain long at home, as, although it was my duty to acquaint my mother with my father's death, it was also my duty to appear to return to my corps. This I had resolved never more to do. I reflected that a life of quiet and ease was best suited to my disposition, and I resolved to join some religious sect. Before I quitted my mother's roof I gave her thirty sequins, which she was most thankful for, as she was in straitened circumstances. "Ah!" cried she, as she wrapt up the money carefully in a piece of rag, "if you could only have brought back your poor father's head, Hudusi!"—I might have told her that she had just received what I had sold it for—but I thought it just as well to say nothing about it; so I embraced her, and departed.

There was a sort of dervishes, who had taken up their quarters about seven miles from the village where my mother resided, and as they never remained long in one place, I hastened to join them. On my arrival, I requested to speak with their chief, and imagining that I was come with the request of prayers to be offered up on behalf of some wished-for object, I was admitted.

"Khoda shefa midêhed—God gives relief," said the old man. "What wishest thou, my son? Khosh amedeed—you are welcome."

I stated my wish to enter into the sect, from a religious feeling; and requested that I might be permitted.

"Thou knowest not what thou askest, my son. Ours is a hard life, one of penitence, prostration, and prayer—our food is but of herbs and the water of the spring; our rest is broken, and we know not where to lay our heads. Depart, yaha bibi, my friend, depart in peace."

"But, father," replied I (for to tell your highness the truth, notwithstanding the old man's assertions, as to their austerities of life, I very much doubted the fact), "I am

prepared for all this, if necessary, and even more. I have brought my little wealth to add to the store, and contribute to the welfare of your holy band; and I must not be denied." I perceived that the old man's eyes twinkled at the bare mention of gold, and I drew from my sash five-and-twenty sequins, which I had separated from my hoard, with the intention of offering it. "See, holy father," continued I, "the offering which I would make."

"Barik Allah—praise be to God," exclaimed the dervish, "that he has sent us a true believer. Thy offering is accepted, but thou must not expect yet to enter into the austerities of our holy order. I have many disciples here, who wear the dress, and yet they are not as regular as good dervishes should be; but there is a time for all things, and when their appetite to do wrong fails them, they will (Inshallah, please God), in all probability, become more holy and devout men. You are accepted." And the old man held out his hand for the money, which he clutched with eagerness, and hid away under his garment. "Ali," said he to one of the dervishes who had stood at some distance during my audience, "this young man—what is your name—Hudusi—is admitted into our fraternity. Take him with thee, give him a dress of the order, and let him be initiated into our mysteries, first demanding from him the oath of secrecy. Murakhas, good Hudusi, you are dismissed."

I followed the dervish through a narrow passage, until we arrived at a door, at which he knocked; it was opened, and I passed through a courtyard, where I perceived several of the dervishes stretched on the ground in various postures, breathing heavily and insensible.

"These," said my conductor, "are holy men who are favoured by Allah. They are in a trance, and during that state are visited by the Prophet, and are permitted to enter the eighth heaven, and see the glories prepared for true believers." I made no reply to his assertion, but as it was evident that they were all in a state of beastly intoxication, I very much doubted the fact.

I received my dress, took an oath of secrecy, and was introduced to my companions, whom I soon found to be a set of dissolute fellows, indulging in every vice, and laughing at every virtue; living in idleness, and by the contributions made to them by the people, who firmly believed in their pretended sanctity. The old man, with the white beard, who was their chief, was the only one who did not indulge in debauchery. He had outlived his appetite for the vices of youth, and fallen into the vice of age—a love for money, which was insatiable. I must acknowledge that the company and mode of living were more to my satisfaction than the vigils, hard fare, and constant prayer, with which the old man had threatened me, when I proposed to enter the community, and I soon became an adept in dissimulation and hypocrisy, and a great favourite with my brethren.

I ought to have observed to your sublimity, that the sect of dervishes of which I had become a member, were then designated by the name of howling dervishes; all our religion consisted in howling like jackals or hyenas, with all our might, until we fell down in real or pretended convulsions. My howl was considered as the most appalling and unearthly that was ever heard, and, of course, my sanctity was increased in proportion. We were on our way to Scutari, where was our real place of residence, and only lodged here and there on our journey to fleece those who were piously disposed. I had not joined more than ten days when they continued their route, and after a week of very profitable travelling, passed through Constantinople, crossed the Bosphorus, and regained their place of domiciliation, and were received with great joy by the inhabitants, to whom the old chief and many others of our troop were well known.

Your sublime highness must be aware that the dervishes are not only consulted by, but often become the bankers of, the inhabitants, who intrust them with the care of their money. My old chief (whose name I should have mentioned before was Ulu-bibi) held large sums in trust for many of the people with whom he was acquainted; but his avarice inducing him to lend the money out on usury, it was very

difficult to recover it when it was desired, although it was always religiously paid back. I had not been many months at Scutari, before I found myself in high favour, from my superior howling and the duration of my convulsions. But during this state, which by habit soon became spasmodic, continuing until the vital functions were almost extinct, the mind was as active as ever, and I lay immersed in a sea of doubt which was most painful. In my state of exhaustion I doubted everything. I doubted if my convulsions were convulsions or only feigned; I doubted if I was asleep or awake; I doubted whether I was in a trance, or in another world, or dead, or——

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"Friend Hudusi," interrupted Mustapha, "we want the facts of your story, and not your doubts. Say I not well, your highness? What is all this but bosh?—nothing."

"It is well said," replied the pacha.

"Sometimes I thought that I had seized possession of a fact, but it slipped through my fingers like the tail of an eel."

"Let us have the facts, which did not escape thee, friend, and let the mists of doubt be cleared away before the glory of the pacha," replied Mustapha.

One day I was sitting in the warmth of the sun, by the tomb of a true believer, when an old woman accosted me. "You are welcome," said I.

"Is your humour good?" said she.

"It is good," replied I.

She sat down by me, and after a quarter of an hour she continued: "God is great," said she.

"And Mahomet is his Prophet," replied I. "In the name of Allah, what do you wish?"

"Where is the holy man? I have money to give into his charge. May I not see him?"

"He is at his devotions—but what is that? Am not I the same? Do I not watch when he prayeth—Inshallah—please God, we are the same. Give me the bag."

"Here it is," said she, pulling out the money: "seven hundred sequins, my daughter's marriage-portion; but there are bad men, who steal, and there are good men, whom we can trust. Say I not well?"

"It is well said," replied I; "and God is great."

"You will find the money right," said she. "Count it."

I counted it, and returned it into the goat-skin bag. "It is all right. Leave me, woman, for I must go in."

The old woman left me, returning thanks to Allah that her money was safe, but from certain ideas running in my mind, I very much doubted the fact. I sat down full of doubts. I doubted if the old woman had come honestly by the money; and whether I should give it to the head dervish. I doubted whether I ought to retain it for myself, and whether I might not come to mischief. I also had my doubts——

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"I have no doubt," interrupted Mustapha, "but that you kept it for yourself. Say—is it not so?"

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Even so did my doubts resolve into that fact. I settled it in my mind, that seven hundred sequins, added to about four hundred still in my possession, would last some time, and that I was tired of the life of a howling dervish. I therefore set up one last long final howl to let my senior know that I was present, and then immediately became absent. I hastened to the bazaar, and purchasing here and there—at one place a vest, at another a shawl, and at another a turban—I threw off my dress of a dervish, hastened to the bath, and after a few minutes under the barber, came out like a butterfly from its dark shell. No one would have recognised in the spruce young Turk, the filthy dervish. I hastened to Constantinople, where I lived gaily, and spent my money; but I found that to mix in the world, it is necessary not only to have an attaghan, but also to have the courage to use it; and in several broils which took

place, from my too frequent use of the water of the Giaour, I invariably proved that, although my voice was that of a lion, my heart was but as water, and the finger of contempt was but too often pointed at the beard of pretence. One evening, as I was escaping from a coffee-house, after having drawn my attaghan, without having the courage to face my adversary, I received a blow from his weapon which cleft my turban, and cut deeply into my head. I flew through the streets upon the wings of fear, and at last ran against an unknown object, which I knocked down, and then fell along side of, rolling with it in the mud. I recovered myself, and looking at it, found it to be alive, and, in the excess of my alarm, I imagined it to be Shitan himself; but if not the devil himself, it was one of the sons of Shitan, for it was an unbeliever, a Giaour, a dog to spit upon; in short, it was a Frank hakim—so renowned for curing all diseases that it was said he was assisted by the Devil.

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"Lahnet be Shitan! Curses on the devil!" said Mustapha, taking his pipe out of his mouth and spitting.

"Wallah Thaib! It is well said," replied the pacha.

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I was so convinced that it was nothing of this world, that, as soon as I could recover my legs, I made a blow at him with my attaghan, fully expecting that he would disappear in a flame of fire at the touch of a true believer; but, on the contrary, he had also recovered his legs, and with a large cane with a gold top on it, he parried my cut, and then saluted me with such a blow on my head, that I again fell down in the mud, quite insensible. When I recovered, I found myself on a mat in an outhouse, and attended by my opponent, who was plastering up my head. "It is nothing," said he, as he bound up my head; but I suffered so much pain, and felt so weak from loss of blood, that in spite of his assertions, I very much doubted the fact. Shall I describe this son of Jehanum? And when I do so, will not your highness

doubt the fact? Be chesm, upon my head be it, if I lie. He was less than a man, for he had no beard; he had no turban, but a piece of net-work, covered with the hair of other men in their tombs, which he sprinkled with the flour from the baker's, every morning, to feed his brain. He wore round his neck a piece of linen, tight as a bowstring, to prevent his head being taken off by any devout true believer, as he walked through the street. His dress was of the colour of hell, black, and bound closely to his body, yet must he have been a great man in his own country, for he was evidently a pacha of two tails, which were hanging behind him. He was a dreadful man to look upon, and feared nothing; he walked into the house of pestilence—he handled those whom Allah had visited with the plague—he went to the bed, and the sick rose and walked. He warred with destiny; and no man could say what was his fate until the Hakim had decided. He held in his hand the key of the portal, which opened into the regions of death; and—what can I say more?—he said live, and the believer lived; he said die, and the houris received him into Paradise.

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"A yesedi! a worshipper of the devil," exclaimed Mustapha.

"May he and his father's grave be eternally defiled!" responded the pacha.

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I remained a fortnight under the Hakim's hands before I was well enough to walk about; and when I had reflected, I doubted whether it would not be wiser to embrace a more peaceful profession. The Hakim spoke our language well, and one day said to me, "Thou art more fit to cure than to give wounds. Thou shalt assist me, for he who is now with me will not remain." I consented, and putting on a more peaceful garb, continued many months with the Frank physician, travelling everywhere, but seldom remaining long in one place; he followed disease instead of flying from it, and I had my doubts whether, from constant attendance upon the dying, I might not

die myself, and I resolved to quit him the first favourable opportunity. I had already learnt many wonderful things from him; that blood was necessary to life, and that without breath a man would die, and that white powders cured fevers, and black drops stopped the dysentery. At last we arrived in this town, and the other day, as I was pounding the drug of reflection in the mortar of patience, the physician desired me to bring his lancets, and to follow him. I paced through the streets behind the learned Hakim, until we arrived at a mean house, in an obscure quarter of this grand city over which your highness reigns in justice. An old woman full of lamentation, led us to the sick couch, where lay a creature, beautiful in shape as a houri. The Frank physician was desired by the old woman to feel her pulse through the curtain, but he laughed at her beard (for she had no small one), and drew aside the curtains and took hold of a hand so small and so delicate, that it were only fit to feed the Prophet himself near the throne of the angel Gabriel, with the immortal pilau prepared for true believers. Her face was covered, and the Frank desired the veil to be removed. The old woman refused, and he turned on his heel to leave her to the assaults of death. The old woman's love for her child conquered her religious scruples, and she consented that her daughter should unveil to an unbeliever. I was in ecstasy at her charms, and could have asked her for a wife; but the Frank only asked to see her tongue. Having looked at it, he turned away with as much indifference as if it had been a dying dog. He desired me to bind up her arm, and took away a basin full of her golden blood, and then put a white powder into the hands of the old woman, saying that he would see her again. I held out my hand for the gold, but there was none forthcoming.

"We are poor," cried the old woman, to the Hakim, "but God is great."

"I do not want your money, good woman," replied he; "I will cure your daughter." Then he went to the bedside and spoke comfort to the sick girl, telling her to be of good courage, and all would be well.

The girl answered in a voice sweeter than a nightingale's, that she had but thanks to offer in return, and prayers to the Most High. "Yes," said the old woman, raising her voice, "a scoundrel of a howling dervish robbed me at Scutari of all I had for my subsistence, and of my daughter's portion, seven hundred sequins, in a goat-skin bag!"—and then she began to curse. May the dogs of the city howl at her ugliness! How she did curse! She cursed my father and mother—she cursed their graves—flung dirt upon my brother and sisters, and filth upon the whole generation. She gave me up to Jehanum, and to every species of defilement. It was a dreadful thing to hear that old woman curse. I pulled my turban over my eyes, that she might not recognise me, and lifted up my garment to cover my face, that I might not be defiled with the shower of curses which were thrown at me like mud, and sat there watching till the storm was over. Unfortunately, in lifting up my garment, I exposed to the view of the old hag the cursed goat-skin bag, which hung at my girdle, and contained, not only her money, but the remainder of my own. "Mashallah—how wonderful is God!" screamed the old beldame, flying at me like a tigress, and clutching the bag from my girdle. Having secured that, she darted at me with her ten nails, and scored down my face, which I had so unfortunately covered in the first instance, and so unfortunately uncovered in the second. What shall I say more? The neighbours came in—I was hurried before the cadi, in company with the old woman and the Frank physician. The money and bag were taken from me—I was dismissed by the Hakim, and after receiving one hundred blows from the ferashes, I was dismissed by the cadi. It was my fate—and I have told my story. Is your slave dismissed?

"No," replied the pacha; "by our beard, we must see to this, Mustapha; say, Hudusi, what was the decision of the cadi? Our ears are open."

"The cadi decided as follows:—That I had stolen the money, and therefore I was punished with the bastinado; but, as the old woman stated that the bag contained seven hundred sequins, and there were found in it upwards of eleven hundred, that

the money could not belong to her. He therefore retained it until he could find the right owner. The physician was fined fifty sequins for looking at a Turkish woman, and fifty more for shrugging up his shoulders. The girl was ordered into the cadi's harem, because she had lost her dowry; and the old woman was sent about her business. All present declared that the sentence was wisdom itself; but, for my part, I very much doubted the fact."

"Mustapha," said the pacha, "send for the cadi, the Frank physician, the old woman, the girl, and the goat-skin bag; we must examine into this affair."

The officers were despatched, and in less than an hour, during which the pacha and his vizier smoked in silence, the cadi and the others made their appearance.

"May your highness's shadow never be less!" said the cadi, as he entered.

"Mobarek! may you be fortunate!" replied the pacha. "What is this we hear, cadi? There is a goat-skin bag and a girl, that are not known to our justice. Are there secrets like those hid in the well of Kashan—speak! what dirt have you been eating?"

"What shall I say?" replied the cadi; "I am but as dirt; the money is here, and the girl is here. Is the pacha to be troubled with every woman's noise, or am I to come before him with a piece or two of gold—Min Allah—God forbid! Have I not here the money, and seven more purses? Was not the girl visited by the angel of death; and could she appear before your presence lean as a dog in the bazaar? Is she not here? Have I spoken well?"

"It is well said, cadi. Murakhas—you are dismissed."

The Frank physician was then fined one hundred sequins more; fifty for feeling the pulse, and fifty more for looking at a Turkish woman's tongue. The young woman was dismissed to the pacha's harem, the old woman to curse as much as she pleased, and Hudusi with full permission to doubt anything but the justice of the pacha.

Chapter XVII

"Mashallah! God be praised! we are rid of that fellow and his doubts. I have been thinking, Mustapha, as I smoked the pipe of surmise, and arrived at the ashes of certainty, that a man who had so many doubts, could not be a true believer. I wish I had sent him to the mollahs; we might have been amused with his being impaled, which is a rare object now-a-days."

"God is great," replied Mustapha, "and a stake is a strong argument, and would remove many doubts. But I have an infidel in the court-yard who telleth of strange things. He hath been caught like a wild beast; it is a Frank Galiongi, who hath travelled as far as that son of Shitan, Huckaback; he was found in the streets, overpowered by the forbidden juice, after having beaten many of your highness's subjects, and the cadi would have administered the bamboo, but he was as a lion, and he scattered the slaves as chaff, until he fell, and could not rise again. I have taken him from the cadi, and brought him here. He speaketh but the Frankish tongue, but the sun who shineth on me knoweth I have been in the Frank country; and Inshallah! please the Lord, I can interpret his meaning."

"What sort of a man may he be, Mustapha?"

"He is a baj baj—a big belly—a stout man; he is an Anhunkher, a swallower of iron. He hath sailed in the war vessels of the Franks. He holdeth in one hand a bottle of the forbidden liquor; in the other, he shakes at those who would examine him, a thick stick. He hath a large handful of the precious weed which we use for our pipes in one of his cheeks, and his hair is hanging behind down to his waist, in a rolled up mass, as thick as the arm of your slave."

"It is well—we will admit him; but let there be armed men at hand. Let me have a full pipe! God is great," continued the pacha, holding out his glass to be filled; "and the bottle is nearly empty. Place the guards, and bring in the infidel."

The guards in a few minutes brought into the presence of the pacha a stout-built English sailor, in the usual dress, and with a tail which hung down behind, below his waist. The sailor did not appear to like his treatment; and every now and then, as they pushed and dragged him in, turned to one side or the other, looking daggers at those who conducted him. He was sober, although his eyes bore testimony to recent intoxication, and his face, which was manly and handsome, was much disfigured by an enormous quid of tobacco in his right cheek, which gave him an appearance of natural deformity. As soon as he was near enough to the pacha, the attendants let him go. Jack shook his jacket, hitched up his trousers, and said, looking furiously at them, "Well, you beggars, have you done with me at last?"

Mustapha addressed the sailor in English, telling him that he was in the presence of his highness the pacha.

"What, that old chap, muffled up in shawls and furs—is he the pacha? Well, I don't think much o' he;" and the sailor turned his eyes round the room, gaping with astonishment, and perfectly unmindful how very near he was to one who could cut off his head or his tail, by a single movement of his hand.

"What sayeth the Frank, Mustapha?" inquired the pacha.

"He is struck dumb with astonishment at the splendour of your majesty, and all that he beholds."

"It is well said, by Allah!"

"I suppose I may just as well come to an anchor," said the sailor, suiting the action to the word, and dropping down on the mats. "There," continued he, folding his legs in imitation of the Turks, "as it's the fashion to have a cross in your hawse, on this here country, I can be a bit of a lubber as well as yourselves. I wouldn't mind if I blew a cloud, as well as you, old fusty-musty."

"What does the Giaour say? What son of a dog is this, to sit in our presence?" exclaimed the pacha.

"He saith," replied Mustapha, "that in his country, no one dare stand in the presence of the Frankish king; and, overcome by his humility, his legs refuse their office, and he sinks to the dust before you. It is even as he sayeth, for I have travelled in their country, and such is the custom of that uncivilised nation. Mashallah! but he lives in awe and trembling."

"By the beard of the Prophet, he does not appear to show it outwardly," replied the pacha; "but that may be the custom also."

"Be chesm, on my eyes be it," replied Mustapha, "it is even so. Frank," said Mustapha, "the pacha has sent for you that he may hear an account of all the wonderful things which you have seen. You must tell lies, and you will have gold."

"Tell lies! that is, spin a yarn; well, I can do that, but my mouth's baked with thirst, and without a drop of something, the devil a yarn from me, and so you may tell the old Billygoat, perched up there."

"What sayeth the son of Shitan?" demanded the pacha, impatiently.

"The unbeliever declareth that his tongue is glued to his mouth from the terror of your highness's presence. He fainteth after water to restore him, and enable him to speak."

"Let him be fed," rejoined the pacha.

But Mustapha had heard enough to know that the sailor would not be content with the pure element. He therefore continued, "Your slave must tell you, that in the country of the Franks they drink nothing but the fire-water, in which the true believers but occasionally venture to indulge."

"Allah acbar! nothing but fire-water? What, then, do they do with common water?"

"They have none but from heaven—the rivers are all of the same strength."

"Mashallah! how wonderful is God! I would we had a river here. Let some be procured, then, for I wish to hear his story."

A bottle of brandy was sent for, and handed to the sailor, who put it to his mouth, and the quantity he took of it before he removed the bottle to recover his breath, fully convinced the pacha that Mustapha's assertions were true.

"Come, that's not so bad," said the sailor, putting the bottle down between his legs; "and now I'll be as good as my word, and I'll spin old Billy a yarn as long as the main-top bowling."

"What sayeth the Giaour?" interrupted the pacha.

"That he is about to lay at your highness's feet the wonderful events of his life, and trusts that his face will be whitened before he quits your sublime presence. Frank, you may proceed."

"To lie till I'm black in the face—well, since you wish it; but, old chap, my name arn't Frank. It happens to be Bill; howsomever, it warn't a bad guess for a Turk; and now I'm here, I'd just like to ax you a question. We had a bit of a hargument the other day, when I was in a frigate up the Dardanelles, as to what your religion might be. Jack Soames said that you warn't Christians, but that if you were, you could only be Catholics; but I don't know how he could know anything about it, seeing that he had not been more than seven weeks on board of a man-of-war. What may you be—if I may make so bold as to ax the question?"

"What does he say?" inquired the pacha, impatiently.

"He says," interrupted Mustapha, "that he was not so fortunate as to be born in the country of the true believers, but in an island full of fog and mist, where the sun never shines, and the cold is so intense, that the water from heaven is hard and cold as a flint."

"That accounts for their not drinking it. Mashallah! God is great! Let him proceed."

"The pacha desires me to say that there is but one God, and Mahomet is his Prophet; and begs that you will go on with your story."

"Never heard of the chap—never mind—here's saw wood."

TALE OF THE ENGLISH SAILOR.

I was born at Shields, and bred to the sea, served my time out of that port, and got a berth on board a small vessel fitted out from Liverpool for the slave trade. We made the coast, unstowed our beads, spirits, and gunpowder, and very soon had a cargo on board; but the day after we sailed for the Havannah, the dysentery broke out among the niggers—no wonder, seeing how they were stowed, poor devils, head and tail, like pilchards in a cask. We opened the hatches, and brought part of them on deck, but it was of no use, they died like rotten sheep, and we tossed overboard about thirty a day. Many others, who were alive, jumped overboard, and we were followed by a shoal of sharks, splashing, and darting, and diving, and tearing the bodies, yet warm, and revelling in the hot and bloody water. At last they were all gone, and we turned back to the coast to get a fresh supply. We were within a day's sail of the land, when we saw two boats on our weather bow: they made signals to us, and we found them to be full of men; we hove to, and took them on board, and then it was that we discovered that they had belonged to a French schooner, in the same trade, which had started a plank, and had gone down like a shot, with all the niggers in the hold.

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"Now, give the old gentleman the small change of that, while I just wet my whistle."

Mustapha having interpreted, and the sailor having taken a swig at the bottle, he proceeded.

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We didn't much like having these French beggars on board, and it wasn't without reason, for they were as many as we were. The very first night they were overheard by a negro who belonged to us, and had learnt French, making a plan for

overpowering us, and taking possession of the vessel; so when we heard that, their doom was sealed. We mustered ourselves on the deck, put the hatches over some o' the French, seized those on deck, and—in half an hour, they all walked the plank.

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"I do not understand what you mean," said Mustapha.

"That's 'cause you're a lubber of a landsman. The long and short of walking a plank is just this. We passed a wide plank over the gunnel, greasing it well at the outer end, led the Frenchmen up to it blindfolded, and wished them 'bon voyage,' in their own lingo, just out of politeness. They walked on till they toppled into the sea, and the sharks didn't refuse them, though they prefer a nigger to anything else."

"What does he say, Mustapha?" interrupted the pacha. Mustapha interpreted.

"Good; I should like to have seen that," replied the pacha.

