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2 ARABIAN NIGHTS

ENTERTAINMENTS.

VOL. V.

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Madam, you must tell the name of
your daughters father and grand father

ARABIAN TALES

being

A CONTINUATION

OF THE

ARABIAN NIGHTS ENTERTAINMENTS.

CONSISTING OF

One Thousand and One

S T O R I E S,

TOLD BY

The Sultaneſs of the Indies, to divert the Sultan from the execution of a bloody vow he had made, to marry a lady every day, and have her cut off next morning, to avenge himſelf for the diſloyalty of his firſt Sultaneſs, &c.

CONTAINING

A better account of the Cuſtoms, Manners, and Religion of the Eaſtern Nations, than is to be met with in any work hitherto publiſhed.

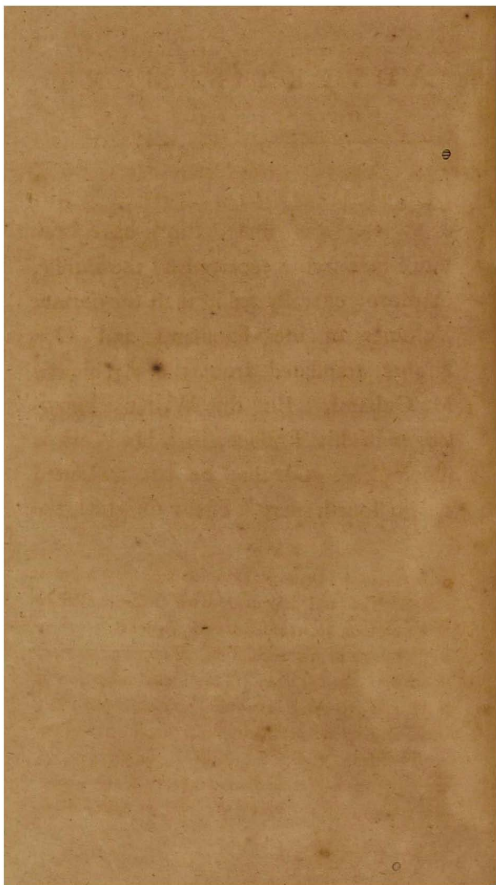
Translated from the Arabian Manuſcript into French, by DOM CHAVIS and M. CAZOTTE, and now tranſlated into Engliſh from the laſt French Edition.

VOL. I.

EDINBURGH:

Printed for G. Mudie, J. Elder, A. Guthrie, J. Hunter, T. Brown, J. & J. Fairbairn, Lawrie & Symington, J. Guthrie, J. Watſon & Co., and C. Elliot, Edinburgh; and W. Coke Leith.

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ADVERTISEMENT

PREFIXED TO THE FRENCH EDITION.

Few works of imagination have been more favourably received by the Public, or more generally read, than the former Volumes of the Thousand and One Nights, translated from the Arabic by M. Galland. But this Writer acknowledges in his Preface, that his Work is incomplete, and that he has translated only a fourth part * of the Original, the
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* M. Galland, however, with an inconsistency very common to translators in general, says, in the last page of his translation, *A thousand and one nights had elapsed*, &c. This casual assertion is made only to give a formal conclusion to the work, and by no means implies, that he has given the Thousand and One Nights complete: For, from the two hundred and thirty-sixth night, which constitutes two thirds of the translation,
(and

remaining part of the Arabian Manuscript, which would have completed the Work, not being then in the Library of the King of France, from which the former part was taken. It has lately been brought thither by DOM DENIS CHAVIS, a Native of Arabia, and priest of the Congregation of St. Bazile, who was called to Paris by Government, under the protection of M. Breteuil, an enlightened Minister, and zealous Patron of the Arts and Sciences. This learned Arabian undertook to enrich that species
of

(and according to some editions, the hundred and ninety seventh) he departs from his original plan of dividing the tales. Nothing is more certain, or easier to be proved, than that a complete copy of the original Arabic did not exist in France at the time when M. Galland lived. Besides, it is as easy to prove, that the rest of this valuable manuscript has been discovered, and deposited in the King's Library, as to prove the existence of the learned Arabian, to whom we are indebted for it, and of the man of letters, whom he has associated with him, in order to enrich our literature with his translation.

of our Literature, which has amusement for its object, with the present charming Continuation; and, to render the translation more correct, he associated with him in the work, M. CAZOTTE, the celebrated author of the poem of *Ollivier*, the *Diable Amoureux*, the *Lord Impromptu*, and many other productions which have met with a very favourable reception from the Public.

It may well be presumed, that the beauties of the original Arabic, which have been faithfully transmitted to us by an enlightened man, deeply interested in the glory of his native country, have lost nothing by passing through the hands of M. CAZOTTE, who has displayed so much spirit, elegance, and wit in his own works.

It is, therefore, with entire confidence, that we present to the Public, this Continuation of the Thousand and One
Nights,

Nights, which is not inferior, in point of imagination, interest, and variety, to the former Volumes, translated by M. GALLAND. Besides the merit of furnishing us with an entertaining species of reading, it leads us into the extensive regions of the East, with which, in general, we are little acquainted, and opens a rich source of instruction concerning the religion, philosophy, and character of the inhabitants of a great part of Asia.

ARABIAN TALES.

THE story of the Sultan of Persia, and of the two jealous sisters, seemed to have given great pleasure to the Sultan Schahriar, whose curiosity it was intended to keep continually alive, by exciting in him a desire to hear new stories.

Sister, said Dinarzade to Scheherazade, this marriage of Khofronschah made in the course of a night, whose consequences have given rise to so interesting events, brings to my remembrance those which the Caliph Haroun Alraschid contracted with the Princess of Persia, and the beautiful Zutulbe, at his return from those walks which he so often delighted to take through Bagdad in disguise. I have, with much pleasure, heard you relate them; and if you can now recollect the circumstances of them, I doubt not but their recital will be very entertaining. Sister, replied the beau-

tiful Sultaneſs, the partiality which I have always had for the actions of the Caliph Haroun, has prevented me from forgetting any of thoſe of which the knowledge has been tranſmitted to us ; and I have ſuch a ſtock of them as will not ſoon be exhausted : But, ſince you deſire it, if my maſter the Sultan will do me the favour to lend his attention, I will begin with relating the adventures which you have juſt now mentioned. The Sultan ſmiled in token of approbation, and Scheherazade began as follows.

The Caliph a Robber ; or, the Adventures of Haroun Alraſchid with the Princeſs of Perſia, and the beautiful Zutulbe.

THE feaſt of the *Haraphat* * had aſſembled at Bagdad, round Haroun Alraſchid, the Viſiers, the Grandees, the Nobility, and even ſome of the Princes, who were ſubject to the dominion of this powerful and renowned Caliph, to concur with him in celebrating this auguſt feſtival. In obſerving the religious ceremonies, every thing was lavished to increaſe their magnificence

* The feaſt of the *Haraphat* is a feſtival among the Muſulmen, at which they ſacrifice animals,

magnificence, decorations, and pomp. The sonorous voices of musical instruments made the vault of the grand mosque to resound: perfumes embalmed the air: the blood of heifers flowed upon the altar, which was served and surrounded by the different orders consecrated to its service. In short, nothing was wanting which could witness to heaven and earth the piety of the Prince of the Faithful, the Commander of Believers, and the greatest Sovereign of the Earth. But the ceremony was long; and Haroun, fatigued, moreover, with the multitude of addresses which he had received, and the necessity he was under of shewing himself attentive to them, was at length overcome with weariness and disgust. He addressed himself to his Grand Visier, the chief of the Barmecides.

“Giasar,” said he to him, “the feast of our great Prophet ought to inspire us with joy; but in spite of all my exertions, I find melancholy gaining upon me. Even amid the pomp and splendour of this numerous assembly, I feel myself tormented by an involuntary uneasiness. I have need of objects fitted to dissipate my cares; but on a day like this, I can give myself up to those only from which the people will derive advantage. We will both disguise ourselves; we will go down to

Bagdad ; we will distribute alms to the poor, and endeavour to give comfort to the unhappy. Besides, I wish to see with my own eyes if the people are happy under my government ; if my ministers of justice, and those who are entrusted with the police of the city, discharge their duty with fidelity."

Giafar shewed himself complying and submissive to the inclinations of the Caliph. Both of them went into a private apartment, and there disguised themselves : Each of them took a thousand pieces of gold : they left the palace, and traversed the streets and public places of the city, scattering alms, on the right hand and on the left, to every needy person whom they met in their way. In passing through one quarter of the city, they found a woman sitting on the pavement in the middle of the street. She held out her hand to the Caliph, begging charity of him for the love of God. The sovereign was struck with the beauty of the arm which was stretched towards him : Its form was perfect, and it was whiter than alabaster. He gave Giafar a piece of gold to deliver to the woman : the visier executed the design of his master.

The woman, upon receiving the gift, shut her hand, and thought she perceived from its bulk and weight, that what she held was
not

not an ordinary coin, such as is commonly distributed in alms. She opened her fingers and saw a piece of gold. Immediately she called aloud upon Giafar.

“Ho! excellent young man,” said she to him as soon as he was within reach of hearing her, “the piece you gave me is gold: did you mean to give it in alms, or had you any other intention?” “It is not to me,” answered Giafar, “that you are indebted for this generosity, but to the young man who accompanies me.” “Be so kind, I beseech you,” replied the woman, “as persuade him to explain the motive of the gift which he has made me.” Giafar related to the Caliph this new entreaty of the woman, and was ordered to tell her to be perfectly easy about the intention which he had in doing her good, for charity and the love of God were the foundation of it. “In that case,” replied the woman, “you will tell my benefactor, that I thank him, and am going to offer up supplications for the continuance of his life.”

The Caliph, informed by Giafar of the manner in which the woman had received the gift, and of the wishes she had formed for the hand by which she saw it bestowed, immediately sent him back to her. “Ask of her,” said Haroun, “whether she is a maid or a

married woman? If her hand is still free, tell her that I make her a proposal of marriage."