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Well, as soon as we were rid of the Frenchmen, we made our port, and soon had another cargo on board, and, after a good run, got safe to the Havannah, where we sold our slaves; but I didn't much like the sarvice, so I cut the schooner, and sailed home in summer, and got back safe to England. There I fell in with Betsy, and as she proved a regular out-and-outer, I spliced her; and a famous wedding we had of it, as long as the rhino lasted; but that wasn't long, the more's the pity; so I went to sea for more. When I came back after my trip, I found that Bet hadn't behaved quite so well as she might have done, so I cut my stick, and went away from her altogether.

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"Why didn't you put her in a sack?" inquired the pacha, when Mustapha explained.

"Put her head in a bag—no, she wasn't so ugly as all that," replied the sailor. "Howsomever, to coil away."

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I joined a privateer brig, and after three cruises I had plenty of money, and determined to have another spell on shore, that I might get rid of it. Then I picked up Sue, and spliced again; but, Lord bless your heart, she turned out a regular-built Tartar—nothing but fight fight, scratch scratch, all day long, till I wished her at old Scratch. I was tired of her, and Sue had taken a fancy to another chap; so says she one day, "As we both be of the same mind, why don't you sell me, and then we may part in a respectable manner." I agrees, and I puts a halter round her neck, and leads her to the market-place, the chap following to buy her.

"Who bids for this woman?" says I.

"I do," say he.

"What will you give?"

"Half-a-crown," says he.

"Will you throw a glass of grog into the bargain?"

"Yes," says he.

"Then she's yours; and I wish you much joy of your bargain." So I hands the rope to him, and he leads her off.

"How much did you say he sold his wife for?" said the pacha to Mustapha, when this part of the story was repeated to him.

"A piastre, and a drink of the fire-water," replied the vizier.

"Ask him if she was handsome," said the pacha.

"Handsome," replied the sailor to Mustapha's inquiry; "yes, she was as pretty a craft to look at as you may set your eyes upon; fine round counter—clean run—swelling bows—good figure-head, and hair enough for a mermaid."

"What does he say?" inquired the pacha.

"The Frank declareth that her eyes were bright as those of the gazelle, that her eyebrows were as one, her waist as that of the cypress, her face as the full moon, and

that she was fat as the houris that await the true believers."

"Mashallah! all for a piastre. Ask him, Mustapha, if there are more wives to be sold in that country?"

"More," replied the sailor, in answer to Mustapha; "you may have a ship full in an hour. There's many a fellow in England who would give a handful of coin to get rid of his wife."

"We will make further inquiry, Mustapha; it must be looked to. Say I not well?"

"It is well said," replied Mustapha. "My heart is burnt as roast meat at the recollection of the women of the country; who are, indeed, as he hath described houris to the sight. Proceed, Yaha Bibi, my friend, and tell his——"

"Yaw Bibby! I told you my name was Bill, not Bibby; and I never yaws from my course, although I heaves to sometimes, as I do now, to take in provisions." The sailor took another swig, wiped his mouth with the back of his hand, and continued—"Now for a good lie."

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"I sailed in a brig for the Brazils, and a gale came on, that I never seed the like of. We were obliged to have three men stationed to hold the captain's hair on his head; and a little boy was blown over the moon, and slid down by two or three of her beams, till he caught the mainstay, and never hurt himself."

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"Good," said Mustapha, who interpreted.

"By the beard of the Prophet, wonderful!" exclaimed the pacha.

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Well, the gale lasted for a week, and at last one night, when I was at the helm, we dashed on the rocks of a desolate island. I was pitched right over the mountains, and fell into the sea on the other side of the island. I swam on shore, and got into a cave,

where I fell fast asleep. The next morning I found that there was nothing to eat except rats, and they were plentiful; but they were so quick, that I could not catch them. I walked about, and at last discovered a great many rats together; they were at a spring of water, the only one, as I afterwards found, on the island. Rats can't do without water, and I thought I should have them there. I filled up the spring, all but a hole which I sat on the top of. When the rats came again, I filled my mouth with water, and held it wide open; they ran up to drink, and I caught their heads in my teeth, and thus I took as many as I wished.

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"Aferin, excellent!" cried the pacha, as soon as this was explained.

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Well, at last a vessel took me off, and I wasn't sorry for it, for raw rats are not very good eating. I went home again, and I hadn't been on shore more than two hours, when who should I see but my first wife, Bet, with a robin-redbreast in tow. 'That's he!' says she. I gave fight, but was nabbed and put into limbo, to be tried for what they call biggery, or having a wife too much.

"How does he mean?—desire him to explain," said the pacha, after Mustapha had conveyed the intelligence. Mustapha obeyed.

"In our country one wife is considered a man's allowance, and he is not to take more, that every Jack may have his Jill. I had spliced two, so they tried me, and sent me to Botany Bay for life."

This explanation puzzled the pacha. "How—what sort of a country must it be, when a man cannot have two wives? Inshallah! please the Lord, we may have hundreds in our harem! Does he not laugh at our beards with lies? Is this not all bosh, nothing?"

"It is even so, as the Frank speaketh," replied Mustapha. "The king of the country can take but one wife. Be chesm, on my eyes be it, if it is not the truth."

"Well," rejoined the pacha, "what are they but infidels? They deserve to have no more. Houris are for the faithful. May their fathers' graves be defiled. Let the Giaour proceed."

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Well, I was started for the other side of the water, and got there safe enough, as I hope one day to get to Heaven, wind and weather permitting, but I had no idea of working without pay, so one fine morning I slipt away into the woods, where I remained with three or four more for six months. We lived upon kangaroos, and another odd little animal, and got on pretty well.

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"What may the dish of kangaroos be composed of?" inquired Mustapha, in obedience to the pacha.

"'Posed of! why, a dish of kangaroos be made of kangaroos to be sure."

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But I'll be dished if I talked about anything but the animal, which we had some trouble to kill; for it stands on its big tail, and fights with all four feet. Moreover, it be otherwise a strange beast; for its young ones pop out of its stomach, and then pop in again, having a place there on purpose, just like the great hole in the bow of a timber ship; and as for the other little animal, it swims in the ponds, lays eggs, and has a duck's bill, yet still it be covered all over with hair like a beast.

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The vizier interpreted. "By the Prophet, but he laughs at our beards!" exclaimed the pacha, angrily. "These are foolish lies."

"You must not tell the pacha such foolish lies. He will be angry," said Mustapha. "Tell lies, but they must be good lies."

"Well, I'll be——," replied the sailor, "if the old beggar don't doubt the only part

which is true out of the whole yarn. Well, I will try another good un to please him."

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After I had been there about six months I was tired; and as there was only twenty thousand miles between that country and my own, I determined to swim back.

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"Mashallah! swim back—how many thousand miles?" exclaimed Mustapha.

"Only twenty thousand—a mere nothing."

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So one fine morning I throws a young kangaroo on my shoulder, and off I starts. I swam for three months, night and day, and then feeling a little tired, I laid to on my back, and then I set off again; but by this time I was so covered with barnacles, that I made but little way. So I stopped at Ascension, scraped and cleaned myself, and then, after feeding for a week on turtle, just to keep the scurvy out of my bones, I set off again; and as I passed the Gut, I thought I might just as well put in here; and here I arrived, sure enough, yesterday, about three bells in the morning watch, after a voyage of five months and three days.

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When Mustapha translated all this to the pacha, the latter was lost in astonishment. "Allah Wakbar! God is everywhere! Did you ever hear of such a swimmer? Twenty thousand miles—five months and three days. It is a wonderful story! Let his mouth be filled with gold."

Mustapha intimated to the sailor the unexpected compliment about to be conferred on him, just as he had finished the bottle and rolled it away on one side. "Well, that be a rum way of paying a man. I have heard it said that a fellow pursed up his mouth; but I never afore heard of a mouth being a purse. Howsomever, all's one for that; only, d'ye see, if you are about to stow it away in bulk, it may be just as well to

get rid of the dunnage." The sailor put his thumb and forefinger into his cheek, and pulled out his enormous quid of tobacco. "There now, I'm ready, and don't be afraid of choking me." One of the attendants then thrust several pieces of gold into the sailor's mouth, who, spitting them all out into his hat, jumped on his legs, made a jerk of his head with a kick of the leg behind to the pacha; and declaring that he was the funniest old beggar he had ever fallen in with, nodded to Mustapha, and hastened out of the divan.

"Mashallah! but he swims well," said the pacha, breaking up the audience.

Chapter XVIII

The departure of the caravan was delayed for two or three days by the vizier upon various pretexts—although it was his duty to render it every assistance—that Menouni might afford further amusement to the pacha. Menouni was well content to remain, as the liberality of the pacha was not to be fallen in with every day, and the next evening he was again ushered into the sublime presence.

"Khosh amedeid! you are welcome," said the pacha, as Menouni made his low obeisance, "Now let us have another story. I don't care how long it is, only let us have no more princesses to be married. That Babe-bi-bobu was enough to tire the patience of a dervish."

"Your sublime highness shall be obeyed," replied Menouni. "Would it please you to hear the story of Yussuf, the Water carrier?"

"Yes, that sounds better. You may proceed."

THE WATER-CARRIER.

May it please your highness, it so happened that the great Haroun Alraschid was one night seized with one of those fits of sleepless melancholy with which it had pleased Allah to temper his splendid destiny, and which fits are, indeed, the common lot of

those who are raised by fortune above the ordinary fears and vicissitudes of life.

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"I can't say that I ever have them," observed the pacha. "How is that, Mustapha?"

"Your highness has as undoubted a right to them as the great caliph," replied Mustapha, bowing; "but if I may venture to state my opinion," continued he, drawing down to the ear of the pacha, "you have discovered the remedy for them in the strong water of the Giaour."

"Very true," replied the pacha; "Haroun Alraschid, if I recollect right, was very strict in his observances of the precepts of the Koran. After all, he was but a pastek—a water-melon. You may proceed, Menouni."

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The caliph, oppressed, as I before observed to your highness, with this fit of melancholy, despatched Mesrour for his chief vizier, Giaffar Bermukki, who, not unaccustomed to this nocturnal summons, speedily presented himself before the commander of the faithful. "Father of true believers! descendant of the Prophet!" said the minister, with a profound obeisance, "thy slave waits but to hear, and hears but to obey."

"Giaffar," replied the caliph, "I am overwhelmed with distressing inquietude, and would fain have thee devise some means for my relief. Speak—what sayest thou?"

"Hasten, O my prince, to thy favourite garden of the Tierbar, where, gazing on the bright moon, and listening to the voice of the bul-bul, you will await in pleasing contemplation the return of the sun."

"Not so," replied the caliph.

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"By the beard of the Prophet! the caliph was right, and that Giaffar was a fool. I never heard that staring at the moon was an amusement before," observed the pacha.

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"Not so," urged the caliph. "My gardens, my palaces, and my possessions, are no more to me a source of pleasure."

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"By the sword of the Prophet! Now the caliph appears to be the fool," interrupted the pacha.

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"Shall we then repair to the Hall of the Ancients, and pass the night in reviving the memory of the wise, whose sayings are stored therein?" continued Giaffar.

"Counsel avails not," replied the caliph; "the records of the past will not suffice to banish the cares of the present."

"Then," said the vizier, "will the light of the world seek refuge from his troubles in a disguise, and go forth with the humblest of his slaves to witness the condition of his people?"

"Thou hast said well," replied the caliph; "I will go with thee into the bazaar, and witness unknown the amusements of my people after the labours of the day."

Mesrour, the chief eunuch, was at hand, and hastened for the needful disguises. After having clad themselves as merchants of Moussul, and tinged their faces of an olive hue, the caliph, accompanied by Giaffar and Mesrour, the latter armed with a scimitar, issued forth from the secret door of the seraglio. Giaffar, who knew from experience the quarter likely to prove most fertile in adventure, led the caliph past the mosque of Zobeide, and crossing the Bridge of Boats over the Tigris, continued his way to that part of the city on the Mesopotamian side of the river which was inhabited by the wine-sellers and others, who administered to the irregularities, as well as to the wants of the good people of Bagdad. For a short time they wandered up and down without meeting anybody; but passing through a narrow alley, their

steps were arrested by the sound of a most potent pair of lungs, carolling forth a jovial song. The caliph waited awhile, in expectation of its ceasing; but he might apparently have waited until dawn of day, for verse was poured forth after verse: a small interval between them filled up by the musical gurgling of liquor from a bottle, and the gulps of the votary of Bacchus. At length, his patience being exhausted, the caliph ordered Mesrour to knock loudly at the singer's dwelling. Hearing the noise, the fellow opened the jalouise, and came out into the verandah above. Looking down, and perceiving the three interrupters of his mirth, he bawled out—"What rascals are you that disturb an honest man at his devotions?—Begone!—fly!—away with you, scum of the earth!"

"Truly, charitable sir," replied Giaffar in a humble tone, "We are distressed merchants, strangers in this city, who have lost our way, and fear to be seized by the watch—perhaps carried before the cadi. We beseech thee, therefore, to admit us within thy doors, and Allah will reward thy humanity."

"Admit you within my doors!—not I, indeed. What, you wish to get into my house to gormandise and swill at my expense. Go—go!"

The caliph laughed heartily at this reply, and then called out to the man, "Indeed we are merchants, and seek but for shelter till the hour of prayer."

"Tell me, then," replied the man, "and mind you tell me the truth. Have you eaten and drunk your fill for the night?"

"Thanks and praise be to Allah, we have supped long since, and heartily," returned the caliph.

"Since that is the case, you may come up, but recollect it is upon one condition, that you bind yourselves not to open your lips whatever you may see me do; no matter whether it please you or not."

"What you desire is so reasonable," called out the caliph, "that we should be ignorant as Yaboos, if we did not at once comply."

The man gave one more scrutinising glance at the pretended merchants; and then, as if satisfied, descended and opened his door. The caliph and his attendants followed him up to his room, where they found a table laid out for supper, on which was a large pitcher of wine, half a roasted kid, a bottle of rakee, preserves, confections, and various kinds of fruit; odoriferous flowers were also on the table, and the lighting up of the room was brilliant. The host, immediately on their entering, tossed off a bumper of wine, as if to make up for the time he had lost, and pointing to a corner, bade the intruders to sit down there, and not to disturb him any more. He commenced his solitary feast, and after another bumper of wine, as if tired of his own company, he gruffly demanded, "Where do you fellows come from, and whither are you going?"

"Sir," replied Giaffar, who had been whispering with the caliph, "we are merchants of Moussul, who have been to an entertainment at the country seat of a khan of Bagdad. We feasted well, and left our friend just as the day closed in. Whereupon we lost our way, and found ourselves in this street; hearing the musical accents of your voice, we exclaimed, 'Are not those notes delightful?—one who has so sweet a voice must be equally sweet in disposition. Let us entreat the hospitality of our brother for the remainder of the night, and in the morning we will depart in peace.'"

"I do not believe a word that you have said, you ill-looking thief. You are spies or thieves, who would profit by getting into people's houses at unseasonable hours. You, barrel-stomach, you with whiskers like a bear," continued he to the vizier, "hang me if ever I saw such a rascally face as yours; and you, you black-faced nigger, keep the whites of your eyes off my supper-table, or by Allah I'll send you all to Jehanum. I see you are longing to put your fingers on the kid: but if you do, I've a bone-softener, which, by the blessed Prophet, shall break every bone in your three skins." So saying the man, taking a large cudgel from the corner of the room, laid it by the dish of kid, into which he then plunged his fingers, and commenced eating heartily.

"Giaffar," said the caliph, in an undertone, "contrive to find out who this ferocious animal may be, and how he contrives to live so merrily?"

"In the name of Allah, let us leave him alone," replied Giaffar, in a fright, "for should he strike us on the head with that cudgel, we should be despatched without anyone being the wiser."

"Pish! fear nothing," replied the caliph. "Ask him boldly his name and trade."

"Oh, my Commander," replied Giaffar, "to hear is but to obey, yet do I quake most grievously at the threats of this villainous fellow. I entreat thee that I may defer the questions until wine shall have softened down his temper."

"Thou cowardly vizier. Must I then interrogate him myself?" replied the caliph.

"Allah forbid," replied Giaffar; "I will myself encounter the wrath of this least of dogs, may his grave be defiled."

During this parley, their host, who had become more good-humoured in his cups, cast his eyes upon them.

"What in the name of Shitan, are you chaps prating and chatting about?" inquired he.

Giaffar, perceiving him in a more favourable mood, seized the occasion to speak. "Most amiable and charitable sir," replied he, "we were talking of your great liberality and kindness in thus permitting us to intrude upon your revels. We only request, in the name of friendship, the name and profession of so worthy a Mussulman, that we may remember him in our prayers."

"Why, thou impudent old porpus; did you not promise to ask no questions? In the name of friendship! Truly it is of long standing."

"Still I pray Allah that it may increase. Have we not sat a considerable time in your blessed presence—have you not given us refuge? All we now ask is the name and profession of one so amiable and so kind-hearted?"

"Enough," replied the host, pacified with the pretended humility of the vizier.

"Silence, and listen. Do you see that skin which hangs over my head?" The caliph and his companions looked up and perceived the tanned skin of a young ox, which appeared to have been used for carrying water. "It is that by which I gain my daily bread. I am Yussuf, son of Aboo Ayoub, who dying some five years ago, left me nothing but a few dirhems and this strong carcass of mine, by which to gain a livelihood. I was always fond of sports and pastimes—overthrew everybody who wrestled with me; nay, the man who affronts me, receives a box on the ear which makes it ring for a week afterwards."

"Allah preserve us from affronting him!" whispered the caliph.

"When old Aboo died, I perceived, if I did not speedily turn my strength to some account, I should starve; so it struck me that there were no people more merry than the water-carriers, who supply for a few paras to the houses of this city the soft water of the river. I resolved to become one, but instead of going backwards and forwards with a goatskin on my shoulders, I went down to the curriers, and selected the soft skin of the young ox which hangs above me, fitted it to my shoulders, and filling it at the river, marched up to the bazaar. No sooner did I appear than all the water-carriers called out, 'That villain, Yussuf, is about to take away our bread. May Shitan seize him. Let us go to the cadi and complain.' The cadi listened to their story, for they accused me of witchcraft, saying that no five men could lift the skin when it was full. He sent one of his beeldars to summon me before him. I had just filled my skin at the river, when the officer came from this distributor of bastinadoes. I followed him to the court, laden as I was. The crowd opened to let me pass, and I appeared before the cadi, who was much astonished at my showing so little inconvenience from such an enormous burthen. 'Oh! Yussuf,' cried he, 'hear and answer; thou art accused of witchcraft.' 'Who accuses me, O cadi?' replied I, throwing down my skin of water. Whereupon two hang-dogs stepped forward, and cried with loud voices, 'Behold us here, O wise and just one.' The cadi put one aside, and questioned the other, who swore on the book that the devil had given me a pig's

skin and had promised that as long as I served the followers of the Prophet out of the unclean vessel, he would enable me to carry as much as ten men. The second witness confirmed this evidence; and added, that he heard me talking with the devil, who offered to turn himself into a yaboo, and carry water for me, which I had civilly declined, for what reason he knew not, as he did not hear the rest of the conversation.

"At this evidence, the cadi and mollahs who sat with him, turned up their eyes with horror, and proceeded to discuss the degree of punishment which so enormous a crime deserved, quite forgetting to ask me if I had anything to offer in my defence. At last they settled that, as a commencement, I should receive five hundred bastinadoes on the soles of my feet, and if I lived, about as many more on my belly. The cadi was about to pronounce his irrevocable fetva, when I took the liberty of interrupting this rapid course of justice. 'O cadi,' said I, 'and ye, mollahs, whose beards drop wisdom, let your slave offer, at the footstool of justice, the precious proofs of innocence.' 'Produce them quickly, then, thou wedded to Shitan and Jehanum,' replied the cadi. Whereupon I loosened the string which attached the mouth, and allowed all the water to run out of the skin. I then turned the skin inside out, and showing to them the horns of the young ox, which fortunately I had not cut off, I demanded of the cadi and of the mollahs if any of them had ever seen a pig with horns. At this they every one fell a laughing, as if I had uttered a cream of a joke. My innocence was declared, and my two accusers had the five hundred bastinadoes shared between them. The water-carriers were too much alarmed at the result of this attempt, to attack me any more, and the true believers, from the notoriety of the charge, and my acquittal of having rendered them unclean, from the use of swinish skin, all sought my custom. In short, I have only to fill my skin, to empty it again, and I daily realise so handsome an income, that I have thrown care to the dogs, and spend in jollity every night what I have worked hard for every day. As soon as the muezzin calls to evening prayers, I lay aside my skin, betake myself to

the mosque, perform my ablutions, and return thanks to Allah. After which I repair to the bazaar, purchase meat with one dirhem, rakee with another, others go for fruit and flowers, cakes, sweetmeats, bread, oil for my lamps, and the remainder I spend in wine. As soon as all is collected, I arrive at my own house, put everything in order, light up my lamps and enjoy myself after my own fashion. So now you know all I choose to tell you, and whether you are merchants or spies in disguise, I care not. Be satisfied and depart, for the dawn is here."

The caliph, who had been much amused with Yussuf's account of himself, replied, "In truth, you are a wonderful man, and it must be allowed that, in separating yourself from your fellows, you escape many troubles and inconveniences."

"Ay," replied Yussuf; "thus have I lived for five years. Every night has my dwelling been lighted up as you see it, and my fortunate stars have never suffered me to go without meat and drink, such as you three now smell and long for, but shall not put your fingers to."

"But, friend Yussuf," observed Giaffar, "suppose that to-morrow, the caliph should issue a decree, putting an end to the trade of supplying with water, and declare that whoever was found with a skin-full should be hanged. In such a case, what would you do? You could not light up your lamps; you could not enjoy your kabobs and pillau, neither would you be able to purchase fruits, sweetmeats, or a drop of wine."

"May Shitan seize your unlucky soul, you tun-bellied beast of ill-omen! for the bare supposition of such a thing; depart—depart quickly, and never let me see you again."

"My good friend, Yussuf, I did but jest; five years, as you observe, have passed away without a day's intermission of your enjoyment, nor is it probable that the caliph will ever issue such a ridiculous and unheard-of decree. I only observed, that supposing he did, what could you do, never leaving a single asper for the next day's provision?"

At the repetition of the vizier's speech, Yussuf became highly exasperated. "You dare to repeat to me your unlucky words and ill-omens,—and you ask me what I would do! Now hear me: by the beard of the Prophet, should the caliph issue such a decree, with this good cudgel I will search all Bagdad, until I find you all. You, and you," continued Yussuf, looking fiercely at the caliph and the vizier, "I will beat until you are as black as he is (pointing to Mesrour), and him I will cudgel until he is as white as the flesh of the kid I have been regaling on. Depart at once, you shall no longer pollute my roof."

The caliph was so much diverted with the anger of Yussuf, and yet in such dread of showing it, that he was obliged to thrust the end of his robe into his mouth, as they walked out under a shower of curses from the water-carrier.

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"By the sword of the Prophet, but they were well out of this scrape!" observed the pacha. "May the grave of the rascal's mother be defiled! to offer to cudgel the vice-regent of the Prophet."

"The caliph was in disguise, and Yussuf knew him not," replied Mustapha.

"Those who threaten me in disguise, will find that no excuse, we swear by our beard," replied the pacha. "Proceed Menouni."

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It was daylight before the great Haroun re-entered the secret gate of the seraglio, and retired to his couch. After a short slumber he arose, performed his ablutions, and proceeded to the divan, where he found the principal officers of his court, the viziers, omras, and grandees, assembled to receive him; his imagination, however, still dwelt upon the events of the preceding night, and after the ordinary business of the day had been transacted, and the petitioners who attended had been dismissed, he called for his grand vizier, who presented himself with the customary obeisances.

"Giaffar," said the caliph, "issue a decree to the governor of the city that it be

proclaimed throughout the streets of Bagdad, that no person whatever, shall, for the space of three days, carry water from the river to the bazaars for sale, and that whoever trespasses shall be hanged."

The governor, Khalid ben Talid, immediately that he received the fetva, took the proper measures to have it promulgated. Heralds were despatched throughout the various quarters of the city, who proclaimed the will of the caliph. The people wondered, but submitted.

Yussuf, who had performed his morning devotions, had reached the banks of the Tigris, and just filled, and hoisted on his shoulders, his ox-skin of water, when the appearance of one of the heralds attracted his attention; he listened to the legal proclamation, and let down his ox-skin with a curse upon all merchants of Moussul.

"Confusion to the scoundrels, who last night prophesied such an unlucky event! If I could but lay hands upon them!" exclaimed Yussuf. "They did but hint it, and behold, it is done."

Whilst Yussuf was thus lamenting over his empty water-skin, some of the other water-carriers came up, and began to console him after the fashion of Job's comforters.

"Surely," said one, "you need not be troubled at this edict, you gain more than any five of us every day, and you have no wife nor child to provide for. But I, wretched man that I am, will have the misery of beholding my wife and children starving before the expiration of the three days."

Another said, "Be comforted, Yussuf, three days will soon pass away, and then you will relish your kabobs and your rakee, your sweetmeats and your wine, with greater pleasure, having been so long deprived of them."

"Besides," added a third, "you must not forget, Yussuf, that the prophet has declared that a man is eternally damned, body and soul, who is constantly drunk as you are."

These observations kindled Yussuf's bile to that degree, that he was nearly venting

his spleen upon his sarcastic consolers. He turned away, however, in his rage, and throwing his empty skin over his shoulders, proceeded slowly towards the mosque of Zobeide, cursing as he went along, all Moussul merchants down to the fiftieth generation. Passing the great baths, he was accosted by one of the attendants with whom he was intimate, who inquired, why he was so depressed in spirits.

"That cold-blooded caliph of ours, Haroun Alraschid, has put an end to my earnings for three days, by threatening to hang any water-carrier who shall carry his load to the bazaar. You know, my friend, that I never have put by a single para, and I fear that in three days my carcase will become shrivelled with famine, and dried up for the want of a cup of rakee."

"Which thou hast often divided with me before now," replied the other; "so even now will I divide my work with you, Yussuf. Follow me, if you do not object to the employment, which requires little more than strength, and, by Allah, you have that, and to spare. Surely, upon a pinch like this, you can take up a hair-bag, and a lump of soap, and scrub and rub the bodies of the true believers. Those hands of yours, so enormous and so fleshy, are well calculated to knead the muscles and twist the joints of the faithful. Come, you shall work with us during these three days at the hummaum, and then you can return to your old business."

"Thy words of comfort penetrate deep into my bosom," replied Yussuf, "and I follow thee."

The bath-rubber then took him in, bound an apron round his waist, and lent him a bag, three razors, pumice-stone for scrubbing the soles of the feet, a hair bag, and a sponge. Having caparisoned and furnished him with implements, he led Yussuf into the apartment where was the reservoir of hot water, and desired him to wait for a customer. Yussuf had not long sat down on the edge of the marble bath, when he was summoned to perform his duties on a hadji who, covered with dust and dirt, had evidently just returned from a tedious pilgrimage.

Yussuf set to work with spirit; seizing the applicant with one hand, he stripped him with the other, and first operated upon the shaven crown with his razor. The hadji was delighted with the energy of his attendant. Having scraped his head as clean as he could with an indifferent razor, Yussuf then soaped and lathered, scrubbed and sponged the skin of the pilgrim, until it was as smooth and glossy as the back of a raven. He then wiped him dry, and taking his seat upon the backbone of his customer, he pinched and squeezed all his flesh, thumped his limbs, twisted every joint till they cracked like faggots in a blaze, till the poor hadji was almost reduced to a mummy by the vigour of the water-carrier, and had just breath enough in his body to call out, "Cease, cease, for the love of Allah—I am dead, I am gone." Having said this, the poor man fell back nearly senseless. Yussuf was very much alarmed; he lifted up the man, poured warm water over him, wiped him dry, and laid him on the ottoman to repose, covering him up. The hadji fell into a sound slumber, and in half an hour awoke so refreshed and revived, that he declared himself quite a new man.

"It is only to hadjis," observed Yussuf, "that I give this great proof of my skill."

The man put his hand into his pocket, pulled out three dirhems, and presented them to Yussuf, who was astounded at such liberality, and again expressing his satisfaction, the hadji left the hummaum. Delighted with his success, Yussuf continued his occupation, and attended with alacrity every fresh candidate for his joint-twisting skill. By the time that evening prayers commenced, he had kneaded to mummies half a dozen more true believers, and had received his six dirhems, upon which he determined to leave off for that day.

Having left the bath, he dressed himself, went home, took his leathern pitcher, dish, and basket, and went to the bazaar, where he purchased a piece of mutton, and left it at the most noted kabob-makers in the district to be cooked; he then purchased his wine and rakee, wax tapers, and flowers, pistachio-nuts, dried fruit, bread, and oil

for his lamps. When he had completed his purchases he called at the cook's shop, where he found his mutton nicely kabobed, and smoking in the dish. Paying the cook, and putting it into his basket, he hastened home over the bridge of boats, exulting in his good fortune. When he arrived, he swept out his room, dressed himself in better clothes, lighted his lamps, spread out his table, and then squatted himself down, with his legs twisted under him, and tossing off a bumper of wine, he exclaimed, "Well, I am lucky; nevertheless, here's confusion to all Moussul merchants, with their vile omens. Allah send their unlucky footsteps here to-night—that's all."

* * * * *

Here Menouni stopped, and made his salaam. "May it please your highness to permit your slave to retire for the night, for the tale of Yussuf, the water-carrier, cannot be imparted to your highness in one evening."

The pacha, although much amused, was also a little tired. "Be it so, good Menouni, but recollect, Mustapha, that the caravan must not depart until I hear the end of this story."

"Be chesm, on my eyes be it," replied Mustapha; and they all retired for the night.

"What is the cause?" demanded the pacha, hastily, as next day Mustapha listened with apparent patience to the long details of one of the petitioners for justice.

"It is, O lord of wisdom, a dispute between these men, as to a sum of money, which they received as guides to a Frank, who journeyed into the interior. The one was hired for the journey, but not being well acquainted with the road, called in the assistance of the other; they now dispute about the division of the money, which lies at my feet in this bag."

"It appears that the one who was hired did not know the way."

"Even so," replied Mustapha.

"Then he was no guide, and doth not deserve the money. And the other, it appears, was called in to assist?"

"Thy words are the words of wisdom," replied Mustapha.

"Then was he not a guide, but only an assistant; neither can he be entitled to the money, as guide. By the beard of the Prophet, justice must not be fooled thus, and the divan, held in our presence, be made foolish by such complaints. Let the money be distributed among the poor, and let them each have fifty bastinadoes on the soles of the feet. I have said it."

"Wallah Thaib—it is well said," replied Mustapha, as the two disputants were removed from the presence.

"Now call Menouni," said the pacha, "for I am anxious to hear the story of Yussuf, and the future proceedings of the caliph; and a part of this bag of money will reward him for the honey which falls from his lips."

Menouni made his appearance, and his obeisance; the pacha and Mustapha received their pipes from the Greek slave, and the Kessehgou then proceeded with his story.

* * * * *

The great caliph, Haroun Alraschid, had as usual held his afternoon audience; the court was dismissed. Haroun, whose whole thoughts were upon the bankrupt condition of Yussuf, and who was anxious to know how he had got on after the fetva had been promulgated, sent for his vizier, Giaffar. "I wish to ascertain," said the caliph to the vizier, "if the unlucky Yussuf has managed to provide for his bacchanalian revels to-night?"

"There can be no doubt, O vice-regent of the Prophet," replied Giaffar, "that the young man is seated in the dark, in a most dismal mood, without either wine or kabob, or aught to comfort him."

"Send for Mesrour, then; we will again resume our disguises, and pay him a visit."

"Let the humblest of your slaves," interposed Giaffar, in a great fright, "represent at the footstool of your highness a true picture of what we may anticipate. Doubtless this lion-slayer of Shitan, being famished, will not forget our prophecy, and ascribing its fulfilment to our bad omens, will, in his mood, sacrifice us to his empty stomach.

"Your wisdom is great, Giaffar," replied the caliph; "the man is truly a savage, and doubtless will rage with hunger, nevertheless, we will go and see in what state he may be."

Giaffar trembled at the idea of being subjected to the wrath of such a fellow as Yussuf, but made no reply. He went for Mesrour and the dresses, and having put them on, they all three issued forth from the private gate of the seraglio. They had nearly reached the end of the narrow lane in which Yussuf's house was situated, when the strong reflection of the lights from the windows told them that, at all events, he was not lamenting his hard fate in darkness; and as they approached, the sound of his jovial voice proved also that it was neither in silence that he submitted to his destiny. As they came under the window, he ceased singing, and ejaculated a loud curse upon all Moussul merchants, wishing that he might only see them once again before the devil had them. The caliph laughed at this pious wish, and taking up a handful of pebbles, threw them at the jalousies of Yussuf's windows.

"Who the devil is there?" roared the water-carrier; "is it you, ye bankrupt vagabonds, who have annoyed me? Begone, or by the sword of the Prophet, I'll impale you all three on my broomstick."

"Dost thou not know us, Yussuf?" replied the caliph; "we are your friends, and once more request admission under thy hospitable roof."

Yussuf came out into the verandah. "Oh! it is you, then; now take my advice,—go in peace. I am now in good humour, and peaceably disposed; but had I fallen in with you to-day, I would have twisted off your necks."

"Nay, good Yussuf," replied Giaffar, "we have heard of the unaccountable and mad decree of the caliph, and have called to know how thou hast fared, and if we can be of service to one so hospitable and kind."

"You lie, I believe," replied Yussuf; "but I'm in good humour, so you shall come in, and see how well I fare. I am Yussuf, and my trust is in God." He then went down and admitted them, and they viewed with surprise the relics of the feast. "Now, then," observed Yussuf, who was more than half drunk, "you know my conditions; there is my meat, there is my wine, there is my fruit; not a drop or a taste shall you have. Keep your confounded sharp eyes off my sweetmeats, you black-bearded rascal," continued Yussuf, addressing the caliph. "You have your share of them."

"Indeed, most hospitable sir, we covet not your delicacies: all we wish to know is the reason of this unheard of decree, and how you have contrived to supply your usual merry table."

"You shall hear," replied the water-carrier. "My name is Yussuf, and my trust is in God. When the decree of the caliph came to my ears this morning, I became as one deprived of sense; but wandering near the hummaum of Giaffar Bermuki, a friendly servant of the baths accosted me." Yussuf then stated how he had gained his money, much to their amusement. "Now," continued he, "I will no longer be a water-carrier, but an attendant at the bath will I live and die. May all evil fall upon the cold-blooded caliph; but thanks to Allah, it never will enter his head to shut up the baths."

"But," observed Giaffar, "suppose the caliph were to-morrow morning to take it into his head to shut up the baths."

"Now, may all the ghouls seize thee when thou visitest thy father's tomb," cried Yussuf, jumping up in a fury, "thou bear-whiskered rascal! Did not I caution thee against evil predictions—and did you not swear that you would deal no more in surmises? The devil must attend you, and waft your supposes into the ear of the

caliph, upon which to frame out his stupid fetvas."

"I heartily ask your forgiveness, and I am dumb," replied Giaffar.

"Then you are wise for once; prove yourself still wise, and hasten away before I reach my cudgel."

Perceiving that Yussuf's eyes twinkled with anger, they thought it right to follow his advice. "We shall see you again, good Yussuf," said the caliph, as they descended.

"To the devil with you all three, and never let me see your ugly faces again," replied the water-carrier, slamming the door after they were out. The caliph went away much amused, and with his attendants, entered the private gate of the seraglio.

The next morning the caliph held a solemn divan, at which all the mollahs, as well as all the chief officers, were present, and he issued a decree, that every bath throughout Bagdad should be shut for three days, on pain of impalement. The inhabitants of Bagdad were swallowed up with wonder and perplexity. "How," exclaimed they, "what can this mean? Yesterday we were ordered not to use the waters of the Tigris, to-day the baths are denied us. Perhaps, to-morrow the mosques may be ordered to be shut up," and they shook their heads, as if to hint to each other that the caliph was not in his senses; but they exclaimed, "In Allah only safety is to be found." Nevertheless, the decree was enforced by the proper officers, who went round to the different baths. First they closed the Hummaum Alraschid, next that of Ziet Zobiede, then the bath of Giaffar Bermuki, at which Yussuf had found employment the day before. When it was closed, the master and attendants looked at the door, and they reproached the assistants, who had befriended Yussuf, saying, he was a water-carrier, and the business was stopped by a decree. You have brought him to the baths, and now they are shut. In the meantime, Yussuf was perceived striding towards the bath, muttering to himself, "I am Yussuf; my trust is in God. As an assistant at the hummaum will I live and die." Ignorant of the decree, he approached the door of the building, round which the servants were clustered, and

accosted them. "How now, my friends, do you wait for the key? if anything ails the lock, trust to the strength of Yussuf."

"Have you not heard that the caliph has ordered the baths to be shut for three days, on pain of impalement?"

Yussuf started back with astonishment. "Now, may the graves of their fathers be eternally defiled—those confounded Moussul Merchants! Their supposes always come to pass. I will seek them out and be revenged." So saying, Yussuf, who had come prepared with his brushes, razors, and soap, turned off in a rage, and hastened through the streets for an hour or two, looking at every passenger, to ascertain if he could find those upon whom he would have wreaked his vengeance.

After a long walk, Yussuf sat down on a large stone. "Well," said he, "I am still Yussuf, and my trust is in God; but it would be better, instead of looking after these rascals, if I were to look out for some means of providing myself with a supper to-night." So saying, he rose, went home, put on some clothes of better materials, and twisting up his red cotton sash for a turban, he took up his praying-carpet, with a determination to go to the bazaar and sell it for what it would fetch. As he passed the mosque of Hosein, he observed several mollahs, reading and expounding the more abstruse passages of the Koran. Yussuf knelt and prayed awhile, and returning to the door of the mosque he was accosted by a woman, who appeared to be waiting for some one. "Pious sir," said she, "I perceive by your goodly habit and appearance that you are one of the cadi's law officers."

"I am as you please—I am Yussuf, and my trust is in God."

"Oh! my hadji, then become my protector. I have an unjust debtor who refuses me my due."

"You cannot intrust a better person," replied Yussuf. "I am a strong arm of the law, and my interest at court is such that I have already procured two decrees."

"Those are great words, O hadji."

"Tell me, then, who is this debtor, that I may seize him and carry him before the cadi. Haste to tell me, and for a few dirhems I will gain your cause, right or wrong."

"My complaint is against my husband, who has divorced me, and notwithstanding, refuses me my dowry of five dinars, my clothes, and my ornaments."

"What is your husband's trade?"

"Pious sir, he is an embroiderer of papouches."

"Let us lose no time, my good woman; show me this miracle of injustice, and by Allah, I will confound him."

Upon this the woman unbound the string of coins from her head, and cutting off three dirhems, presented them to Yussuf. Yussuf seized the money, and tucking up his sleeves, that he might appear more like an officer he bade her to lead to the delinquent. The woman led him to the great mosque, where her husband, a little shrivelled-up man, was performing his duties with great devotion. Yussuf, without saying a word, took him up, carpet and all, and was about to carry him off.

"In the name of the Prophet, to what class of madmen do you belong?" screamed the astonished devotee.

"Release me; do not crush my poor ribs within your grasp. Set me down, and I will walk with you, as soon as I have put on slippers."

The people crowded round to know what was the matter. "Ho, ho, that will presently appear," replied Yussuf. "His wife is his creditor, and I am her law officer; my demand is, that you restore to her fifty dinars, besides all the gold jewels and ornaments she has had these last fifty years."

"How can that be," replied the little man, "seeing that I am not forty years old?"

"That may be the case in fact," replied Yussuf; "but law is a very difficult thing, as you will find out. So come along with me to the cadi."

The party then proceeded on their way to the cadi, but they had not gone many

yards, when the papouche-maker whispered to Yussuf, "Most valiant and powerful sir, I quarrelled with my wife last night, on account of her unreasonable jealousy. I did pronounce the divorce, but there was no one to hear. If we slept together once more, she would be pacified. Therefore, most humane sir, I entreat you to interfere."

"Was there no witness?" inquired Yussuf.

"None, good sir," replied the man, slipping five direhms into the hand of Yussuf.

"Then I decide that there is no divorce," replied Yussuf, pocketing the money, "and therefore you are no debtor. Woman, come hither. It appears that there was no divorce—so says your husband—and you have no witness to prove it. You are therefore no creditor. Go to your husband, and walk home with him; he is not much of a husband, to be sure, but still he must be cheap at the three dirhems which you have paid me. God be with you. Such is my decree."

The woman, who had already repented of her divorce, was glad to return, and with many compliments, they took their leave of him. "By Allah!" exclaimed Yussuf, "but this is good. I will live and die an officer of the law." So saying he returned home for his basket, purchased his provisions and wine, and lighting up his house, passed the evening in carousing and singing as before.

While Yussuf was thus employed, the caliph was desirous of ascertaining the effect of the new decree, relative to the baths. "Giaffar," said he, "I wonder whether I have succeeded in making that wine-bibber go to bed supperless? Come, let us pay him a visit."

"For the sake of Islam, O caliph," replied Giaffar, "let us forbear to trifle with that crackbrained drunkard any more. Already has Allah delivered us out of his hands. What may we not expect if he is hungry and desolate?"

"Your wisdom never grows less," replied the caliph; "those are the words of truth: nevertheless, I must go and see the madman once more."

Giaffar, not being able to prevail, prepared the dresses, and they, accompanied by

Mesrour, again sallied forth by the private gate of the seraglio. Once more were they surprised at witnessing the same illumination of the house, and one of the jalousies having burst open with the wind, they perceived the shadow of Yussuf, reflected on the wall, his beard wagging over his kabobs, and a cup of wine in his hand.

"Who is there?" cried Yussuf, when Giaffar, at the command of the caliph, knocked at the door.

"Your friends, dear Yussuf—your friends, the Moussul merchants. Peace be with you."

"But it's neither peace nor welcome to you, you owls," replied Yussuf, walking out into the verandah. "By Allah! if you do not walk away, and that quickly, I shall come down to you with my bone polisher."

"Indeed, friend Yussuf," replied Giaffar, "we have but two words to say to you."

"Say them quickly, then, for you enter not my doors again, you wretched fellows, who have ruined all the water-carriers and all the bath-people in Bagdad."

"What is that you mean?" replied the caliph; "we are lost in mystery."

"What!" replied Yussuf: "have you not heard the decree of this morning?"

"Gentle sir, we have been so busy sorting our wares, that we have not stepped out this day, and are ignorant of all that hath passed in Bagdad."

"Then you shall come up and learn; but first swear by Moses, Esau, and the Prophet, that you will not suppose, for all you have imagined has proved as true as if it had been engraven on the ruby seal of Solomon."

These conditions were readily accepted by the caliph and his companions, and they were then admitted upstairs, where they found everything disposed in the usual order, and the same profusion. When they had taken their seats in the corner of the room, Yussuf said, "Now my guests, as you hope for pardon, tell me, do you know nothing of what has happened to me this day—and what the blockhead of a caliph

has been about?" Haroun and the vizier could with difficulty restrain their laughter, as they shook their heads. "Yes," continued Yussuf, "that vicegerent of a tattered beard, and more tattered understanding, has issued a decree for closing the baths for three days, by which cruel ordinance, I was again cast adrift upon the sea of necessity. However, Providence stood my friend, and threw a few dirhems in my way, and I have made my customary provision in spite of the wretch of a caliph, who I fully believe is an atheist and no true believer."

"Inshallah," said the caliph to himself, "but I'll be even with you some day, at least."

Yussuf then filled his cup several times, and was in high glee, as he narrated the events of the day, concluding with, "I am Yussuf—I put my trust in God. As an officer of the law I intend to live and die, and to-morrow I shall attend the hall of the cadi."

"But," said Giaffar, "suppose——"

"Suppose! by the beard of the Prophet, if you dare to suppose again in my presence, I will pound your fat stomach into a jelly," cried Yussuf, seizing his cudgel.

"No, no, my friend, I merely wished to say——"

"Say nothing," roared Yussuf, "or you never speak again."

"Then we will only think, my friend."

"That I will allow, and I also think as well as you. My thoughts are, that it will be wise for you to quit as fast as you can, for I have the cudgel in my hand, and am not in the very best of humours." The caliph and his attendants were of the same opinion, and took their leave of their irritated host.

At the next morning's levee, Giaffar entered the divan at the head of the chief officers of the law, and viziers of the different departments, prostrating himself before the throne, he called down increase of years and prosperity on the caliph. "Giaffar," replied Haroun, "issue immediate orders, under the imperial firmaum, that

strict inquiries be made into those officers of justice who attend the halls of the cadis. All those who have been lawfully selected shall be retained, with a present and increase of salary, while those who have assumed their name and office, without warranty or permission, shall be dismissed with the bastinado."

The orders of the caliph were immediately obeyed. In the meantime, Yussuf, who had fallen asleep over his wine, did not awaken till long after the sun was up. He immediately rose, dressed himself with care, and hastened to the hall of the cadi, and took his station among the officers of the law, who looked at him with surprise and displeasure. At this moment the caliph's firmaum was delivered to the cadi, who, lifting it up to his forehead, in token of respect and obedience, caused it to be read to him. He then cried with a loud voice, "Bring in purses of gold, and let also the fellah and rods for the bastinado be brought in. Close up the gates of the cutchery, that none escape; and ye officers of justice, be ready to answer as your names are called." Yussuf, whose eyes were wide open, as well as his ears, said to himself, "My God! what new event is now to come to pass?"

The orders of the cadi having been obeyed, the officers were severally called forward, and having proved themselves regularly appointed, received their rewards, and were dismissed. Yussuf's ideas were so confused by what appeared to him such an unmitigated destiny, that he did not perceive that he was left standing alone. It was not until the second time that the cadi called to him, that Yussuf moved towards him.

"Who are you?" inquired the cadi.

"I am Yussuf, and my trust is in God," replied he.

"What is your profession?"

"I am a water-carrier."

"Such being the case, why did you join the officers of the law?"

"I only entered upon the calling yesterday, O cadi; but nothing is difficult to me.

Provided I gain but my six dirhems a day, I have no objection to become a mollah."

The cadi and bystanders were unable to restrain their mirth, nevertheless, his feet were secured to the pole; and when hoisted up, they commenced the bastinado, taking care, however, to strike the pole much oftener than his toes. Having finished, he was released, and turned out of the hall of justice, very much mortified and melancholy, but little hurt by the gentle infliction. "Well," thought Yussuf, "fate appears determined that I shall change my mode of gaining my livelihood every day. Had I not allowed those Moussul rascals to enter my house, this never would have happened."

As he said this, he perceived one of the beeldars, or officers of the caliph's household, pass by him. "That would be a nice office," thought Yussuf, "and the caliph does not count his people like the cadi. It requires but an impudent swagger, and you are taken upon your own representation." Accordingly, nowise disheartened, and determined to earn his six dirhems, he returned home, squeezed his waist into as narrow a compass as he could, gave his turban a smart cock, washed his hands, and took a peeled almond-wand in his hand. He was proceeding down stairs, when he recollected that it was necessary to have a sword, and he had only a scabbard, which he fixed in his belt, and cutting a piece of palm-wood into the shape of a sword, he fixed it in, making the handle look smart with some coloured pieces of cotton and silk, which he sewed with packthread. Thus marched he out, swaggering down the streets, and swinging his twig of almond-tree in his hand. As he strutted along everyone made way for him, imagining him to be one of those insolent retainers of office who are supported by the great khans. Thus he continued a straight course, until he arrived at the market-place, where a multitude was assembled round two men, who were fighting desperately. Yussuf pressed forward, the crowd making way for him on both sides, either taking him for an officer of the household, or dreading the force of his nervous and muscular proportions. When he reached the combatants, they were covered with dirt and

blood, and engaged so furiously, that no one dared separate them. Yussuf, perceiving the dread which he inspired, and that he was taken, as he wished to be, for a beeldar, first clapped his hand to the handle of his pretended sword, and then struck the combatants several sharp blows with his almond stick, and thus induced them to leave off fighting. The sheick, or head of the bazaar, then approached Yussuf, and making an obeisance, presented him with six dirhems, with a prayer that he would seize the culprits, and carry them before the caliph for punishment, as disturbers of the public peace.

Yussuf, securing the money in his girdle, seized up the two combatants, and carrying one under each arm, walked off with them. A great crowd followed, with many prayers for the release of the prisoners; but Yussuf turned a deaf ear, until another six dirhems were dropped into his vest, with a prayer for mercy. Upon this Yussuf consented to release them, and walked away, hardly able to contain his exultation. "I am Yussuf," cried he, "and I trust in God. As a beeldar will I live and die. By Allah! I will go to the palace, and see how it fares with my brother beeldars."

Now there were thirty beeldars in the service of the caliph, who attended the palace in rotation, ten each day. On reaching the court of the palace, Yussuf took his station where the ten beeldars on duty were collected together. He observed, however, that they were very different from himself, very slight young men, and dressed in a very superior style. He felt some contempt for their effeminate appearance, contrasted with his own muscular frame, but could not keep his eyes off their handsome and stylish dress. Meanwhile, the chief of the beeldars perceived him, and knowing that he did not belong to the palace, imagined from his appearance, and his presenting himself among them, that he must be one in the service of one of the great omrahs who were at Bagdad, who, having nothing to do at home, had come as a visitor to the palace. He remarked this to his brother beeldars, saying, "This fine-built stranger ought to be considered as our guest. Let us show him all courtesy, for he is of our profession, and therefore we shall not do ourselves credit, if we do not prove that we

have the power to serve him." The other beeldars agreeing with him, the chief went to the secretary of the treasury, and procured an order of notice upon a rich confectioner, to pay into the treasury the sum of five thousand dirhems, due by him upon several accounts therein specified. The vizier's seal having been attached to it, he went with it to where Yussuf was standing. "What, ho! brother beeldar," said the chief.

"I am Yussuf, and my trust is in God; I am ready to obey your commands," said the water-carrier, advancing with great humility.

"May I request, brother beeldar, that you will do us of the palace, the very great favour to carry this paper, bearing the vizier's seal, to Mallem Osman, the great confectioner, and request the immediate payment of five thousand dirhems. You know your profession; of course the money is not expected, but whatever he may offer for your affording him a respite, put down to the friendship and good will of the beeldars of the palace, and remember us when you feast in your own dwelling."

Yussuf, highly delighted, put the order into his cap, made a low salaam, and departed on his message. Deeming it beneath his new-fledged dignity to walk, he mounted one of the asses ready for hire at the corner of the streets, ordering the driver to hasten before to clear the way, and ascertain which was the dwelling of the confectioner. The house of Mallem Osman was soon discovered, for he was the most celebrated of his trade, and had an immense business. Yussuf rode up on the beast, which was not half as large as himself, and stopped at the shop, where the confectioner was superintending his work-people. "I am Yussuf, and my trust is in God," said Yussuf, looking at the confectioner. The confectioner heeded him not, when Yussuf strutted into the shop. "I merely wait upon you, good Mallem Osman, to request that you will immediately repair to the palace, carrying with you five bags, each containing one thousand dirhems, of which there appears at present to be no chance of receiving an asper. This paper, sealed by the vizier, contains the order;

and as you have the honour of being the caliph's debtor, you will do well to rise and accompany me forthwith to the palace, not forgetting the needful."

At this speech Mallem started up from his seat, advanced most submissively to Yussuf, took the paper and raised it to his head, addressing Yussuf with the most abject servility, "O most excellent, most valiant, and most powerful beeldar, how well doth the caliph select his officers! How favoured am I by Allah with your happy presence! I am your slave—honour me by refreshing yourself in my dwelling."

Yussuf then threw the driver of the beast half a dirhem, and dismissed him, breathed as if fatigued with his journey, and wiped his brow with his sleeve. The confectioner placed him in his own seat, and sent hastily to the bazaar for a large dishful of kabob, spread a napkin before Yussuf, and slicing a pomegranate, strewed it over with pounded sugar, and placed it before him, along with some sweet cakes and some honey. "O chief of beeldars!" said the confectioner, "it is my prayer that you deign to break your fast in the house of your servant. Will you amuse yourself with these trifles while something better is preparing?" Here one of the shopmen brought a bowl, into which he poured sherbet of the distilled juice of the lotus-flower mingled with rose-water. The master placed this also before Yussuf, and entreated him to eat; but Yussuf, affecting the great man, held his head up in the air and would not even look that way. "Condescend to oblige me by tasting this sherbet, O chief!" continued the confectioner: "or I swear by Allah, that I will divorce my youngest and most favourite wife."

"Hold—hold, brother!" replied Yussuf; "rather than that the innocent should suffer, I will comply with your request; although, to say the truth, I have no appetite, having taken my breakfast from the caliph's table in ten dishes, each dish containing three fowls dressed in a different fashion. I am so full that I can scarce draw my breath."

"I fully comprehend that it is out of compassion to your slave that you comply with

my request."

"Well," said Yussuf, "to oblige you;" and taking up the bowl of sherbet, which contained some pints, to the amazement of the confectioner, at one long draught he swallowed it all down. The kabob now made its appearance, wrapped up in thin cakes of fine wheaten flour. Yussuf swallowed this also with a rapidity which was astonishing to behold, nor did he cease eating till the whole table cleared. The confectioner was amazed. "This fellow," thought he, "breakfasted upon ten dishes, each containing three fowls. How fortunate for me! What would he have done had he come here fainting? Nothing less than an ox stuffed with pistachio-nuts would have satisfied him. Would to Heaven that I were well rid of him!"

In the meantime Yussuf stirred not, but resumed his consequence. The confectioner requested to know if his highness would wait till a dinner was prepared for him. "Indeed, friend, that is a subject of small concern. My object here is, that you hasten with me to the treasury to pay in the five thousand dirhems which are due."

"Your indulgence, my aga," replied the confectioner; "I will return in one minute." Mallem Osman then filled a large bag with the choicest of his sweetmeats, and putting thirty dirhems in a paper, he approached Yussuf, saying, "My prince, I humbly beg your acceptance of this trifling present of sweetmeats, and these thirty dirhems for the expenses of the bath after your fatiguing journey hither. Deign also to favour me with your protection. Trade is scarce, and money does not come in. In a short time I will pay all."

Yussuf, who was aware that the order had only been given that he might squeeze a few dirhems out of the confectioner, then spoke with much civility. "My advice to you, Mallem," said he, "is, that you stir not out of your door to-day—there is no such hurry—nor to-morrow, nay, even a week, or a month, or a year. I may say, stir not at all, for you have my protection; and therefore be under no trouble of going to the palace at all."

It was near sunset when this affair was settled. Yussuf walked home with his hands full of presents, exclaiming as he went, "I am Yussuf, my provision is from God!" He reached his home, full of pleasing anticipations, and changing his dress, took out his basket and pitcher, returning loaded more than usual; for having gained forty-two dirhems, he resolved to indulge himself. "By Allah!" cried he, "I will double my allowance, to the confusion of those rascally Moussul merchants, who are such birds of ill omen." He accordingly expended double the money, doubling also his allowance of wax tapers and oil, so that his house was in a blaze of light when he sat down as usual to his feast, more happy than ever, drinking more, and singing twice as loudly as he had ever done before.

Leaving him to his solitary revels, we must observe, that the caliph had ascertained that Yussuf had received the bastinado; and now making sure that he would be without provisions or wine, he resolved to pay him another visit. "I think, Giaffar, that I have, at last, sent that rascal to bed supperless in return for his calling me an infidel; and I must go and enjoy his wrath and indignation, increased of course by the pain of the blows he has received by the order of the cadi." In vain did Giaffar represent that it would be attacking an angry and wounded lion in his den; that his wrath would be such, and his strength was so enormous, that they could not expect less than annihilation, should they venture to his door. "All that may be true," replied the caliph; "but still I will go and see him at all risk."

"I have my dagger, Commander of the Faithful," observed Mesrour, "and I fear him not."

"Use it not, Mesrour," replied the caliph. "Get ready the dresses, and let us depart."

"I venture to promise that we shall see no more lights this time, except it may be a solitary lamp to enable him to bathe his wounded feet."

They went forth, and on their arrival were astonished at the blaze of light which proceeded from Yussuf's apartments; his singing also was most clamorous, and he

appeared to be much intoxicated, crying out between his staves, "I am Yussuf! confound all Moussul merchants—my trust is in God!"

"By the sword of the prophet!" exclaimed the caliph, "this fellow baffles me in everything. Have I not made the whole city uncomfortable, and submit to decrees which appeared to be promulgated by a madman, merely to chastise this wine-bibber, and behold he revels as before? I am weary of attempting to baffle him; however, let us find out, if possible, how he has provided for his table. What, ho! friend Yussuf, are you there? Here are your guests come again to rejoice in your good fortune," cried the caliph from the street.

"What, again?" roared Yussuf. "Well, now, you must take the consequence. Fly, or you are dead men. I have sworn by Allah, not only that you should not come into my door, but that I would cudgel you whenever we met again."

"Nay, thou pearl among men, thou ocean of good temper, rise and receive us. It is our destiny, and who can prevent it?"

"Well, then," replied Yussuf, coming out to the verandah with his great cudgel, "if it is your destiny, it will not be my fault."

"But, good Yussuf," replied the caliph, "hear us. This is the last time that we request admittance. We swear it by the three. You rail at us as if we harmed you; whereas, you must acknowledge that everything, however unfortunate at first appearance, has turned only to thy advantage."

"That is true," replied Yussuf; "but still it is through your pernicious omens that I am made to change my trade every day. What am I to be next?"

"Is not your trust in God?" replied Giaffar. "Besides, we promise thee faithfully that we will not say one word on the subject, and that this shall be the last time that we demand your hospitality."

"Well," replied Yussuf, who was very drunk, "I will open the door for the last time, as I must not war with destiny." So saying, he reeled down the stairs, and let them

in.

The caliph found everything in extraordinary profusion. Yussuf sang for some time without noticing them; at last he said, "You Moussul rascals, why do you not ask me to narrate how I have had such good fortune? You are dying with envy, I presume; but now you shall hear it, and if you dare to go away till I have told you all, I will shower down such a quantity of blows upon your carcasses, as shall leave you worse than a bastinado of five hundred."

"We are all obedience and humility, O prince of men!" replied the caliph.

Yussuf then narrated the events of the day, concluding with, "I am Yussuf, my trust is in God! A beeldar will I live, a beeldar will I die, in spite of the caliph and his grand vizier to boot. Here's confusion to them both!" He then drank off a cup of rakee, and rolling over in a state of stupid intoxication, fell fast asleep.

The caliph and Giaffar blew out the lights, and then let themselves out of the door, and, much amused with the adventures of Yussuf, they regained the private gate of the seraglio.

The next morning Yussuf awoke, and finding it late, hastened to dress himself in his best clothes, saying to himself, "I am a beeldar, and I will die a beeldar." He took care to comb out his beard, and twist it in a fiercer manner; and then putting on his sham sword, lost no time in going to the palace, where he took his station among the beeldars who were on duty, hoping that he would be despatched by the chief on a similar message as that of the day before. The caliph soon afterwards made his appearance at the divan, and immediately recognised Yussuf in his partial disguise. He observed to Giaffar, "Do you see there our friend Yussuf? I have him at last, and now I will perplex him not a little before he escapes me." The chief of the beeldars being called, stepped forward and made his obeisance. "What is the number of your corps?" inquired the caliph.

"Thirty in all, Most High, of which ten are every day on duty."

"I will review those who are present," replied the caliph, "and examine each man particularly."

The chief of the beeldars bowing low, retired, and turning to his men, with a loud voice, said, "Beeldars, it is the pleasure of the Commander of the Faithful, that you appear before him."

This order was instantly obeyed, and Yussuf was compelled to walk with the rest into the immediate presence of the caliph; not, however, without alarm, and saying to himself, "What can all this be for? My usual luck. Yesterday, I cast up my reckoning with the cadi, and paid the balance with my heels. If I have to account with the caliph, I am lucky if I come off clear with my head."

In the meantime the caliph asked a few questions of each beeldar, until he came to Yussuf, who had taken care to stand last. His manoeuvres and embarrassment afforded much pleasure to the caliph and Giaffar, so much, that they scarce could refrain from laughing outright. The last of the beeldars had now been examined, and had passed over to the right after the others, and Yussuf remained standing by himself. He shuffled from side to side, casting an eye now at the door, and then at the caliph, considering whether he should take to his heels; but he felt that it was useless. The caliph asked him who he was three times before Yussuf's confusion would allow him to answer; and the chief of the beeldars gave him a push in the ribs, and looking in his face, did not recognize him; he however supposed that he had been lately substituted by one of the other chiefs. "Answer the caliph, you great brute," said he to Yussuf, giving him another dig in the ribs with the handle of his poniard; but Yussuf's tongue was glued to his mouth with fear, and he stood trembling without giving any answer. The caliph again repeated, "What is your name, your father's name, and the amount of your salary as a beeldar? and how did you get your appointment?"

"Is it to me you speak, O hadji caliph?" at last stammered out Yussuf.

"Yes," replied the caliph, gravely.

Giaffar, who stood near his master, then cried out, "Yes, you cowardly shred of a beeldar; and reply quickly, or a sword will be applied to your neck."

Yussuf, as if talking to himself, replied, "I hope it will be my own then." He then replied to the question, "Yes, yes, it's all right—my father was a beeldar, and my mother also before him." At this extravagant answer the caliph and whole court could no longer restrain their mirth, which gave Yussuf a little more courage.

"So," replied Haroun, "it appears that you are a beeldar, and that your allowance is ten dinars yearly, and five pounds of mutton daily."

"Yes, my Umeer," replied Yussuf, "I believe that is correct. My trust is in God!"

"It is well. Now, Yussuf, take with you three other beeldars to the dungeon of blood, and bring to me the four robbers who were condemned to death for their manifold crimes and enormities."

Here Giaffar interfered, and submitted to the caliph, whether it would not be better that the head jailor should produce them, which being ordered, that officer presently made his appearance with the four criminals pinioned and bareheaded. The caliph ordered three of the beeldars each to seize and blindfold a prisoner, to open their upper garments ready to unsheath their swords, and wait for the word of command. The three beeldars made their obeisance, obeyed the command, placing the criminals in a kneeling position, resting on their hams, with their necks bare, and their eyes covered. While the three beeldars stood thus in readiness, Yussuf was in a dreadful state of confusion. "To escape now is impossible," said he to himself. "Confound these Moussul merchants. They did well to say they would come no more, for in a few minutes I shall be no more myself."

"You fellow there! you are one of the appointed beeldars, and do not know your duty," cried Giaffar. "Why do you not lead out the criminal, as your companions have done?"

Yussuf, obliged to obey, now seized the fourth prisoner, covered his eyes, laid bare his neck, and took his stand behind him, but without drawing his sword. "I never shall be able to get over this," thought Yussuf. "In a few seconds it will prove to be but a piece of palm-wood, and I shall lose my head among the jeers of the people. However, my trust is in God; and to Shitan with all Moussul merchants." He took, however, his sheath and sham sword from his belt, and raised it in the scabbard over his shoulder.

The caliph, who watched him narrowly, was highly diverted with this manoeuvre. "You beeldar!" cried he, "why do you not unsheath your sword?"

"My sword," replied Yussuf, "is of that temper, that it must not too long glance in the eyes of the Commander of the Faithful."

The caliph appeared satisfied, and turning to the first beeldar, commanded him to strike. In a moment the head of the robber was lying on the ground. "Neatly and bravely done," said the caliph; "let him be rewarded." He then gave command to the second to execute his criminal. The sword whirled in the air, and at one stroke the head of the robber flew some distance from the shoulders. The third criminal was despatched with equal dexterity. "Now," said the caliph to Yussuf, "you, my beeldar, cut off the criminal's head, and receive the like reward for your dexterity."

Yussuf had by this time, to a certain degree, recovered his presence of mind; he had not exactly arranged his ideas, but they floated indistinctly in his brain. "Will your highness allow me to say a few words to the criminal?" demanded Yussuf, to gain time.

"Be it so," replied the caliph, stuffing his robe in his mouth to prevent laughter.

"The caliph has commanded that your head be struck off. If you would pronounce the profession of the true faith, now is your time, robber, for you have but one short minute to live."

The criminal immediately cried out, "There is but one God, and Mahomet is his

Prophet!"

Yussuf then bared his muscular arm, and fiercely rolling his eyes, walked three times round his prisoner. "Declare now the justice of your fate," cried he, aloud (but at the same time saying to the man, in a low tone, "Swear you are innocent"). "Say, is not your sentence just?"

"No—no," replied the man, in a loud voice, "I am innocent."

The caliph, who was very attentive to all that passed, was much diverted by Yussuf's proceedings, and wondered what he would do next. Yussuf then walked up to the caliph, and prostrated himself. "O caliph! vicegerent of the Prophet! deign to listen to your faithful beeldar, while he narrates a strange adventure which hath befallen him within these few days."

"Speak, beeldar, we are all attention; remember that thy words be those of truth."

"It was on the evening before your highness issued the decree that no water should be supplied to the bazaar, from the Tigris, that as I was sitting in my house, performing my sacred duties, and studying the Koran, which I read in a loud voice, three merchants of Moussul claimed and entreated my hospitality. The Koran has pointed out hospitality as a virtue necessary to every true believer, and I hastened to open my door and receive them."

"Indeed," replied the caliph, looking at Giaffar. "Tell me, beeldar, what sort of looking personages might these Moussul merchants be?"

"Ill-favoured to a degree. One was a pot-bellied, rascally-looking fellow, with a great beard, who looked as if he had just come out of a jail. [The caliph winked at his vizier, as much as to say, There is your portrait.] Another was a black-bearded, beetle-browed, hang-dog looking rascal. [Giaffar bowed to the caliph.] And the third was a blubber-lipped, weazen-faced skeleton of a negro. [Mesrour clapped his hand to his dagger with impatience.] In short, your highness, I may safely say that the three criminals whose heads have just been forfeited to justice were, as far as

appearances went, honest-looking men compared to the three Moussul merchants. Nevertheless, as in duty bound, I received these three men, gave them shelter, and spread a table of the best before them. They indulged in kabobs, and asking for wine and rakee, which, as forbidden by the law, I never taste, I went out and purchased it for them. They did eat and drink till the dawn broke, and then they departed."

"Indeed," said the caliph.

"The next night, to my great annoyance, they aroused me from my devotions as before. Again did my substance disappear in providing for their demands; and, after having eaten and drunk until they were intoxicated, they went away, and I hoped to see them no more, as they were not sparing in their observations upon the new decree of your highness, relative to the shutting up of the baths."

"Proceed, good Yussuf."

"The third night they again came, and having no more money to spare, and finding them still making my house a tavern, I hoped that they would come no more; but they came again, a fourth night, and then behaved most indecorously, singing lewd songs, and calling out for wine and rakee until I could bear it no more, and I then told them that I could no longer receive them. The fat-stomached one, whom I have before mentioned, then rose, and said, 'Yussuf, we have proved your hospitality, and we thank you. No one would have received three such ill-favoured persons, and have regaled them for the love of God, as you have done. We will now reward thee. Thou art a beeldar of the palace, and we will now present thee with the sword of justice, which has been lost since the days of the great Solomon; take this, and judge not by its outward appearance. When commanded to take off the head of a criminal, if he is guilty, the sword will flash like fire, and never fail; but should he be innocent, it will become a harmless lath of wood.' I took the present, and was about to return thanks, when the three ill-favoured Moussul merchants gradually took the form of celestial beings, and vanished."

"Indeed, this is a strange story—what, did the big-bellied fellow look like an angel?"

"As an angel of light, O caliph."

"What, and the weazen-faced negro?"

"Like a houri, O caliph."

"Well, then," replied the caliph, "you shall now, Yussuf, try the power of this wonderful sword. Strike off that criminal's head."

Yussuf returned to the robber, who remained kneeling, and walked round him, crying out with a loud voice, "O sword, if this man be guilty, do thy duty; but if he be, as he has declared in his dying moments, innocent, then become thou harmless." With these words Yussuf drew his sword, and exhibited a lath of palm-wood. "He is innocent, O caliph; this man, being unjustly condemned, ought to be set free."

"Most certainly," replied the caliph, delighted with the manoeuvre of Yussuf, "let him be liberated. Chief of the beeldars, we cannot part with a man, who, like Yussuf, possesses so famous a weapon. Let there be ten more beeldars appointed, and let Yussuf have the command of them as chief, with the same perquisites and salary as the other chiefs."

Yussuf prostrated himself before the caliph, delighted with his good fortune, and as he retired, he exclaimed, "I am Yussuf; my trust is in God. Allah preserve the three Moussul merchants."

It was not long before the caliph, Giaffar, and Mesrour appeared again as the merchants to Yussuf, and heartily enjoyed his discomfiture and confusion, when they discovered themselves. Still Yussuf enjoyed the favour of Haroun to the end of his life, and was more fortunate than Giaffar and others, who only once fell under the wrath and suspicion of the all-powerful caliph.

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"Such, O pacha, is the history of Yussuf, the water-carrier."

"Yes, and a very good story too. Have you not another, Menouni?"

"Your highness," replied Mustapha, "the caravan will depart at break of day, and Menouni has but three hours to prepare. It can no longer be detained without the chief making a report to the authorities, which would not be well received."

"Be it so," replied the pacha; "Let Menouni be rewarded, and we will try to find some other storyteller, until his return from his pilgrimage."

Chapter XIX

"Mustapha," observed the pacha, taking his pipe out of his mouth, "what makes the poets talk so much about the Book of Fate?"

"The Book of Fate, your highness, is where is written our Talleh, or destiny. Can I say more?"

"Allah acbar! God is great! and it is well said. But why a book, when nobody can read it?"

"These are great words, and spiced with wisdom. O pacha! doth not Hafiz say, 'Every moment you enjoy, count it gain.' Who can say what will be the event of anything?"

"Wallah thaib! well said, by Allah! Then why a book, if the book is sealed?"

"Yet there are wise men who can read our Kismet, and foretell."

"Yes, very true; but I have observed that it is not until after an event has happened, that they tell you of it. What are these astrologers? Bosh—nothing—I have said." And the pacha remained some time smoking his pipe in silence.

"May it please your highness," observed Mustapha, "I have outside a wretch who is anxious to crawl into your presence. He comes from the far-distant land of Kathay—an unbeliever, with two tails."

"Two tails! was he a pacha in his own country?"

"A pacha! Staffir Allah!—God forgive me! A dog—a most miserable dog—on my eyes be it; but still he hath two tails."

"Let the dog with two tails be admitted," replied the pacha. "We have said it."

A yellow-skinned, meagre, and wrinkled old Chinaman was brought in between two of the guards. His eyes were very small and bleared, his cheek-bones prominent; all that could be discovered of his nose were two expanded nostrils at its base; his mouth of an enormous width, with teeth as black as ink. As soon as the guards stopped, he slipped down from between them on his knees, and throwing forward his body, kow-tow-ed with his head in the dust nine times, and then remained with his face down on the floor.

"Let the dog with two tails rise," said the pacha.

This order not being immediately obeyed by the servile Chinaman, each of the two guards who stood by him seized one of the plaited tails of hair, which were nearly an ell in length, and pulled up his head from the floor. The Chinaman then remained cross-legged, with his eyes humbly fixed upon the ground.

"Who art thou, dog?" said the pacha, pleased with the man's humility.

"I am of Kathay and your vilest slave," replied the man, in good Turkish. "In my own country I was a poet. Destiny hath brought me here, and I now work in the gardens of the palace."

"If you are a poet, you can tell me many a story."

"Your slave has told thousands in his lifetime, such hath been my fate."

"Talking about fate," said Mustapha, "can you tell his highness a story, in which destiny has been foretold and hath been accomplished? If so, begin."

"There is a story of my own country, O vizier! in which destiny was foretold, and was most unhappily accomplished."

"You may proceed," said Mustapha, at a sign from the pacha.

The Chinaman thrust his hand into the breast of his blue cotton shirt, and pulled out a sort of instrument made from the shell of a tortoise, with three or four strings stretched across, and in a low, monotonous tone, something between a chant and a whine, not altogether unmusical, he commenced his story. But first he struck his instrument, and ran over a short prelude, which may be imagined by a series of false notes, running as follows:—

Ti-tum, titum, tilly-lilly, tilly-lilly, ti-tum, titum, tilly-lilly, tilly-lilly, ti-tum, ti.

As he proceeded in his story, whenever he was out of breath, he stopped, and struck a few notes of his barbarous music.

THE WONDROUS TALE OF HAN.

Who was more impassioned in his nature, who was more formed for love, than the great Han Koong Shew, known in the celestial archives as the sublime Youantée, brother of the sun and moon?—whose court was so superb—whose armies were so innumerable—whose territories were so vast—bounded as they were by the four seas, which bound the whole universe? yet was he bound by destiny to be unhappy, and thus do I commence the wondrous Tale of Han—the sorrows of the magnificent Youantée.

Ti-tum, tilly-lilly——

Yes, he felt that some one thing was wanting. All his power, his wealth, his dignity, filled not his soul with pleasure. He turned from the writings of the great Fo—he closed the book. Alas! he sighed for a second self to whom he might point out—"All this is mine." His heart yearned for a fair damsel—a maid of beauty—to whose beauty he might bow. He, to whom the world was prostrate, the universe were slaves, longed for an amorous captivity, and sighed for chains. But where was the maiden to be found, worthy to place fetters upon the brother of the sun and moon—the magnificent master of the universe? Where was she to be found?

Ti-tum, tilly-lilly, ti-tum, ti.

Yes, there was one, and but one, worthy to be his mate, worthy to be the queen of a land of eternal spring, filled with trees, whose stems were of gold, branches of silver, leaves of emerald, and whose fruits were the fragrant apples of immortality. And where was this moon, fit bride unto the sun? Was she not plunged in grief—hidden in a well of her own tears—even in the gardens of joy? Those eyes which should have sunned a court of princes, were dimmed with eternal sorrow. And who was the cause of this eclipse, but the miscreant, gold-loving minister, Suchong Pollyhong Ka-te-tow.

Ti-tum, tilly-lilly.

The mandarins were summoned by the great Youantée, the court in its splendour bowed down their heads into the dust of delight as they listened to the miracle of his eloquence. "Hear me, ye first chop mandarins, peers, lords, and princes of the empire. Listen to the words of Youantée. Hath not each bird that skims the air, its partner in the nest? Hath not each beast its mate? Have not you all eyes which beam but upon you alone? Am I then so unfortunately great, or so greatly unfortunate, that I may not be permitted to descend to love? Even the brother of the sun and moon cannot, during his career on earth, exist alone. Seek, then, through the universe, a maiden for thy lord, that like my brother, the sun, who sinks each night into the bosom of the ocean, I too may repose upon the bosom of my mate. Seek, I say, search each corner of the world, that its treasures may be poured forth at our golden feet, and one gem be selected for our especial wear. But first, O wise men and astrologers, summon ye the planets and stars of destiny, that they may ascertain whether, by this conjunction, aught of evil be threatened to our celestial person, or to our boundless empire."

Ti-tum, tilly-lilly, ti-tum, ti.

Where is the star which leaps not in his course with delight, to obey the wishes of

the brother of the sun and moon? Where was the planet that rejoiced not to assist so near a relative? Yes, they all hearkened, bowing down to the astrolabes of the astrologers, like generous steeds, who knelt to receive their riders; yet, when they all did meet to throw light upon the required page of destiny, was not their brightness dimmed when they perceived, as they read it, that it was full of tears, and that joy floated but as a bubble? The wise men sighed as the decree of fate was handed down to them, and with their faces to the earth, thus did they impart the contents of the revealed page to the magnificent Youantée.

"The brother of the sun and moon would wed. Beauty shall be laid at the golden feet, but the pearl beyond price will be found and lost. There will be joy and there will be sorrow. Joy in life, sorrow both in life and death; for a black dragon, foe to the celestial empire, threatens like an overhanging cloud. More the stars dare not reveal."

Ti-tum, till-lilly, ti-tum, ti.

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Here the pacha looked at Mustapha and nodded his head in approbation, as much as to say, "Now we are coming to the point." Mustapha bowed, and the Chinese poet continued.

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The golden eyes of the great Youantée were filled with silver tears when the page of destiny was made known; but the sun of hope rose, and bore away the sacred dew to heaven. Then called he the minister, ever to be disgraced in story, Suchong Pollyhong Ka-te-tow, and the emperor desired him to make a progress through the universe, his dominions, to find out the most beautiful maidens, to be brought to the celestial feet, at the coming feast of Lanthorns. But before they could be permitted to shoot up the rays of love through the mist of glory which surrounded the imperial throne—before their charms were to make the attempt upon the heart of

magnanimity, it was necessary, that all their portraits should be submitted to the great Youantée, in the Hall of Delight. That is to say, out of the twenty thousand virgins whose images were to be impressed upon the ivory, one hundred only, selected by a committee of taste, composed of the first class mandarins and princes, were to be honoured by the beam of the celestial eye.

The avaricious, gold-seeking, Suchong Pollyhong Ka-te-tow had performed his task; wealth poured into his coffers from the ambitious parents, who longed to boast of an alliance with the brother of the sun and moon, and many were the ill-favoured whose portraits were dismissed by the committee of taste, with surprise at the minister's ideas of beauty.

Now there was a certain mandarin, whose daughter had long been extolled through the province of Kartou, as a miracle of beauty, and her father, Whanghang, brought her in a litter to the minister Suchong Pollyhong Ka-te-tow. He felt that her charms were piercing as an arrow, and that he had found a fit mate for the brother of the sun and moon; but his avarice demanded a sum which the father would not pay. Refuse to send her portrait he dare not; it was therefore ordered to be taken, as well as the others, and Whanghang considered himself as the father-in-law of the celestial Youantée. The young painter who was employed finished his task, then laid down his pencil, and died with grief and love of such perfection, which he never could hope to obtain. The picture was sent to the vile minister, who reserved it for himself, and wrote the name of this pearl beyond price, under that of another, unworthy to unloose her zone as her handmaiden. The committee of taste did, however, select that picture among the hundred to be placed in the Hall of Delight, not because the picture was beautiful, but because the fame of her beauty had reached the court, and they thought it right that the emperor should see the picture. The virgins whose pictures were thus selected, were all ordered to repair to the imperial palace, and the magnificent Youantée entered the Hall of Delight, which was illumined with ten thousand lanthorns, and cast his eyes over the portraits of the hundred beauties, but

not one feature touched his heart, he turned away in disgust at the degenerate countenances of the age, "Is this all," exclaimed he, "that the world can lay at the feet of its lord?" And the committee of taste prostrated themselves when they beheld his indignation. "And this," exclaimed he, pointing to the supposed portrait of the daughter of Whanghang, "who is this presumptuous one who hath dared to disgrace with her features the Hall of Delight?"

"That, O emperor," said the wily Suchong Pollyhong Ka-te-tow, "is the far-famed beauty Chaoukeun, whose insolent father dared to say, that if it was not sent, he would lay his complaint at the celestial feet. In her province the fame of her beauty was great, and I did not like to be accused of partiality, so it has been placed before the imperial eye."

"First, then," exclaimed the emperor, "let it be proclaimed that the whole province of Kartou is peopled by fools, and levy upon it a fine of one hundred thousand ounces of gold, for its want of taste; and next, let this vain one be committed to perpetual seclusion in the eastern tower of the imperial palace. Let the other maidens be sent to their parents, for as yet there is not found a fit bride for the brother of the sun and moon."

The imperial mandates were obeyed; and thus was the first part of the prophecy fulfilled, that "the pearl beyond price would be found and lost."

Ti-tum, till-lilly, ti-tum, tilly-lilly, ti-tum, ti.

Yes, she was lost, for the resplendent Chaoukeun was shut up to waste away her peerless beauty in sorrow and in solitude. One small terrace-walk was the only spot permitted her on which to enjoy the breezes of heaven. Night was looking down in loveliness, with her countless eyes, upon the injustice and cruelty of men, when the magnificent Youantée, who had little imagined that the brother of the sun and moon would be doomed to swallow the bitter pillau of disappointment, as had been latterly his custom, quitted the palace to walk in the gardens and commune with his own

thoughts, unattended. And it pleased destiny, that the pearl beyond price, the neglected Chaoukeun also was induced, by the beauty and stillness of the night, to press the shell sand which covered the terrace-walk, with her diminutive feet, so diminutive, that she almost tottered in her gait. The tear trembled in her eye as she thought of her own happy home, and bitterly did she bewail that beauty, which, instead of raising her to a throne, had by malice and avarice condemned her to perpetual solitude. She looked upwards at the starry heaven, but felt no communion with its loveliness. She surveyed the garden of sweets from the terrace, but all appeared to be desolate. Of late, her only companions had been her tears and her lute, whose notes were as plaintive as her own.

"O my mother!" exclaimed she; "beloved, but too ambitious mother! but for one little hour to lay this head upon your bosom! Fatal hath been the dream you rejoiced in at my nativity, in which the moon shone out so brilliantly, and then descended into the earth at your feet. I have shone but a little, little time, and now am I buried, as it were, in the earth, at my joyous age. Immured in this solitary tower, my hopes destroyed—my portrait cannot have been seen—and now I am lost for ever. Thou lute, sole companion of my woes, let us join our voices of complaint. Let us fancy that the flowers are listening to our grief, and that the dews upon the half-closed petals are tears of pity for my misfortunes." And Chaoukeun struck her lute, and thus poured out her lament:

"O tell me, thou all-glorious sun, Were there no earth to drink thy light, Would not, in vain, thy course be run, Thy reign be o'er a realm of night?

"Thus charms were born to be enthroned In hearts, and youth to be caress'd; And beauty is not, if not own'd, At least by one adoring breast."

Ti-tum, tilly-lilly, ti-tum, ti.

The musical notes of the peerless Chaoukeun were not thrown away only upon flowers deaf and dumb, they vibrated in the ears of the magnificent Youantée, who

had sat down on the back of an enormous metal dragon, which had been placed in the walk under the terrace. The emperor listened with surprise at her soliloquy, with admiration at her enchanting song. For some minutes he remained in a profound reverie, and then rising from the dragon, he walked towards the gate of the tower, and clapped his hands. The eunuch made his appearance. "Keeper of the Yellow Tower," said the emperor, "but now I heard the sounds of a lute."

"Even so, O Sustenance of the world," responded the slave.

"Was it not rather an angel than a mortal, whose mellifluous notes accompanied the instrument?" said the magnificent Youantée.

"Certainly is she blessed beyond mortality, since her melody has found favour in the celestial ears," replied the black keeper of the Yellow Tower.

"Go then, and quickly summon all our highest officers of state, to lay their robes upon the ground, that she may pass over them to our presence at the dragon below the terrace."

The magnificent Youantée, brother of the sun and moon, returned to his former seat, filled with pleasing anticipations, while the eunuch hastened to obey the celestial commands. The mandarins of the first class hastened to obey the orders of Youantée; their furred and velvet cloaks, rich in gold and silver ornaments, were spread from the tower to the dragon at the terrace, forming a path rich and beautiful as the milky way in the heavens. The pearl beyond price, the peerless Chaonkeun, like the moon in her splendour, passed over it into the presence of the great Youantée.

"Immortal Fo," exclaimed the emperor, as the attendants raised their lanterns, so as to throw light upon her countenance, "by what black mischance have such charms been hidden from our sight?"

Then did the peerless Chaoukeun narrate, in few words, the treachery and avarice of Suchong Pollyhong Ka-te-tow.

"Hasten, O mandarins, let the scissors of disgrace cut off the two tails of this wretch, and then let the sword of justice sever off his head."

But the rumour of his sentence flew on the wind to Suchong Pollyhong Ka-te-tow; and before the executioner could arrive, he had mounted a horse fleeter than the wind, and with the portrait of the peerless Chaoukeun in his vest, had left even rumour far behind.

Ti-tum, tilly-lilly, ti-tum, tilly-lilly, ti-tum, ti.

And to whom did the miscreant minister fly, to hide his devoted head? He flew to the wild nations of the north, the riders of wild horses, with sharp scimitars and long lances. For three days and three nights did the hoofs of his fiery steed strike fire upon the flints, which he spurned in his impetuous course, and then, as an immortal poet hath already sung, "he bowed his head and died." With the portrait of the peerless Chaoukeun in his bosom, and his mandarin garments raised up under each arm, the miscreant Suchong Pollyhong Ka-te-tow reached the presence of the Great Khan. "O Khan of Tartary," said he, "may thy sword be ever keen, thy lance unerring, and thy courser swift. I am thy slave. O thou who commandest a hundred thousand warriors, hath thy slave permission to address thee?"

"Speak, and be d——d," replied the warrior chief, of few words, whose teeth were busy with some pounds of horse-flesh.

"Thou knowest, O Khan, that it hath been the custom for ages, that the celestial empire should provide for thee a fair damsel for thy nuptial bed, and that this hath been the price paid by the celestial court, to prevent the ravages of thy insatiate warriors. O Khan, there is a maid, whose lovely features I now have with me, most worthy to be raised up to thy nuptial couch." And the miscreant laid at the feet of the Great Khan the portrait of the peerless Chaoukeun.

The chief finished his repast, and then with his lance turned over the image of the pearl beyond all price. He looked at it, then passed it to those around him. The

savage warriors stared at the lovely portrait, and admired it not—yet did they long for war. "Tell me, O chiefs," said the Great Khan, "is that baby-face you look at worth contending for?"

And, with one voice, the chiefs replied that she was worthy to share the nuptial couch of the Great Khan.

"Be it so," replied he, "I am no judge of beauty. Let the encampment be broken up—this evening we move southwards." And the Tartar chief entered the northern provinces of the celestial empire, with his hundred thousand warriors, destroying all with fire and sword, proving his sincere wish to unite himself to the Chinese nation by the indiscriminate slaughter of man, woman, and child; and his ardent love for the peerless Chaoukeun, by making a nuptial torch of every town and village.

Ti-tum, tilly-lilly, ti-tum, ti.

But we must return to the celestial court, and astonish the world with the wonderful events which there took place. The astrologers and wise men had consulted the heavens, and had ascertained that on the thirty-third minute after the thirteenth hour, the marriage procession must set out, or the consummation would not be prosperous. Who can describe the pomp and glory of the spectacle, or give an adequate idea of its splendour? Alas! it would not be possible, even if it were attempted by ten thousand poets, each with ten thousand tongues of silver, singing for ten thousand years. Such, however, was the order of the procession.

First walked ten thousand officers of justice, with long bamboos, striking right and left to clear the way, to the cadence of soft music, blending with the plaintive cries of those who limped away and rubbed their shins.

Then marching, ten abreast, one hundred thousand lanthorns to assist the sun, partially eclipsed by the splendour of the procession.

Next appeared, slowly keeping time to a dead march, five thousand decapitated criminals, each carrying his own head by its long tail of hair.

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"Staffir Allah! What is that but a lie?" exclaimed the pacha. "Did you hear what the dog has dared to breathe into our ears, Mustapha?"

"Mighty pacha," replied the Chinaman, with humility, "if your wisdom pronounces it to be a lie—a lie it most certainly must be; still it is not the lie of your slave, who but repeats the story as handed down by the immortal eastern poet."

"Nevertheless, there appears to be a trifling mistake," observed Mustapha. "Is the procession to proceed, O pacha?"

"Yes, yes; but by the Prophet, let the dog tremble if again he presumes to laugh at our beards."

* * * * *

After the decapitated criminals, which your highness objects to, came in procession those criminals with their heads on, who were to suffer for their offences on this day of universal happiness.

First came two thousand robbers, sentenced to be hung up by their heels, emblematic of their wish to turn everything upside down—so to remain until they were pecked to death by the crows, or torn to pieces by the vultures.

The banner of innovation.

One of the robber chiefs, ordered to be choked with an abacus, which was suspended round his neck.

Another of the robber chiefs. This man, although a follower of the court, and sunned in the celestial presence, had dared to utter vile falsehoods against the celestial dynasty. He was sentenced to have his skin peeled off, and to eat his own words, until he died from the virulent poison which they contained.

The most important of all the criminals next appeared, who being great in favour at court, and appointed to the high office of physician to the celestial conscience, had

been discovered in the base attempt of drugging it with opium; he had also committed several other enormities, such as being intoxicated in his mandarin robes, and throwing mud at the first chief mandarin; also of throwing aside his robes, mingling with the lower classes, and associating with mountebanks, jugglers, and tight-rope dancers. His enormities were written on a long scroll suspended round his neck. His sentence was the torture of disappointment and envy, previous to a condign political death.

After him came a disgraced yellow mandarin, who had been a great enemy of the criminal who preceded him. He was seated upon a throne of jet, and his arms supported in derision by two prize-fighters. His crime was playing at pitch and toss with the lower classes. His punishment was merely exposure.

Such were the criminals who were to suffer upon this day of universal happiness and delight.

Then came fifty thousand archers of the blue dragon battalion, carrying in their hands chowries of horses' tails to clear away the blue-bottle flies.

Next appeared ten thousand virgins, all modest, lovely, and in light drapery, singing hymns in praise of Ganesa on the Rat, the god of pure Love;

Attended by ten thousand youths, who tickled the said ten thousand virgins, singing hymns in praise of the upright Fo.

Fifty thousand archers of the green dragon battalion, each carrying a long peacock's feather in his right hand, to ascertain how the wind blew.

Five hundred physicians attending the celestial court, each carrying a silver box with golden pills.

The head physician to the celestial wits, and always in attendance upon a crisis. He carried in his right hand a bladder-full of peas at the end of a wand, to recall his majesty's wits when they wandered; and was followed by

Fifty thousand fools marching five abreast in union,

And fifty thousand rogues, marching off with everything they could lay their hands upon.

Then came a notorious faquir and mendicant, who was leader of a celebrated sect. He wore but one tail instead of the two usually worn by our nation, but that tail was of forty feet. He was followed by numerous devotees, who threw their worldly goods at his feet, and in return he presented them with writings and harangues, which he declared were infallible in all diseases.

Ten thousand young married women, each hushing an infant to repose upon the left breast to the sound of clarions and trumpets, emblematical of the peaceful and quiet state of matrimony.

The banner of impudence.

Five thousand political mountebanks, contradicting each other, and exerting themselves for the amusement of the people, who, however, suffered rather severely from their mad tricks.

The second in command, explaining their system in an unknown tongue.

The emperor's juggler, who astonished the whole empire by his extraordinary feats, and the rapidity with which he relieved them of all the money in their pockets.

The banner of Love.

The celestial secretary, with goose-wings on his shoulders, goose-quills in each hand, looking very much like a goose mounted on a mule, gaily caparisoned in colours quadripartite, and covered with jingling brass bells.

Five thousand old women, singing the praises of the said secretary and taking snuff to the flourish of hautboys.

The prosperity of the celestial empire, carried by the court fool, in a basket beautifully carved out of a wild cherry-stone; and guarded by

Fifty thousand archers of the red dragon battalion, picking their teeth to soft music.

Ten thousand poets, each singing at the same time, and to a different tune, his ode upon this joyful occasion.

The immortal poet of the age, attired in velvet to his feet, and superbly ornamented with rings and chains of gold and precious stones. He carried his silver harp in his hand, and was mounted on a beautiful white jackass with his face towards the tail, that he might behold and be inspired by the charms of the peerless Chaoukeun, the pearl beyond all price.

Then came the magnificent Youantée, and the peerless Chaoukeun, seated in the massive car of gossamer richly studded with the eyes of live humming birds, drawn by twelve beautiful blue loadstars, presented by the heavenly bodies to the brother of the sun and moon.

Twenty thousand young men, beautiful as angels, clad in the skins of the black fox, and playing upon ivory jews'-harps, all mounted upon coal-black steeds.

Twenty thousand niggers, ugly as devils, clad in the skins of the white polar bear, and sounding mellifluous cat-calls, all mounted upon pure white Arabian horses.

All the first-class mandarins of the celestial empire, turning up their eyes to heaven, and wishing that the procession was over.

All the second-class mandarins of the celestial empire, choked with dust, and wishing the procession at the devil.

Twenty millions of the people, extolling the liberality of the great emperor, and crying out for bread.

Ten millions of women, who had lost their children in the crowd, and were crying out bitterly in their search.

Ten millions of children who had lost their mothers in the crowd, and were crying out bitterly till they found them.

The remainder of the inhabitants of the celestial empire.

Such was the grand and pompous marriage procession, which employed the whole population, so that there were no spectators except three blind old women, who were so overcome with delight that, when it had passed, they bowed their heads and died.

Ti-tum, tilly-lilly, ti-tum, tilly-lilly, ti-tum, ti.

The procession arrived at the palace, and the pearl of price was now his bride, and the heart of Youantée was oppressed with love. Upon a jewelled throne they sat, side by side; but what was the blaze of the diamonds, compared to one glance from her lightning eye? What were the bright red rubies, compared to her parted coral lips—or the whiteness of the pearls, when she smiled, and displayed her teeth? Her arched eyebrows were more beautifully pencilled than the rainbow; the blush upon her cheek turned pale with envy every rose in the celestial gardens; and in compassion to the court, many of whom were already blind, by rashly lifting up their eyes to behold her charms, an edict had been promulgated, by which it was permitted to the mandarins and princes attending the court, to wear green spectacles to save their eyes. The magnificent Youantée was consumed with love as with a raging fever, and the physicians of the emperor were alarmed for his celestial health; by their advice, Chaoukeun consented only to receive him in a darkened chamber. All was joy. The empire rang with the praises of the pearl beyond all price. The gaols were ordered to be levelled to the ground—criminals to be pardoned—the sword of justice to remain in its scabbard—the bastinado to be discontinued. Even the odious lanthorn-tax was taken off, in honour of the peerless Chaoukeun, whose praises were celebrated by all the poets of the country, until they were too hoarse to sing, and the people too tired to listen to them.

Ti-tum, tilly-lilly, ti-tum, tilly-lilly, ti-tum, ti.

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"I'm sure I don't wonder at their being tired," observed the pacha, yawning, "if they

were like you."

"God is great," replied Mustapha, with another yawn. "Shall he proceed?"

"Yes, let him go on; wake me when the story is ended," replied the pacha, laying down his pipe.

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Alas! how soon was all this delirium of happiness to be overthrown: how soon was the prophecy to be fulfilled, that there should be not only joy in life, but also sorrow! The magnificent Youantée was roused from his dream of delight by courier after courier coming in, and laying at the celestial feet tidings of the advance of the hundred thousand warriors. A solemn council was summoned, and the imperial edict was passed, that the barbarians of the north should be driven back to their lands of eternal frost and snow. The imperial armies departed from the capital, each individual composing its hundreds of thousands, vowing by his two tails that he would eat all that he killed. This bloody vow was accomplished, for they killed none; they returned discomfited, without their bows, or arrows, or their swords, fleeing before the rage of the Tartar chief. Then rose the great Youantée in wrath, and issued another edict that the barbarians should be driven even into the sea which bounds the empire of the world. And the armies were again sent forth, but again they returned discomfited, saying, "How can we, who eat rice with chopsticks, combat with barbarians, who not only ride on horses, but eat them too?" The celestial edict was not attended to by the Tartars, for they were barbarians, and knew no better; and they continued to advance until within one day's progress of the celestial capital; and the brother of the sun and moon, the magnificent Youantée, was forced to submit to the disgrace of receiving an envoy from the barbarians, who thus spoke, in sugared words:—

"The great khan of Tartary greets the magnificent Youantée; he has slaughtered some millions of his subjects, because they were traitors, and would not defend the

celestial throne. He has burnt some thousands of his towns, that the great Youantée may order them to be rebuilt in greater beauty. All this has he done with much trouble and fatigue, to prove his regard to the magnificent Youantée. All that he asks in return is, that he may receive as his bride the peerless Chaoukeun, the pearl beyond all price."

The great Youantée spoke from his celestial throne—"Return my thanks to the great khan your master, for his considerate conduct, and tell him, that he well deserves a bride from our celestial empire, but the pearl beyond all price is wedded to the brother of the sun and moon. Any other maiden in our empire shall be sent to him with gifts worthy to be offered by the great Youantée, and worthy to be accepted by the great khan of Tartary. Let it be an edict."

But the Tartar replied, "O great monarch, the great khan my master does not require an edict, but the peerless Chaoukeun. If I return without her, he enters the celestial city, and spares not man, or woman, or child." Then fell at the celestial feet all the princes and mandarins of every class, performing solemnly the great kow tow, and the chief minister of state spoke thus:—"Lord of the universe, brother of the sun and moon, who governs the world with thine edicts, whose armies are invincible, and numerous as the sands upon the shores of the four seas, listen to thy faithful slaves. Surrender up to this barbarian the pearl beyond all price, so shall we all live to humble ourselves before thee." And all the princes and mandarins cried out with one voice, "Surrender up the pearl beyond all price." And all the brave generals drew their swords, and waved them in the air, crying out, "Surrender up to this barbarian the pearl beyond all price." And all the army and all the people joined in the request.

Then rose up Youantée in great wrath, and ordered that the prime minister, and all the mandarins, and the princes, and all the generals, and all the army, and all the people, should be disgraced and decapitated forthwith. "Let it be an edict." But as there was no one left to put the great Youantée's edict into force, it was not obeyed.

And the brother of the sun and moon perceived that he was in the minority; concealing therefore his bile, he graciously ordered refreshments for the envoy, saying, "Let the dog be fed," and retired to the apartment of the peerless Chaoukeun.

Ti-tum, tilly-lilly, ti-tum, tilly-lilly, ti-tum, ti.

Now the beauteous empress had listened to all that had taken place in the great hall of audience, and she threw herself at the celestial feet, saying, "Let me be sacrificed—it is my destiny. Send your slave to the great khan to do with me as he pleases—I am all submission. They say he is a handsome man, and of great size and strength. It is my destiny."

Then did the great Youantée shed bitter tears at his bitter fate; but he knew it was his destiny—and O destiny, who can resist thee? He wiped his celestial eyes, and leading forth the peerless Chaoukeun, put her in the hands of the barbarian envoy, saying, "I send your master the pearl beyond all price. I have worn her for some time, but still she is as good as new. And now let your master the great khan return, with his hundred thousand warriors, to the confines of our territories, as it was agreed. Thou hearest. It is an edict."

"It is enough that my great master hath given his word, and the great Youantée hath given the pearl beyond all price. There needs not an edict," replied the envoy, departing with the peerless Chaoukeun. Thus was the magnificent Youantée left without a bride.

Now when the envoy had brought the peerless Chaoukeun in a close litter to the tent of the great khan, he forthwith commanded his army to return. Much to the mortification of the peerless damsel, he did not express any curiosity to behold her, but commenced a rapid retreat, and, in a few days, arrived at the confines of the celestial territory, which was separated from the Tartar dominions by an impetuous river. As soon as he had forded the river, he encamped on the other side, and sat down with his generals to a sumptuous feast of horseflesh and quass. When the

liquor had mounted into his brain, he desired that the litter of the pearl beyond all price should be brought nigh to his tent, that he might send for her, if so inclined. And the peerless Chaoukeun peeped out of the litter, and beheld the great khan as he caroused; and when she beheld his hairy form, his gleaming eyes, his pug-nose, and his tremendously wide mouth—when she perceived that he had the form and features of a ghoul, or evil spirit, she wrung her hands, and wept bitterly, and all her love returned for the magnificent Youantée.

Now the great khan was drunk with quass, and he ordered the pearl beyond all price to be brought to him, and she replied trembling, saying, "Tell your lord that I am not fit to appear in his sublime presence until I have washed myself in the river." And those who had charge of her took the message to the great khan, who replied, "Let her wash, since she is so dirty."

Then was the litter of the peerless Chaoukeun taken down to the banks of the river, and she stood upon a rock which overhung the black waters. "How callest thou this river?" said she to her attendants.

And they replied, "This river, O princess, divides the territory of Tartary from China, and it is called the river of the Black Dragon."

"Then is the prophecy fulfilled," cried the pearl beyond price. "It is my destiny; and destiny, who shall resist?"

She raised up her arms to heaven, and uttering a loud shriek at her unhappy fate, she plunged headlong into the boiling waters, and disappeared for ever.

Thus was the prophecy fulfilled. The brother of the sun and moon had wed—beauty had been laid at the golden feet—the pearl beyond price had been found and lost. There had been joy and there had been sorrow in life—and sorrow in death. The Black Dragon had proved the foe to the celestial empire, for it had swallowed up the pearl beyond all price.

Ti-tum, ti-tum, tilly-lilly, tilly-lilly, ti-tum, ti.

The twang of the rude instrument awoke the pacha, who had been fast asleep for some time.

"Is it finished, Mustapha?" said he, rubbing his eyes.

"Yes, your highness; and the destiny foretold was truly accomplished."

"Bismillah! but I'm glad of it. Before he had whined ten minutes, I foretold that I should go to sleep. My destiny has also been accomplished."

"Will your highness foretell the destiny of this dog with two tails?"

"Two tails! that reminds me that we have only had one out of him as yet. Let's have him again to-morrow, and have another. At all events, we shall have a good nap. God is great."

Chapter XX

"Mustapha," said the pacha, "I feel as the caliph Haroun Alraschid, in the tale of Yussuf, related by Menouni, full of care; my soul is weary—my heart is burnt as roast meat."

Mustapha, who had wit enough to perceive that he was to act the part of Giaffar, the vizier, immediately replied, "O pacha! great and manifold are the cares of state. If thy humble slave may be permitted to advise, thou wilt call in the Chinese dog with two tails, who hath as yet repeated but one of his tales."

"Not so," replied the pacha; "I am weary of his eternal ti-tum, tilly-lilly, which yet ringeth in mine ears. What else canst thou propose?"

"Alem penah! refuge of the world, wilt thou be pleased to order out thy troops, and witness the exercise of djireed? The moon is high in the heavens, and it is light as day."

"Not so," replied the pacha; "I am tired of war and all that appertains to it. Let the troops sleep in peace."

"Then, O pacha! will you permit your slave to send for some bottles of the fire-water of the Giaour, that we may drink and smoke until we are elevated to the seven heavens?"

"Nay, good vizier, that is as a last resource, for it is forbidden by the laws of the Prophet. Think once more, and thou must have no more brains than a water-melon, if this time thou proposest not that which will give me ease."

"Thy slave lives but to hear, and hears but to obey," replied Mustapha. "Then will it please my lord to disguise himself, and walk through the streets of Cairo; the moon is bright, and the hyena prowls not now, but mingles his howlings with those of the jackal afar off."

"Your face is whitened, Mustapha, and it pleaseth us. Let the disguises be prepared, and we will sally forth."

In a short time the disguises were ready, the vizier taking care that they should be those of Armenian merchants, knowing that the pacha would be pleased with the similarity to those worn by the great Alraschid; two black slaves, with their swords, followed the pacha and his vizier at a short distance. The streets were quite empty, and they met with nothing living except here and there a dog preying on the garbage and offal, who snapped and snarled as they passed by. The night promised nothing of adventure, and the pacha was in no very good humour, when Mustapha perceived a light through the chinks of a closed window in a small hovel, and heard the sound of a voice. He peeped through, the pacha standing by his side. After a few seconds the vizier made signs to the pacha to look in. The pacha was obliged to strain his fat body to its utmost altitude, standing on the tips of his toes to enable his eyes to reach the cranny. The interior of the hovel was without furniture, a chest in the centre of the mud floor appeared to serve as table and repository of everything in it, for the walls were bare. At the fireplace, in which were a few embers, crouched an old woman, a personification of age, poverty, and starvation. She was warming her

shrivelled hands over the embers, and occasionally passed one of her hands along her bony arm, saying, "Yes, the time has been—the time has been."

"What can she mean," said the pacha to Mustapha, "by 'the time has been'?"

"It requires explanation," replied the vizier; "this is certain, that it must mean something."

"Thou hast said well, Mustapha; let us knock, and obtain admittance." Mustapha knocked at the door of the hovel.

"There's nothing to steal, so you may as well go," screamed the old woman; "but," continued she, talking to herself, "the time has been—the time has been."

The pacha desired Mustapha to knock louder. Mustapha applied the hilt of his dagger, and thumped against the door.

"Ay—ay—you may venture to knock now, the sultan's slippers are not at the door," said the old woman: "but," continued she, as before, "the time has been—the time has been."

"Sultan's slippers! and time has been!" cried the pacha. "What does the old hag mean? Knock again, Mustapha."

Mustapha reiterated his blows."

"Ay—knock—knock—my door is like my mouth; I open it when I choose, and I keep it shut when I choose, as once was well known. The time has been—the time has been."

"We have been a long time standing here, and I am tired of waiting; so, Mustapha, I think the time is come to kick the door open. Let it be done."

Whereupon Mustapha put his foot to the door, but it resisted his efforts. "Let me assist," said the pacha, and retreated a few paces; he and Mustapha backed against the door with all their force. It flew open, and they rolled together on the floor of the hovel. The old woman screamed, and then, jumping on the body of the pacha,

caught him by the throat, crying, "Thieves; murder!" Mustapha hastened to the assistance of his master, as did the two black slaves, when they heard the cries, and with some difficulty the talons of the old Jezebel were disengaged from the throat of the pacha, who, in his wrath, would have immediately sacrificed her. "Lahnet be Shitan! Curses on the devil!" exclaimed the pacha; "but this is pretty treatment for a pacha."

"Knowest thou, vile wretch, that thou hast taken by the throat, and nearly strangled, the Lord of Life—the pacha himself," said Mustapha.

"Well," replied the old woman, coolly, "the time has been—the time has been."

"What meanest thou, cursed hag, that 'the time has been'?"

"I mean that the time has been, when I have had more than one pacha strangled. Yes," continued she squatting down on the floor, and muttering, "the time has been."

The pacha's rage was now a little appeased. "Mustapha," said the pacha, "let this old woman be carefully guarded; to-morrow afternoon we will understand the meaning of those strange words, 'the time has been.' Depend upon it, thereby hangs a good story; we will have that first—and then," whispered the pacha, "her head off afterwards."

The old woman, hearing the order to take her into custody, again repeated. "Ah, very well—the time has been." The slaves laid hold of her; but she defended herself so vigorously with her teeth and nails, that they were under the necessity of gagging her, and tying her hand and foot. They then hoisted her on their shoulders, and marched off with her to the palace, followed by Mustapha and the pacha, the latter quite delighted with his adventure. When the divan of the ensuing day had closed, the old woman was ordered to be brought into the presence of the pacha; and as she refused to walk, she was brought on the shoulders of four of the guards, and laid on the floor of the council-chamber. "How dare you rebel against the sublime commands?" inquired Mustapha with severity.

"How dare I rebel!" cried the old woman with a shrill voice. "Why, what right has the pacha to drag me from my poor hovel; and what can he want with an old woman like me? It's not for his harem, I presume."

At this remark the pacha and Mustapha could not help laughing; having recovered his gravity, Mustapha observed, "One would imagine, old carrion that thou art, that the idea of such a punishment as the bastinado had never entered your mind."

"There you are mistaken, Mr Vizier, for I have suffered both the bastinado and the bowstring."

"And the bowstring! Holy Prophet! what a lying old hag!" exclaimed the pacha.

"No lie, pacha, no lie!" screamed the old woman in her wrath. "I have said it—and the bowstring. Yes, the time has been, when I was young and beautiful; and do you know why I suffered? I'll tell you—because I would not hold my tongue—and do you think that I will now that I'm an old piece of carrion? Yes—yes—the time has been."

"Fortunately, then," replied Mustapha, "you are not required by the pacha to hold your tongue. You are required to do the very contrary, which is, to speak."

"And do you know why I received the bowstring?" screamed the old hag. "I'll tell you—because I would not speak; and I do not intend so to do now, since I find that you wish that I should."

"Then it appears," said the pacha, taking the pipe out of his mouth, "that the bastinado was as ill-managed as the bowstring. We do these things better at Cairo. Hear me, old mother of Shitan! I wish to know what you mean by that expression which is ever in your mouth—'time has been.'"

"It means a great deal pacha, for it refers to my life—you want the story."

"Exactly," replied Mustapha, "so begin."

"You must pay me for it—it is worth twenty pieces of gold."

"Do you presume to make conditions with his sublime highness the pacha?" exclaimed Mustapha. "Why, thou mother of Afrits and Ghouls, if thou commencest not immediately, thy carcass shall be thrown over the walls for the wild dogs to smell at, and turn away from in disgust."

"Vizier, I have lived long enough to trust nobody. My price is twenty pieces of gold counted out in this shrivelled hand before I begin; and without they are paid down—not one word." And the old beldam folded her arms, and looked the pacha boldly in the face.

"God is great!" exclaimed the pacha. "We shall see." At his well-known signal the executioner made his appearance, and holding up the few scattered gray hairs which still remained upon her head, he raised his scimitar, awaiting the nod which was to be succeeded by the fatal blow.

"Strike, pacha, strike!" cried the old woman, scornfully. "I shall only lose a life of which I have long been weary; but you will lose a story of wonder, which you are so anxious to obtain. Strike—for the last time, I say, 'Time has been'—before time shall be no more!"

"That is true, Mustapha," observed the pacha. "I forgot the story. What an obstinate old devil; but I must hear the story."

"If it appears good to your absolute wisdom," said Mustapha, in a low voice, "would it not be better to count down to this avaricious old hag the twenty pieces of gold which she demands? When her story is ended, it will be easy to take them from her, and her head from her shoulders. Thus will be satisfied the demands of the old woman, and the demands of justice."

"Wallah Thaib! it is well said, by Allah! Your words are as pearls. Count out the money, Mustapha."

"His highness the pacha has been pleased, in consideration of the fear and trembling with which you have entered his presence, to order that the sum which you require

shall be paid down," said Mustapha, pulling out his purse from his girdle. "Murakkas, you are dismissed," continued the vizier to the executioner, who let go the old woman, and disappeared. Mustapha counted out the twenty pieces of gold, and shoved them towards the old woman, who, after some demur, as if imagining that they ought to have been brought to her, got up and took possession of them. She counted them over, and returned one piece as being of light weight. Mustapha, with a grimace, but without speaking, exchanged it for another.

"By the beard of the Prophet!" muttered the pacha—"but never mind."

The old woman took out a piece of dirty rag, wrapped up the gold pieces, and placing them in her vest, smoothed down her sordid garments, and then commenced as follows:—

"Pacha, I have not always lived in a hovel. These eyes were not always bleared and dim, nor this skin wrinkled and discoloured. I have not always been covered with these filthy rags—nor have I always wanted or coveted the gold which you have just now bestowed on me. I have lived in palaces—I have commanded there. I have been robed in gold—I have been covered with jewels. I have dispensed life and death—I have given away provinces. Pachas have trembled at my frown—have received by my orders the bowstring—for at one time I was the favourite of the grand sultan. Time has been."

"It must have been a long time ago, then," observed the pacha.

"That is true," replied the old woman; "but I will now narrate my adventures."

STORY OF THE OLD WOMAN.

I was born in Georgia, where, as your highness knows, the women are reckoned to be more beautiful than in any other country, except indeed Circassia; but in my opinion, the Circassian women are much too tall, and on too large a scale, to compete with us; and I may safely venture my opinion, as I have had an opportunity

of comparing many hundreds of the finest specimens of both countries. My father and mother, although not rich, were in easy circumstances; my father had been a janissary in the sultan's immediate employ, and after he had collected some property, he returned to his own country, where he purchased some land, and married. I had but one brother, who was three years older than myself, and one of the handsomest youths in the country. He was disfigured a little by a scarlet stain on his neck, somewhat in shape resembling a bunch of grapes, and which our national dress would not permit him to conceal. My father, intending that he should serve the sultan, brought him up to a perfect knowledge of every martial exercise. Even at fourteen years old, few could compete with him in the use of the bow, and throwing the djireed, and as a horseman he was perfect. As for me, I was, I am certain, intended for the sultan's seraglio, for as a child I was beautiful as a houri. My father was a man who would not scruple to part with his children for gold, provided he obtained his price. I was considered, and I believe that I was, the most beautiful girl in the country, and every care was taken that I should not injure my appearance or hurt my complexion by domestic labour or exposure. I was not permitted to assist my mother, who, induced by my father's orders, waited upon me. I was indulged in every whim, and I grew up as selfish and capricious as I was beautiful. Smile not, pacha—time has been.

One day, when I was about fourteen years old, I was sitting at the porch, when a large body of Turkish cavalry suddenly made their appearance from a wood close to the house, and surrounded it. They evidently came for me, for they demanded me by name, threatening to burn the house down to the ground, if I was not immediately delivered up. Our house, which was situated near the confines of the country, had been constructed for defence; and my father, expecting assistance from his neighbours, refused to acquiesce in their terms. The assault was made, my father and mother, with all their household, were murdered, my brother severely wounded, the house plundered, and burnt to the outside walls. I was, of course, a prisoner as well

as my brother. He was tied, wounded as he was, upon one horse, and I upon another, and in a few hours the party had regained the frontiers. A young man, handsome as an angel, was the leader of the band, and I soon perceived that all his thoughts and attentions, were directed to me. He watched me with the greatest solicitude when we halted, procured me every comfort, and was always hovering about my presence. From the discourse of the soldiers I discovered that he was the only son of the grand vizier at Stamboul. He had heard of my beauty, had seen me, and offered a large sum to my father, who had refused, as his ambition was, that I should belong to the sultan—in consequence I had been carried off by force. I could have loved the beautiful youth, although he had murdered my father and mother, but it was the taking me by force which steeled my heart, and I vowed that I never would listen to his addresses, although I was so completely in his power. During the time that I had been in his possession I had never spoken one word, and it came into my head that I would pretend to be dumb. In three weeks we arrived at Constantinople. Since I quitted the country I never had seen my brother, his wound was too severe to allow him to travel with the same rapidity, and it was not until years afterwards that I knew what had become of him. I was taken to Osman Ali's house, and allowed a few days' repose from the fatigue of the journey; after which, as I was still but a child, I was ordered to be instructed in music, dancing, singing, and every other accomplishment considered necessary for the ladies of a harem. But I adhered to my resolution, every method to induce me to speak was tried in vain; even blows, torture from pinching, and other means were resorted to, but would not induce me to swerve from my resolution; at last they concluded that I was either born dumb, or had become so from fright at the time that the attack and slaughter of my family took place. I was eighteen months in the harem of Osman Ali, and never spoke one word.

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"Mashallah! but this is wonderful!" exclaimed the pacha—"a woman hold her

tongue for eighteen months! Who is to believe this?"

"Not at all wonderful!" replied the old woman, "when you recollect that she was required to speak."

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Once and once only, did I nearly break through my resolution. Two of the principal favourites were conversing in my presence.

"I cannot imagine," said one, "what Ali can see in this little minx to be so infatuated with her. She is very ugly—her mouth is large—her teeth are yellow—and her eyes not only have no expression, but look different ways. She has one shoulder higher than the other, and worse than all, being dumb, cannot be taught anything but dancing, which only shows her ugly broad feet."

"That is all true," replied the other. "If I was Ali, I should employ her as a common slave; she is fit for nothing but to roll up and beat carpets, boil rice, and prepare our coffee. A little of the slipper on her mouth would soon bring her to her senses."

I must own that I was near breaking through my resolution, that I might have indulged my revenge, and had not the door suddenly opened, I should have proved to them that I could have spoken to some purpose, for never would I have ceased, until they had both been sewn up in sacks, and cast into the Bosphorus. But I restrained myself, although my cheeks burned with rage, and I more than once put my hand to my jewelled dagger.

I was often visited by Osman Ali, who in vain attempted to make me speak; a harsh guttural sound was all which I would utter to express pain or pleasure. At last, being convinced that I was dumb, he exchanged me with a slave-merchant for a beautiful Circassian girl. He did not state my supposed infirmity, but gave it as a reason for parting with me, that I was too young, and required to be taught. As soon as the bargain was struck, and the merchant had received the money which had been given by Ali to effect the exchange, I was despoiled of my dress and ornaments, and put in

a litter, to be conveyed to the house of the slave-merchant. As your highness may imagine, not a little tired of holding my tongue for a year and a half——

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"By the beard of the prophet, we can believe you on that point, good woman. You may proceed."

"Yes, yes, I may proceed. You think women have no resolution, and no souls—be it so—and what you dignify with the name of perseverance in your own sex, you call obstinacy in ours. Be it so—time has been."

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I was no sooner in the litter than I let loose my tongue, and called out to the women who were appointed to conduct me to the door of the harem. "Tell Osman Ali, that now that I am no longer his slave, I have found my tongue." Then closing the curtains, I was carried away. As soon as I arrived, I told the merchant all that had passed, and the reason why Ali had parted with me. The merchant, who was astonished at having made so good a bargain, laughed heartily at my narrative. He told me that he intended me for the seraglio of the sultan—flattered me by declaring that I should be certainly the favourite, and advised me to profit all I could by the masters he would provide. In the meantime, Osman Ali having heard from the women the message I had sent, was very wroth, and came to the slave-merchant to procure me again; but the slave-merchant informed him that the Kislar Aga of the sultan had seen me, and ordered me to be reserved for the imperial seraglio; by this falsehood screening himself, not only from Ali's importunities, but also from his vengeance. I took the advice of my master, and in a little more than a year became a proficient in music and most other accomplishments; I also learnt to write and read, and to repeat most of the verses of Hafiz, and other celebrated poets. At seventeen I was offered to the Kislar Aga as a prodigy of beauty and talent. The Kislar Aga came to see me, and was astonished; he saw at once that I should immediately

become first favourite; and having heard me sing and play, he demanded my price, which was enormous. He reported me to the sultan, stating that he had never beheld such perfection, and at the same time informing him of the exorbitant demand of the slave-merchant. The sultan, who had felt little interest in the inmates of his harem, and was anxious for novelty, ordered the sum to be paid, and I was conducted to the seraglio in a royal litter.

That I was anxious to be purchased by the sultan I confess: my pride rebelled at the idea of being a slave, and if I was to be so, at least I wished to be the slave of the sultan. I indulged the idea that I should soon bring him to subjection, and that the slave would lord it over her master, and that master the dispenser of life and death, honour and disgrace, to millions. I had made up my mind how to behave; the poets I had read had taught me but too well. Convinced that a little wilfulness would, from its novelty, be most likely to captivate one who had been accustomed to dull and passive obedience, I allowed my natural temper to be unchecked. The second day after my arrival, the Kislar Aga informed me that the sultan intended to honour me with a visit, and that the baths and dresses were prepared. I replied that I had bathed that morning, and did not intend to bathe again—as for the dresses and jewels, I did not require them, and that I was ready to receive my lord the sultan, if he pleased to come. The Kislar Aga opened his eyes with astonishment at my presumption, but not venturing to use force to one who, in his opinion, would become the favourite, he returned to the sultan, reporting to him what had passed. The sultan, as I expected, was more amused at the novelty than affronted at the want of respect. "Be it so," replied he; "this Georgian must have a good opinion of her own charms."

In the evening the sultan made his appearance, and I prostrated myself at his feet, for I did not wish to proceed too far at once. He raised me up and appeared delighted.

"You are right, Zara," said he; "no jewels or dress could add to the splendour of your beauty."

"Pardon me, O gracious lord," replied I, "but if thy slave is to please thee, may it be by her natural charms alone. If I have the honour to continue in thy favour, let me adorn myself with those jewels which ought to decorate the chosen of her master—but as a candidate I have rejected them, for who knows but in a few days I may be deserted for one more worthy of your preference?"

The sultan was delighted at my apology, and I certainly was pleased with him. He was then about forty years of age, very handsome and well made; but I was still more gratified to find that my conversation amused him so much that he remained with me for many hours after his usual time for retiring. This gave promise of an ascendancy which might survive personal charms. But not to detain your highness, I will at once state, the sultan soon thought but of me. Not only my personal attractions, but my infinite variety, which appeared natural, but was generally planned and sketched out previous to his visits, won so entirely upon him, that so far from being tired, his passion, I may say his love, for me was every day increased.

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"Well, it may be all true," observed the pacha, looking at the wrinkled and hideous object before him. "What do you say, Mustapha?"

"O pacha! we know not yet her history. The mother of your slave, as I have heard from my father, was once most beautiful. She is still in our harem, and pooh," said Mustapha, spitting, as if in abhorrence.

"Right, good vizier—right—recollect, pacha, what I have said: time has been." The pacha nodded, and the old woman proceeded.

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Once sure of the sultan's affections, I indulged myself in greater liberties—not with him, but with others; for I knew that he would laugh at the tricks I might play upon his dependents, but not be equally pleased with a want of respect towards himself; and other people of the harem were the objects of my caprice and amusement. So far

from preventing him from noticing the other women in the harem, I would recommend them, and often have them in my apartments when he would visit me, and wish to be alone. I generally contrived to manage a little quarrel about once a month, as it renewed his passion. In short, the sultan became, as I intended, so infatuated, that he was my slave, and at the same time I felt an ardent attachment to him. My power was well known. The presents which I received from those who required my good offices were innumerable, and I never retained them, but sent them as presents to the sultan, in return for those which he repeatedly sent to me. This indifference on my part to what women are usually too fond of, increased his regard.

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"By the holy Prophet but you seemed fond enough of gold just now," observed the pacha.

"Time has been," replied the old woman. "I speak not of the present."

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For two years I passed a happy life; but anxious as the sultan was, as well as myself, that I should present him with an heir, that happiness was denied me, and was eventually the cause of my ruin. The queen mother, and the Kislar Aga, both of whom I had affronted, were indefatigable in their attempts to undermine my power. The whole universe, I may say, was ransacked for a new introduction into the seraglio, whose novelty and beauty might seduce the sultan from my arms. Instead of counter-plotting, as I might have done, I was pleased at their frustrated efforts. Had I demanded the woolly head of the one, and poisoned the other, I had done wisely. I only wish I had them now; but I was a fool—it cannot be helped—but time has been.

Like most of the sex, the ruling passion of the sultan was vanity, a disease which shows itself in a thousand different shapes. He was peculiarly proud of his person,

and with reason, for it was faultless, with one little exception, which I had discovered, a wen, about the size of a pigeon's egg, under the left arm. I had never mentioned to him that I was aware of it; but a circumstance occurred which annoyed me, and I forgot my discretion.

The Kislar Aga had at last discovered a Circassian slave, who, he thought, would effect the purpose. She was beautiful, and I had already engrossed the sultan's attentions for more than two years. Men will be fickle, and I expected no otherwise. What I required was the dominion over the mind; I cared little about the sultan's attentions to other women. Like the tamed bird which flies from its cage, and after wandering a short time, is glad to return to its home and reassume its perch, so did I consider it would be the case with the sultan. I never, therefore, wearied him with tears or reproaches, but won him back with smiles and good humour. I expected that this new face would detach him for a short time, and for a fortnight he never came into my apartment. He had never been away so long before, and I was rather uneasy. He visited me one morning, and I asked him to sup with me. He consented, and I invited three or four of the most beautiful women of the seraglio, as well as the lady of his new attachment, to meet him. I thought it wise so to do, to prove to him that I was not displeased, and trusting that the Circassian might suffer when in company with others of equal charms, who from neglect might reassume their novelty. The Circassian was undeniably most beautiful; but, without vanity, she was by no means to be compared to me; she had the advantage of novelty, and I hoped no more, for I felt what a dangerous rival she might prove if her wit and talents were equal to her personal charms. The sultan came, and I exerted myself to please, but, to my mortification, I was neglected; all his attentions and thoughts were only for my rival, who played her part to admiration, yielded to him that profound respect and abject adulation, which, on my part, had been denied him, and which he probably, as a novelty from a favourite, set a higher price upon. At last I was treated with such marked insult, that I lost my temper, and I determined that the sultan should do the

same. I handed him a small apple. "Will my lord accept this apple from the hand of his slave? Is it not curious in shape? It reminds me of the wen under your Majesty's left arm."

The sultan coloured with rage.

"Yes," replied I, laughing, "you have one of them, you know very well."

"Silence! Zara," cried the sultan, in a firm tone.

"And why should I be silent, my lord? Have not I spoken the truth?"

"False woman! deny what you have falsely uttered."

"Sultan, I will not deny the truth. I will, if you command me, hold my tongue."

"Your slave has been honoured with my lord's attentions, and denies the assertion as a calumny," observed my rival.

"Peace, wretch! thou hast proved thyself unworthy of the honour, by thy lying tongue."

"I tell thee, Zara, silence! or you shall feel my indignation."

But I was now too angry, and I replied, "My lord, you well know that I once held my tongue for eighteen months, I therefore can be silent when I choose; but I can also speak when I choose, and now I do choose to speak. I have said it, and I will not retract my words."

The sultan was white with rage; my life hung upon a thread; when the Circassian maliciously observed, "The bastinado might induce her to retract."

"And shall," exclaimed the sultan, clapping his hands.

The Kislar Aga appeared, in obedience to the sultan's orders; the executioner of the harem, and two slaves stretched me on the floor,—I made no resistance or complaint; my jewelled slippers were taken off, and all was ready for the disgraceful punishment.

"Now, Zara, will you retract?" said the sultan, solemnly.

"No, my lord, I will not. I repeat that you have a wen under your left arm."

"Strike!" cried the sultan, in a paroxysm of rage. The bamboos fell, and I received a dozen blows. I bore them without a cry,—I was too much choked by my feelings.

"Now, Zara, will you retract?" exclaimed the sultan, in a subdued tone.

"Never, sultan; I will prove to you that a woman has more courage than you imagine; if I die under the punishment, my rival shall not have even the pleasure of a groan. You ask me to retract. I will not swerve from the truth. You have, and you know you have, and so does that vile parasite by your side know, that you have a wen under your left arm." I was faint with the pain, and my voice was weak and trembling.

"Proceed," said the sultan.

When I had received thirty blows, I fainted with the agony, and the sultan ordered them to desist. "I trust, Zara, you are now sufficiently punished for your disobedience." But I heard him not; and when the sultan, perceiving that I did not reply, looked at me, his heart melted. He felt how arbitrary, how cruel he had been. The Circassian went to him; he ordered her in a voice of thunder to be gone, me to be unbound by the other ladies, laid on the sofa, and restoratives to be procured. When I came to my senses, I found myself alone with the sultan. "Oh! Zara," said he, as the tears stood in his eyes, "why did you tempt me thus—why were you so obstinate?"

"My lord," answered I, in a feeble voice, "leave your slave, and go to those who can teach their tongues to lie. I have never deceived you, although I may have displeased you. I have loved you with fidelity and truth. Now that you have witnessed what I can suffer rather than be guilty of falsehood, you ought to believe me. Take my life, my lord, and I will bless you; for I have lost you, and with you I have lost more than life."

"Not so, Zara," replied the sultan; "I love you more than ever."

"I am glad to hear you say so, my lord, although it is now of no avail. I am no longer yours, and never will be. I am unfit to be yours; my person has been contaminated by the touch of Ethiopian slaves—it has been polluted by the hand of the executioner—it has been degraded by a chastisement due only to felons. Oblige me, as a last proof of your kindness, by taking a life which is a burden to me."

Despot as he was, the sultan was much moved; he was mortified at having yielded to his temper, and his passionate affection for me had returned. He entreated my pardon, and shed tears over me, kissed my swelled feet, and humiliated himself so much, that my heart relented—for I loved him dearly still.

"Zara," exclaimed he, at last, "will you not forgive me?"

"When, my lord, have I ever shown myself jealous? True love is above jealousy. This evening, to please you, although I have lately been neglected, did I not request your new favourite to meet you? In return, I was grossly insulted by neglect, and studied attentions to her. I was piqued, and revenged myself—for I am but a woman. I was wrong in so doing, but having told the truth, I was right in not retracting what I had said. Now that you have degraded me—now that you have rendered me unworthy of you, you ask me to forgive you."

"And again I implore it, my dearest Zara!"

"There are my jewels, my lord. I have no other property but what I have received, and cherished as presents from you. Your treasurer well knows that. Take my jewels, my lord, and present them to her, they will make her more beautiful in your sight—to me they are now worthless. Go to her, and in a few days you will forget that ever there was such a person as the unhappy, the neglected, the disgraced, and polluted Zara." And I burst into tears; for even with all his ill-usage, I was miserable at the idea of parting with him; for what will not a woman forgive a man who has obtained her favour and her love?

"What can I do to prove that I repent?" cried the sultan. "Tell me, Zara. I have

supplicated for pardon, what more can I do?"

"Let my lord efface all traces and memory of my degradation. Was not I struck by two vile slaves, who will babble through the city? Was not I held down by an executioner? These arms, which have wound round the master of the world, and no other, polluted by his gripe."

The sultan clapped his hands, and the Kislar Aga appeared. "Quick," exclaimed he, "the heads of the slaves and executioner who inflicted the punishment." In a minute the Kislar Aga appeared; he perceived how matters stood, and trembled for his own. He held up the three heads, one after another, and then returned them to the sack of sawdust in which they had been brought.

"Are you satisfied now, Zara?"

"For myself, yes—but not for you. Who was it that persuaded you to descend from your dignity, and lower yourself, by yielding to the instigations of malice? Who was it that advised the bastinado? As a woman, I am too proud to be jealous of her; but as one who values your honour, and your reputation, I cannot permit you to have so dangerous a counsellor. Your virgins, your omras, your princes, will all be at her mercy; your throne may be overturned by her taking advantage of her power."

The sultan hesitated.

"Sultan, you have but to choose between two things; if she be alive to-morrow morning, I am dead by my own hand. You know I never lie."

The sultan clapped his hands, the Kislar Aga again appeared. "Her head," said he, hesitatingly. The Kislar Aga waited a little, to ascertain if there was no reprieve, for too hasty a compliance with despots is almost as dangerous as delay. He caught my eye—he saw at once, that if not her head, it would be his own, and he quitted the room. In a few minutes he held up by its fair tresses the head of my beautiful rival; I looked at the distorted features, and was satisfied. I motioned with my hand, and the Kislar Aga withdrew.

"Now, Zara, do you forgive me? Now do you believe that I sincerely love you, and have I obtained my pardon?"

"Yes," replied I, "I do, sultan; I forgive you all; and now——I will permit you to sit by me and bathe my feet."

From that day I resumed my empire with more despotic power than ever. I insisted that I should refuse his visits when I felt so inclined; and when I imagined that there was the slightest degree of satiety on his part, he was certain to be refused admittance for a fortnight. I became the depositary of his secrets and the mover of his counsels. My sway was unlimited, and I never abused it. I loved him, and his honour and his welfare were the only guides to my conduct.

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"But your highness will probably be tired, and as I have now told how it was that I suffered the bastinado, you will perhaps wait till to-morrow for the history of the bowstring."

"I believe that the old woman is right," said Mustapha, yawning; "it is late. Is it your highness's pleasure that she shall return to-morrow evening?"

"Be it so; but let her be in close custody—you remember."

"Be chesm—on my eyes be it. Guards, remove this woman from the sublime presence."

"It appears to me," said the pacha to Mustapha, "that this old woman's story may be true. The description of the harem is so correct—commanding one day, bastinadoed the next."

"Who can doubt the fact, your sublime highness? The Lord of Life dispenses as he thinks fit."

"Very true; he might send me the bowstring to-morrow."

"Allah forbid!"

"I pray with you; but life is uncertain, and it is our fate. You are my vizier to-day, for instance, what may you be to-morrow?"

"Whatever your highness may decide," replied Mustapha, not much liking the turn of the conversation. "Am not I your slave, and as the dirt under your feet—and shall I not bow to your sovereign pleasure, and my destiny?"

"It is well said, and so must I, if the caliph sends me a Capitan Badji, which Allah forbid. There is but one God, and Mahomet is his Prophet."

"Amen," replied Mustapha. "Will your highness drink of the water of Giaour?"

"Yes, truly; for what says the poet? 'We are merry to-day and to-morrow we die.'"

"Min Allah; God forbid! That old woman has lived a long while, why shouldn't we?"

"I don't know; but she has had the bowstring and is not yet dead. We may not be so fortunate."

"May we never have it at all; then shall we escape, O pacha."

"True, Mustapha; so give me the bottle."

Chapter XXI

The next evening the old woman made her appearance, without raising any difficulty, as on the previous day, and took her seat before the pacha, and thus continued:—

As I stated to your highness last evening when I broke off my narrative, I was in the highest favour with the sultan, who made me his confidant. He had often mentioned to me the distinguished services of a young seraskier, whom he had lately appointed capitan pacha, to combat in the north against a barbarous nation called Sclavonians, or Russians. My curiosity was raised to see this Rustam of a warrior, for his exploits and unvaried success were constantly the theme of the sultan's encomiums. A

Georgian slave, who had been the favourite previous to my arrival, and who had never forgiven my supplanting her, had been sent to him by the sultan as a compliment; and this rare distinction had been conferred upon him on the day when I requested leave to remain behind the screen in the hall of the divan, that I might behold this celebrated and distinguished person. He was indeed a splendid figure, and his face was equally perfect. He formed, in outward appearance, all that I could imagine of a hero. As I looked at him from behind the screen, he turned his head from me, and I beheld, to my surprise, the red stain on his neck, which told me, at once, that I had found my long-lost brother. Delighted at the rencontre, I retired as soon as the audience was over, and the sultan came to my apartment; I told him the discovery which I had made. The sultan appeared pleased at the information: and the next day sending for my brother, he asked him a few questions relative to his lineage and former life, which corroborated my story, and, loading him with fresh honours, he dismissed him. I was delighted that, in finding my brother, I had found one who was not unworthy of the sultan's regard, and I considered it a most fortunate circumstance; but how blind are mortals! My brother was the cause of my disgrace and eternal separation from the sultan. I mentioned to your highness that the Georgian slave, who had preceded me in the sultan's favour, had been sent as a present to my brother. This woman, although she had always appeared fond of me, was, in fact, my most bitter enemy. She was very beautiful and clever, and soon obtained the most unlimited influence over my brother. Yet she loved him not; she had but one feeling to gratify, which was revenge on me. My brother had so often led the troops to victory, that he had acquired an unbounded sway over them. Stimulated by their suggestions, and his own ambition, which like mine, was boundless, he was at last induced to plot against his master, with the intention of dethroning him, and reigning in his stead. To his new wife, the Georgian, he had intrusted his plans; and she resolved to regain the favour of the sultan and accomplish my ruin, by making me a party, and then communicating to him the

treason which was in agitation. She proposed to my brother that he should inform me of his intentions, alleging, that in all probability I would assist him, as I cared little for the sultan; and at all events, if I did not join, my interest might save him from his wrath. For some time he refused to accede to her suggestions; but as she pointed out that if the plot were discovered, I, as his sister, would certainly share his fate, and that she well knew that I had never forgiven the punishment of the bastinado which I had received, and only waited for an opportunity to revenge myself, he at last consented to make me a party to his intentions. My brother had been allowed to visit me, and he took this opportunity of stating to me his schemes. I started from him with horror, pointed out to him his ingratitude and folly, and entreated him to abandon his purpose. Convinced that I was firmly attached to the sultan, he appeared to acquiesce in the justice of my remarks, confessed that he was wrong, and promised me faithfully to think no more of his treacherous designs. I believed him to be sincere, and I shed tears of joy, as I thanked him for having yielded to my entreaties. We separated, and in a short time I thought no more of the subject.

But he had no idea of abandoning his purpose; in fact, he was already too deeply involved to be able to do so. His arrangements went on rapidly; and when all was ripe, the Georgian gave information to the sultan, denouncing me as a party as well as my brother.

One morning as I was sitting in my apartment, arranging on a tray a present for my lord and master, I was surprised by the abrupt entrance of the Kislar Aga, accompanied by guards, who without explanation seized me, and led me into the presence-chamber, where the sultan and all the officers of state were assembled. It immediately rushed into my mind that my brother had deceived me. Pale with anxiety, but at the same time with a feeling of delight that the plot had been discovered, I entered the divan, where I beheld my brother in the custody of the palace-guard. He had been seized in the divan, as his popularity was so great, that a

few minutes' notice would have enabled him not only to escape, but to have put his treasonable plans into execution; but he bore himself with such a haughty air, with his arms folded across his breast, that I thought he might be innocent; and that he had, as he promised me, abandoned all thoughts of rebellion.

I turned towards the sultan, who fixed his eyes upon me; his brows were knit with anger, and he commenced, "Zara, your brother is accused of treason, which he denies. You, also, are charged with being privy to his designs. Answer me, do you know anything of these plots?"

I did not know how to answer this question, and I would not tell a lie. I did know something about his intentions; but as he had denied the charge, it was not to be expected that he should be condemned by the mouth of his only sister. Perhaps he had, as he had promised me, abandoned his ideas;—perhaps it could not be proved against him. My answer would have been the signal for his death. I could not give the answer required, and I replied, "If my brother be found guilty of rebelling against his sovereign, let him suffer. I, my lord, have never plotted or rebelled against you."

"Answer my question, Zara. Do you know anything about this plot? Yes or no. Say no, and I shall believe you."

"Your slave has never plotted against her lord," replied I. "Further I cannot answer your question."

"Then it is true;—and Zara—even Zara is false!" cried the sultan, clasping his hands in agony. "O! where can a person in my situation find one who is faithful and true, when Zara, even Zara is false?"

"No—no, my lord," cried I, bursting into tears; "Zara is true;—always has been, always will be, true. That I can boldly answer—but do not press the other question."

The sultan looked at me for a short time, and then consulted with the viziers and others, who stood by the throne with their arms folded. The chief vizier replied, "Those who know of treason, and conceal it, are participators in the crime."

"True—most true. Zara, for the last time I ask you, what do you know of this intended insurrection? I must be trifled with no longer. A plain answer, or——"

"I cannot answer that question, my lord."

"Zara, as you value your life, answer me immediately," cried the sultan, with violence;—but I answered not.

Twice more did the forbearance and love of the sultan induce him to repeat the question; but I remained silent.

He waved his hands, I was seized by the mutes, and the bowstring encircled my neck. All was ready, they awaited but the last signal to tighten the fatal cord.

"Once more, Zara, will you answer; or brave me to your destruction?"

"Sultan, I will at least speak to you before I die. I only wish to declare my fidelity and my love to you in my last moments, to tell you that I forgive you for that which, when the truth is known, you will never forgive yourself. One moment more. Let me remove this jewelled chain from my neck, now superseded by the bowstring. You presented it to me when convinced of my attachment and my love. Take it, sultan, and when you find one as faithful and as true, present it to her; but until you do so, wear it in memory of Zara. And now let me throw my veil over those features which have always beamed with love and delight on you, that when I am dead, and you call them to your recollection, they may be as you have been used to see them, and not black with convulsions and distorted with agony. My lord, my dear and honoured lord, farewell!"

The sultan was deeply moved; he turned away his head, and covered his face with one hand, while the other dropped at his side from the intensity of his feelings.

Although it never was so intended, this dropping of his hand was considered as the signal for my death. The string was tightened, and buried itself, cutting deeply into the flesh of a neck once as fair and smooth as the polished marble of Patras. For the first moments my torture was excruciating—my eyes were forcing out of their

sockets—my tongue protruded from my mouth—my brain appeared to be on fire—but all recollection soon departed.

* * * * *

"Staffir Allah! God forgive me! but are you not laughing at our beards, old scarecrow? What think you, Mustapha?" continued the pacha, turning to him. "What is all this but lies?"

"Lies!" screamed the old woman. "Lies! you tell me they are lies! Well, well—the time has been. Pacha, after what I have suffered by telling the truth all my life, it is hard, in my old age, to be told that I lie; but you shall be convinced," and the old woman put her hands up to the shrivelled, pendent skin of her neck, and stretching it out smooth, showed a deep blue mark, which encircled it like a necklace. "Now are you satisfied?"

The pacha nodded his head to Mustapha, as if convinced; and then said, "You may proceed."

"Yes, I may proceed; but I tell you, pacha, that if you doubt what I say once more, I will return your twenty pieces of gold, and hold my tongue. I proved that I could do it as a young woman, and we become more obstinate as we get old."

"That is no lie," observed Mustapha. "Continue, old woman, and we will not interrupt you with doubts again."

* * * * *

My brother, who had watched every motion of the sultan's, and who had determined to reveal all rather than that I should suffer, when he perceived the fatal mistake, which he did not till some moments afterwards, uttered a loud cry, and attempted to burst from his guards. Roused by the cry, the sultan looked up, and perceived what had taken place. In a moment he darted from his throne, and was kneeling by me with frantic exclamations. The mutes hastily tore away the bowstring, but I was, to all appearance, dead.

"Yes, sultan, well you may rave," exclaimed my brother; "for you have good cause. You have destroyed one who, as she declared with her last breath, was most faithful and most true. I acknowledge the conspiracy. I told her my intentions, and she thought that she had succeeded in preventing me, for I promised by the three to abandon my design. She has been faithful both to you and to me, for she believed that, although accused, I had atoned for my fault by repentance."

The sultan looked earnestly at my brother, but made no answer. He embraced me, at one moment bursting into tears, in the next calling for assistance. I was removed to my apartments, and after some time, the physicians succeeded in restoring me to life; but I was for many days confused and dizzy in the brain, during which time every attention and care was lavished on me. One evening I felt sufficiently recovered to speak, and I demanded of my attendants what had taken place. They informed me that the mutes, who had mistaken the signal, had been impaled, and that the Janissaries had risen and demanded my brother, whose execution had been deferred by the sultan; but that on the commotion taking place, by order of the grand vizier,—my brother had been executed, and his head thrown out to the rebellious troops, who had been dispersed, and had since been brought to subjection, and some hundreds of the ringleaders had been executed. I turned away at this intelligence, for I loved my noble but misguided brother. The movement occasioned excruciating pain, which arose from the deep wound made by the bowstring in my neck.

The next morning I rose, that I might contemplate my person in the mirror, and I at once perceived the alteration which had taken place. There was a certain degree of distortion of features which I thought would never be removed. I felt, that although the sultan might respect me, I could not expect the same influence and undivided attention as before. With a heavy heart I threw myself on the couch, and planned for the future. I reflected upon the uncertain tenure by which the affections of a despot are held, and I resolved to part. Still I loved him, loved him in spite of all his cruelty; but my resolution was made. For six weeks I refused to see the sultan, although he

inquired every day, and sent me magnificent presents. At the end of that period I had recovered, and all that remained from the effects of the bowstring was a slight wrinkling of the skin from distension, and the deep blue mark round my neck which I have just shown to your highness.

When I first admitted the sultan, he was much affected. "Zara," said he, mournfully, "I swear by the holy prophet that I meant not to give the signal."

"I believe you, my lord," replied I, calmly.

"Neither did I intend that your brother should suffer. I meant to have gained your favour by his pardon."

"He was a traitor, my lord, an ungrateful traitor, and deserved his death. So may all like him perish."

"And now, Zara, may I hope for your forgiveness?"

"On one condition, sultan; and swear that you will grant what I require."

"I do, by Allah!"

"It is, that you send me back to my own country."

Not to detain your highness by dwelling too long upon what passed, it will suffice to say, that notwithstanding the entreaties of the sultan, and the pleadings of my own heart, my resolution was immovable. Every arrangement was made for my departure, and during the preparations, the sultan was continually with me, persuading me to abandon the idea. The magnificence and liberality which he showed in the costly presents bestowed upon me, that I might return with honour and wealth to my own country, more than once made me waver in my resolution. The evening before my departure he made a last attempt, but in vain. My refusal was at least softened by the tears which I shed, for now that the time of departure was so near, I felt how truly, how devotedly I was attached to him. We parted; I threw myself on the couch, and wept till the dawn of day, when I was summoned to

commence my journey.

As your highness may be aware is the custom, when my brother was executed, all his property was seized by the sultan, and distributed among the favourites. The new capitan pacha who succeeded my brother was called Abdallah, and was said to be an excellent soldier. Part of my brother's property was made over to him, and among the rest the Georgian slave, who had been the ruin of my brother, and had so fatally destroyed my happiness. To show me every attention and respect, the sultan had ordered Abdallah in person to escort me to my own country, with a picked body of cavalry. The cavalcade was magnificent—treasure had been heaped on treasure—present upon present; twenty women of my own country, and numerous slaves had been permitted to attend upon me, and the procession wore the appearance of a pageant. I ascended my litter with an aching heart; and, journeying by easy stages, arrived at the land of my nativity. The borders were passed, and Abdallah requested me to write an acknowledgment that he had done his duty, which the sultan would require of him upon his return. I gave him the paper, and, professing many wishes for my future happiness, he assembled his troops, and the escort turned the heads of their neighing steeds towards the city, where my heart had truly been left behind.

It will now be necessary to revert to the Georgian slave, who had been presented to my brother by the sultan, and had afterwards been made over to Abdallah. When she heard that I was about to depart for my own country, loaded with presents, her rage was without bounds. Already had her beauty and talents made great impression upon Abdallah, and she soon won him over to a plot which would be advantageous to him, at the same time that it would throw me, whom she distrusted, into her power. She proposed to Abdallah that, after having escorted me to the frontiers, and received from me the acknowledgment required by the sultan, he should follow my small escort of slaves, cut them to pieces, take possession of me and all my treasure, and return with it to Constantinople, where I might be immured in his harem. The

avarice of Abdallah was not able to withstand the temptation, and aware that there was no chance of the nefarious transaction being discovered by the sultan, he agreed to the proposal. On the second night after we had parted with Abdallah, a body of horsemen galloped down upon us, and all my attendants, male and female, were massacred. I was seized, put into a sack, and thrown across a horse, and as soon as the treasure could be collected, they set off at a rapid pace. I was nearly dead when they halted, and when I was removed from my painful situation I fainted away.

Abdallah had never seen my face; the soldiers reported me dead, and he was glad when he heard of it, for it was only to please his wife that he had promised to bring me back. He walked up to where I lay, and was, even in my miserable situation, enamoured with my beauty. His heart acknowledged that I was the most valuable of all his plunder. Every care and attention was bestowed upon me, and after several hours' halt to allow me to refresh myself, I was placed in a small litter, and our journey recommenced. He was studious to obtain my favour: at first I spurned him: but when he told me that the Georgian slave had instigated him to the deed, and had insisted that he should bring me back, I well knew for what purpose, and thought only of revenge. I feigned to be less averse to him, and before our journey was over, had used all my powers of fascination with triumphant success. At last our wearied horses arrived at Stamboul, and after waiting in the suburbs till the evening closed in, that the cavalcade might not attract attention, it proceeded to the house of Abdallah, and I was once more in the precincts of a harem. The Georgian slave hastened to meet me when she was informed of our arrival, and taking off her slipper, she struck me contemptuously on the mouth, with such force as to cause the blood to flow.

"Now, sultana," cried she, "the day is mine; again shall you receive the bastinado. Aye, and again shall the bowstring be applied to your proud neck, and more effectually than before." She then ordered her slaves to strip me, and put on the meanest attire. When that was done, she spat in my face, and left me without

speaking; but the flashing of her eyes gave evidence of the fiery passions which were raging in her bosom.

In the meantime, Abdallah had proceeded to the palace, to present to the sultan the document proving my safe arrival, and having so done, he hastened back to his own house. As soon as he entered the harem, instead of visiting the Georgian slave, who had arrayed herself for his reception, he inquired of the astonished women in which chamber I had been accommodated. They hesitatingly replied, pointing it out to him. He entered, and found me clothed in a slave's dress, with my face covered with blood. When I stated the treatment I had received, and the further threat of the bastinado and the bowstring, his rage was beyond all bounds. Ordering all the women to attend me, he quitted me, that I might resume my own dress, intimating that he hoped that I would allow him to sup with me that evening. My desire for revenge induced me to grant his request, and he quitted the harem to look after the treasure of which I had been robbed.

In the meantime, the other women had communicated to the Georgian slave all that had occurred, and she was frantic at the information. Fearful of her, I kept my door fast until the arrival of Abdallah, who sent to inquire whether I would receive him. He was admitted, and again expressed his indignation at the conduct of my rival, offering, as a proof of his attachment, to abandon her to my resentment. I had no time for reply before the door was burst open, the Georgian flew in and aimed her dagger at my heart. Abdallah had sufficient time to ward the blow, and as the weapon passed through his left arm, with his right hand he dashed her on the floor. Pale with rage and pain he called his people. "She threatened you, Zara, with the bastinado and the bowstring. She has sealed her own doom."

By his orders her slippers were torn off, and she received fifty blows of the bastinado; then, as she screamed with pain, and held up her hands for mercy, the mutes were summoned, and the bowstring was applied. My revenge was more than

satiated, and I covered up my eyes that I might not be a witness to the dreadful spectacle. When I removed my hands, I found Abdallah only in the apartment, and my rival lying a blackened corpse upon the floor.

For three years I remained in the harem of Abdallah, and, if not happy, was resigned to my fate. He was devotedly attached to me, and, if I could not return his love, I was not deficient in gratitude. At last a second war broke out between the Turks and Russians, and Abdallah was ordered to put himself at the head of his troops, and drive the invaders back to their regions of frost and snow. As was the custom with Turkish commanders, all his harem accompanied him, and after travelling about from one territory to another, sometimes in pursuit of, and at others retreating before the enemy's forces, we were shut up in the fortress of Ismael, with orders to defend it to the last.

I shall not weary your highness with a detail of what occurred. I shall only say, that after the town had been nearly reduced to ashes, by the shells and shot, which had set fire to it at least one hundred times, it was taken by storm, with immense slaughter. We sat in our apartments, listening with terror to the alternate shouting and shrieking—the noise of the bursting of the shells, the whizzing of the balls, the cries of the wounded, and the terrific roaring of the flames, which were now consuming the whole town in their fury. At last our doors were burst open, and the enemy entered. We screamed, and would have fled, but in vain. What became of the rest I know not, but I was dragged over the dead and the dying, through smoke and through flame, until I fainted away with terror and exhaustion. When I recovered, I found myself in a hut, lying on a small bed, and attended by two bearded monsters, whom I afterwards discovered were Cossacks. They were chafing my limbs with their rough hands, without the least regard for decorum. As soon as I opened my eyes, one of them poured a little spirits down my throat, and wrapping me up in a horse-cloth, they left me—to meditate upon my misfortunes.

I discovered that evening that I had, by the fortune of war, become the property of a Russian general, who had no time for making love. With him it was all ready made, as a matter of course. Still he was a handsome man, and when not tipsy, was good-humoured and generous; but the bivouacs, even of a general, were very different from the luxuries to which I had been accustomed. I lived badly, and was housed worse. It so unfortunately happened, that my protector was a great gambler, as indeed are all Russians; and one morning, to my surprise, a handsome young officer came into the tent and the general very unceremoniously handed me over to him. My beauty had been made known in the camp, and the Russian general, having the night before lost all his money, had staked me for one thousand sequins, and had lost. My new master was a careless, handsome youth, a colonel in the army; I could have loved him, but I had not time; for I had not been in his tent more than three weeks, before I was again gambled away, and lost to a major. I had hardly time to make myself comfortable in my new abode, when I was staked and lost again. In short, your highness, in that campaign I was the property of between forty and fifty Russian officers, and what with the fatigue of marching, the badness of provisions, and my constant unsettled state of mind and body, I lost much of my good looks—so much, indeed, that I found out that instead of being taken as a stake of one thousand sequins, I was not valued at more than two hundred. I can assure your highness that it is no joke to go through a Russian camp in that way—to be handed about like a purse of money, out of one man's pocket into another's. I assure you, that before the campaign was over, I had had quite enough of the Russians, and only wished that the Turkish army might rout them, and I could find myself once more in a harem. It was then that I first lamented over my hard fate, and that of the sultan. It was then that I first used the expression, when I thought of my condition, and that I said to myself, "The time has been."

At last the army was ordered to march back, and being then the property of a Cossack, he put me on a pony, and made me keep up with the squadron, driving me

before him with his long spear, sometimes sticking the point into the rear of the pony, and sometimes into me, by way of a joke. But I had not been more than ten days on the retreat, before he sold me, pony, bridle, saddle, altogether, as a bargain, to an infantry officer, who as soon as he had taken possession, made me dismount, while he got in the saddle, desiring me to lay hold of the pony's tail and follow him. When they halted, he made me wait upon him, and do everything which he required. In the morning he mounted again, and I had to walk after him, as before. This was hard service for one who had been the favourite of the sultan. For a week I contrived to hobble after him, but it was impossible to go on any longer. We passed through a town, and as soon as we were clear of the gates and he did not watch me, I let go the tail of the pony, and escaped without his perceiving it. I regained the town, and faint with hunger and fatigue, sat at the steps of a large house. A lady, dressed in rich furs and sables, came out, and perceiving that my dress was foreign, stopped, and inquired of me who I was. I told her in a few words: she ordered me to be received and taken care of. A few days afterwards she sent for me, and I then narrated to her my history. She was kind and generous, and I became her head attendant; I was contented and happy, and hoped to die in her service. But my misfortunes were not half over. My mistress was a lady of rank, and much esteemed. Her house was always full of company: she was rich, and gave most splendid entertainments. Her husband had been dead about two years, but she was still very young, and exceedingly beautiful. One evening, when there was a large party assembled in her rooms, the door was opened, and an officer came up to her and whispered in her ear. She coloured, trembled, and said that she would be ready in an hour. I was near her at the time; she beckoned to me, hastened to her room, and burst into a flood of tears.

"I am ordered to Petersburg immediately, on a charge of treason. My conscience tells me that I have done nothing; but, alas! for me, the emperor has no mercy. Ekaterina," for that was the name I went by, "will you accompany me?—it will be a

long, and a melancholy journey. God knows how it may end."

I immediately consented—packed up what we required, and without disturbing those who were enjoying themselves, we gained the courtyard, and took our seats in a britska, in company with the officer. In four days we arrived at Petersburg, and my mistress was separated from me and thrown into prison. She never saw her accusers or her judges; her memorial to the emperor was disregarded, and she was condemned—but her punishment was not immediately decided upon.

For three weeks my mistress remained in prison. I was, by the humanity of the officer, who had the charge of her, allowed to visit her for a few minutes every day; but it was always in the presence of a third person. One morning when I came, the poor lady fell upon my neck and sobbed a long while without speaking; the countenance of the officer was also melancholy to a degree, and I perceived that a tear occasionally trickled down his manly cheek.

"Ekaterina," said she, at last, "I have heard my sentence, and am to be punished to-morrow. O God! forgive them their cruelty and injustice;" and she sank from my arms upon the floor of the dungeon.

We raised her, and she recovered a little. "Yes, Ekaterina, I am to be punished to-morrow for a crime of which I am innocent—a punishment—God have mercy!—worse than death. The knout—the knout—and that attended with public exposure in the market-place. May God forgive the emperor his cruelty!"

I had heard of this dreadful punishment, but little thought that women suffered by it. It was too barbarous.

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"I have not heard of it," said the pacha. "Tell me, old woman, is it worse than the bastinado?"

"Yes, your highness. It is a whip of enormous power, so that if the executioner has a private order, he can kill the party on whom it is inflicted by two or three blows; but

your highness will better comprehend the nature of the punishment when I describe what I witnessed."

My dear mistress begged me, as a favour, that I would attend her to the place of execution, and I consented. Poor creature! she, as well as I, had but an imperfect idea of what she was to endure. The punishment was to take place in the great square, and the troops were out, and a large concourse of people were assembled. She appeared on the raised platform upon which she was to suffer, in a genteel undress, which contributed still more to heighten her extreme beauty. The sweetness of her countenance obtained for her the commiseration of those who were ordered and accustomed to execute the will of the despotic and cruel emperor. Young, lively, and admired, sought for, and caressed by everybody, high in rank, and rich in worldly wealth, she stood, no longer surrounded by the attentions and homage due to her talents, her beauty, and her wit, but surrounded only by stern executioners. She looked at them with astonishment, seeming to doubt if such preparations could be intended for her. One of the executioners then pulled off a kind of furred tippet which covered her bosom; her modesty taking the alarm, made her start back a few steps; she turned pale and burst into tears. Her clothes were soon afterwards all stripped off, and in a few moments she was all naked to the waist, exposed to the looks of a vast multitude, who were all profoundly silent. One of the executioners then seized her by both hands, and turning half round, threw her on his back, bending forwards, so as to raise her feet a few inches from the ground, and the other executioner, with his rough hands, and without symptoms of remorse, adjusted her on the back of his companion, in a posture most convenient for her to receive her punishment. Sometimes he pressed his large hands brutally upon her head, in order to make her keep it down: at others, like a butcher handling a lamb, he appeared to soothe her until he had fixed her in a favourable attitude. He then took the knout, a whip made of a long strip of leather, prepared for the purpose; he retreated a few steps, measuring the requisite distance with a steady eye, and looking backwards,

gave a stroke with the end of the whip, so as to carry away a slip of skin from the neck to the bottom of the back; then striking his feet against the ground, he took his aim for a second blow, parallel to the former, so that in a few moments all the skin of her back was cut away in small slips, most of which remained hanging to her shift and dress below. I fainted with horror long before the punishment was over. "Good heavens!" thought I, "I have suffered the bastinado and the bowstring, but both were merciful compared to this. Is there no God in heaven to punish such despotic cruelty?" My mistress was not dead, and the surgeons were ordered to pay her every attention, that she might recover; and I thought this attention on the part of the emperor in some measure made amends for his barbarity. But, God in heaven! she was restored to life that she might be more cruelly punished; for no sooner was she able to bear this infliction, than they cut out her tongue, and then banished her to Siberia.

Thus, O pacha! was my beautiful mistress treated upon mere suspicion, for guilty she never was. I had been permitted to see her previous to her latter punishment, and she fancied, poor thing, that the emperor's wrath had been appeased, and that she would have been permitted to return home, but her tongue was cut out without her receiving any warning of the second punishment which awaited her, and after that I was refused admittance, and I never saw my beautiful and ill-treated mistress any more. It was from the officer who had the charge of her that I learnt this cruel intelligence, and I went back to my lodgings with a heart bursting with grief and indignation.

I was resolved that, if possible, I would escape from a country where women's tongues were cut out; but how to manage it I knew not. I had still some money and valuables, which had been left in my possession by my unfortunate mistress, and I made inquiry about the means of proceeding to Constantinople, where, at least, I should be in a civilised country. At last a Jew, who heard that I wished to go to the southward, offered to take me with him as soon as the snow was on the ground, for

which I bargained for five hundred roubles. In a fortnight the winter had set in, and we got into a drotski, and went away. We arrived at Moscow, and from thence we at last gained Constantinople. On my arrival I selected my luggage, that I might pay the sum agreed; but it was snatched from me by the old rascal, who saluted me with a kick in the body which half-killed me. I was locked up in a room, and in half an hour a slave-merchant came, and I was sold for a low sum and taken away, remonstrating in vain against the injustice. My beauty was now gone, I was more than thirty years old, and hardship had done the rest.

My subsequent life has been nothing but a series of changes and disasters. I was sold to a pastrycook, and broiled by standing over the oven. I grew obstinate and was punished by blows, but for those I cared not. The pastry was burnt, and I was resold to a barber, whose wife was a shrew, and half-killed me; fortunately the barber was accused of shaving a criminal, who had escaped from prison, and one morning was stretched out before his own door, with his head under his arm. His wife and I were both sold again as slaves.

Thus did I go down-hill each year, fetching less and less, and receiving worse treatment, until I was embarked with several others by an Armenian, who was bound to Smyrna. The vessel was captured by an Algerine pirate, and for a long while I was kept on board to cook their victuals. At last she was wrecked on this coast; how I escaped I know not, for I was weary of life. But I was thrown up, and made my way to this place—where I have for many years lived in company with an old wretch like myself, supplicating alms. He died about a year ago, and left me in the hovel by myself. I still beg for my subsistence; and now, pacha, you have my story, and I think you will acknowledge that I may well say that "Time has been."

* * * * *

"It is your kismet, your destiny, good woman. There is but one God, and Mahomet is his Prophet," observed the pacha. "You are dismissed."

"And the gold, your highness," whispered Mustapha.

"Let her retain it. Has she not been a sultana?" observed the pacha, with some appearance of feeling.

The old woman's ears were keen, she had heard the question of Mustapha, and she had heard the reply of the pacha; and she easily imagined the rest.

"And now, pacha, before I quit your presence, as I have enjoyed your bounty, I will, with your permission, offer you a piece of advice, which, from my knowledge of the world and of people's countenances, may be of no small service to you. Is it permitted, O pacha?"

"Speak," replied the pacha.

"Then, pacha, beware of that man who sits beside you; for there is that in his face which tells me that he will raise himself upon your fall. Pacha, beware!"

"Hag of Jehanum!" exclaimed Mustapha, rising from his seat.

The old woman held up her finger, and walked out of the divan.

The pacha looked suspiciously at Mustapha, for he was of a suspicious nature; and Mustapha looked anything but innocent.

"Doth my lord give ear to a lying tongue of an old woman?" said Mustapha, prostrating himself. "Hath not your slave proved himself faithful? Am not I as dust in thy presence? Take my life, O pacha! but doubt not the fidelity of thy slave."

The pacha seemed pacified. "What is all this but bosh, nothing?" said he, rising and quitting the apartment.

"Bosh!" muttered Mustapha. "The cursed old hag! I know better—there is no time to lose—I must be quick. When will that renegade return from Stamboul? It is time." And Mustapha, with a gloomy countenance, quitted the divan.

Chapter XXII

Although the pacha, with the usual diplomacy of a Turk, had, so far from expressing his displeasure against Mustapha, treated him with more than usual urbanity, he had not forgotten the advice of the old woman. Suspicion once raised was not to be allayed, and he had consulted with his favourite wife, Fatima. A woman is a good adviser in cases of this description. The only danger which could threaten the pacha was from the imperial court at Stamboul; for the troops were devoted to him, and the people of the country had no very serious cause of complaint. By the advice of the favourite, the pacha sent as a present to Mustapha, a young and handsome Greek girl, but she was a spy in the service of the favourite, and had been informed that the vizier had been doomed. She was to discover, if she could, whether there was any intercourse between the renegade, who commanded the fleet, and the vizier, as from that quarter alone danger could be anticipated. The Greek had not been a week in the harem of Mustapha, before she ascertained more than was sufficient. The fleet had been sent to Constantinople, with presents to the sultan from the pacha, and its return was hourly expected.

It was on the afternoon of this eventful day that the fleet hove in sight, and lay becalmed a few miles in the offing. Mustapha hastened to report it to the pacha, as he sat in his divan, hearing complaints, and giving judgment, although not justice. Now when the pacha heard that the fleet had returned, his heart misgave him, and the more so, as Mustapha was more obsequious and fawning than ever. He retired for a short time from the divan, and hastened to his favourite, Fatima.

"Pacha," said she, "the fleet has arrived, and Mustapha has already communicated with the renegade. Depend upon it you are lost, if you do not forestall them. Lose no time. But stop," said she, "do not alarm the renegade by violence to Mustapha. To-morrow the fleet will anchor, and if there is mischief, it will not arrive until to-morrow—but this evening, you will as usual send for coffee, while you smoke and listen to the tales which you delight in. Drink not your coffee, for there shall be death in it. Be all smiles and good-humour, and leave me to manage the rest."

The pacha smoothed his brow and returned to the divan. Business proceeded as usual, and at length the audience was closed. The pacha appeared to be in high good-humour, and so was the vizier.

"Surely," said Mustapha, when the pipes were brought, "his imperial highness, the sultan will have sent you some mark of his distinguished favour."

"God is great, and the sultan is wise," replied the pacha. "I have been thinking so too, Mustapha. Who knows but that he may add to the territory under my sway by another pachalik?"

"I dreamt as much," replied Mustapha, "and I am anxious that the renegade should come on shore; but it is now dark, and he will not leave his vessel."

"We must drive away the mists of suspense by the sunbeams of hope," replied the pacha. "What am I but the sultan's slave? Shall we not indulge this evening in the water of the Giaour?"

"What saith Hafiz? It is for wine to exalt men, and raise them beyond uncertainty and doubt. It overfloweth us with courage, and imparts visions of bliss."

"Wallah Thaib, it is well said, Mustapha," said the pacha, taking a cup of coffee, presented by the Greek slave. Mustapha also received his cup. "My heart is light this evening," said the pacha, laying down his pipe, "let us drink deep of the forbidden juice. Where is it, Mustapha?"

"It is here," replied the vizier, drinking off his coffee; while the pacha watched him from the corner of his small grey eye. And Mustapha produced the spirits, which were behind the low ottoman upon which he was seated.

The pacha put aside his coffee, and drank a large draught. "God is great; drink, Mustapha," said he, handing him the bottle.

Mustapha followed the example of the pacha. "May it please your highness," said Mustapha, "I have without a man, who they say hath stories to recount more

delightful than those of Menouni. Hearing that he passed through this city, I have detained him, that he might afford amusement to your highness, whose slave I am. Is it your pleasure that he be admitted?"

"Let it be so," replied the pacha.

Mustapha gave the sign, and to the surprise of the pacha, in came the renegade, commander of the fleet, accompanied by guards and the well-known officer of the caliph, the Capidji Bachi, who held up a firman to his forehead.

The pacha turned pale, for he knew that his hour was come. "Bismillah! In the name of the Most High, O officer, whom seekest thou?" exclaimed the pacha, with emotion.

"The sultan, the Lord of Life, has sent this to you, O pacha! as a proof of his indulgence and great mercy." And the Capidji Bachi produced a silken bowstring, and at the same time he handed the fatal scroll to the pacha.

"Mustapha," whispered the pacha, "while I read this, collect my guards; I will resist. I fear not the sultan at this distance, and I can soften him with presents."

But Mustapha had no such fellow-feeling. "O pacha!" replied he, "who can dispute the will of heaven's vicegerent? There is but one God, and Mahomet is his Prophet."

"I will dispute it," exclaimed the pacha. "Go out and call my trustiest guards."

Mustapha left the divan, and returned with the mutes and some of the guards, who had been suborned by himself.

"Traitor!" exclaimed the pacha.

"La Allah, il Allah! there is but one God," said Mustapha.

The pacha saw that he was sacrificed. He read the firman, pressed it to his forehead, in token of obedience, and prepared for death. The Capidji Bachi produced another firman, and presented it to Mustapha. It was to raise him to the pachalik.

"Barik Allah! praise be to God for all things," humbly observed Mustapha. "What

am I but the sultan's slave, and to execute his orders? On my head be it!"

Mustapha gave the sign, and the mutes seized the unfortunate pacha.

"There is but one God, and Mahomet is his Prophet," said the pacha. "Mustapha," continued he, turning round to him with a sardonic smile, "may your shadow never be less—but you have swallowed the coffee."

The mutes tightened the string. In a minute a cloak was thrown over the body of the pacha.

"The coffee," muttered Mustapha, as he heard the pacha's last words. "I thought it had a taste. Now he's sent to Jehanum for his treachery." And all the visions of power and grandeur, which had filled the mind of the new pacha, were absorbed by fear and dismay.

The Capidji Bachi, having performed his duty, withdrew. "And now," exclaimed the renegade, "let me have my promised reward."

"Your reward—true. I had forgotten," replied Mustapha, as the pain occasioned by the working of the poison distorted his face. "Yes, I had forgotten," continued Mustapha, who, certain that his own end was approaching, was furious as a wild beast, with pain and baffled ambition. "Yes, I had forgotten. Guards, seize the renegade."

"They must be quicker than you think for," replied Huckaback, darting from the guards and drawing his scimitar, while, with his fingers in his mouth, he gave a shrill whistle. In rushed a large body of soldiers and sailors of the fleet, and the guards were disarmed. "Now, pacha of one hour old, what sayest thou?"

"It is my destiny," replied Mustapha, rolling on the floor in agony. "There is but one God, and Mahomet is his Prophet." And Mustapha expired.

"The old fool has saved me some trouble," observed the renegade. "Take away these carcases, and proclaim Ali as the new pacha."

Thus perished the two barbers, and thus did Huckaback, under the name of Ali, reign in their stead. But his reign, and how long it lasted, is one of the many tales not handed down to posterity.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE PACHA OF MANY TALES ***

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