Giafar acquitted himself of this new message. The woman answered that she was a maid, and that she was ready to marry the young man who had such a regard for her, provided he was rich enough to give her a suitable dowry. "Who can this woman be?" said Giafar, as he reported the answer; "does she doubt that the Commander of the Faithful cannot furnish a dowry?"

"My disguise is an excuse," said the Caliph; "learn from her to what sum she will have her dowry amount." The grand vizier obeyed the orders which he received, and this was the answer of the woman: "My dowry must be equal to the tribute of the city Ispahan and that of Karassin for a whole year."

This answer made Giafar shake his head. The Caliph had gone before to the palace. The grand vizier gave him an account of the conference which he had just now had with the woman and he appeared satisfied with it. "Go back to her," said he; "she will be astonished to find that I accept her proposal."

The grand vizier immediately returned to the unknown lady, and discharged the commission which he had to her. "Who can this be,"

be," replied she, "who is in a condition to give a dowry of such importance? What is his rank, and his power?" "The stranger of whom I speak," answers Giafar, "is Haroun Alraschid: in one word, he is the Commander of the Faithful."

At the name of the Caliph, and upon such a proposal coming from him, the woman rose up, covering herself with her robe, that she might appear with more decency and modesty in the sight of the grand vizier. She gave thanks to God, and said, "If the man who proposes himself as a spouse to me, is the Caliph, I will be contented to be his, and you may assure him of my consent." Giafar gave an account to Haroun of the last conversation which he had held with her, and described in a few words her carriage, tone, and attitude. The Caliph immediately ordered one of the women of the palace, who had the most venerable external appearance, accompanied with a great number of slaves, to go in search of the unknown lady, and conduct her to the baths of the palace.

Upon coming out of the bath, she was richly dressed. Diamonds, jewels, and trinkets of every kind, were not spared in fitting out her attire. She was conducted into one of the richest apartments of the palace, which was destined for her: and as soon as she was placed
in

in it, the chief of the eunuchs came to give an account to Haroun of the execution of his orders. The Commander of the Faithful then ordered Giafar to bring the cadi that he might draw up a contract of marriage.

When the evening was come, Haroun entered into the apartment of his spouse ; upon perceiving him, she prostrated herself as a mark of homage, and expressed her gratitude to him in the warmest terms. The Caliph sat down, and seated her beside him. " Who is your father, madam ?" said he to her, " and whence do you take your descent, that you have asked of me so considerable a dowry ?"

" Prince of the Faithful," answered she, with downcast eyes, in proof of her modesty, " you behold a descendant of Kassera Aboc-heroan from whom I take my origin. Reverse of fortune, and the fatality of destiny, have reduced me to the condition in which you found me." " Princess," replied the Caliph, " you are the grand-daughter, then, of Kassera, who is so unhappily renowned for those acts of tyranny by which his reign was sullied, and who exercised great cruelties on his people ?" " It is the same tyranny," answered the princess, " which has brought his children to the sad condition of asking alms in the streets."

" But

“ But I have been assured,” replied the Caliph, “ that having returned from his errors and extravagancies, he governed during the latter part of his reign with great moderation, and distributed justice with so much exactness, that even the beasts of the field and the birds of the air shared of his beneficence.” “ It is for that indeed, O Caliph,” answered the princess, “ that God now intends to reward his descendants, by taking from the midst of the streets one of his daughters, to raise her to the distinguished title of spouse to the Commander of the Faithful.”

The wise answer of his new spouse moved Haroun Alraschid even to compassion. He locked her in his arms, and testified by the most affectionate embraces, how much he valued his conquest, for which he was indebted to the goodness of heaven. But the delight to which he yielded himself was soon interrupted by a troublesome reflection.

“ Pardon me, princess,” cried he, “ if I am forced, by a vow, to tear myself from the pleasing seduction, of which I have just now felt the attraction. I am, at this moment, the most unhappy of mortals. This morning, in the transports of zeal, and having no idea of the treasure which my good fortune was this day to bring in my way, I have sworn, in honour

nour of the great prophet, an irrevocable, and, at the same time, a most solemn oath, not to cohabit for a whole year with the first wife whom I should afterwards marry. Nobody can feel more strongly than I do, the weight of my imprudence: but I could not foresee the satisfaction of which it was to deprive me; and you, whose religion appears equally pure, ought to feel how sacred the vow is which has escaped from me, and to concert measures along with me for making it possible to reconcile it with my happiness."

At this request, the new spouse, whatever impression it might make upon her, could not but cast down her eyes and her head, in token of submission and consent. The Caliph withdrew: he had discovered in her much merit, and many charms; and he could promise himself true enjoyment from the intrigue of the Persian princess: but being scrupulously attached to his oath, and unwilling to expose himself to too strong a temptation to break it, from that moment he forbore seeing her, giving her reason, however, from the constant attentions which she saw paid to her, to think she was not forgotten or neglected; and that the Caliph, after having it in his power to examine narrowly the choice which he had made, did not repent of it.

The cruel year was now elapsed: the day on which it ended, was the return of the grand festival of the *Haraphat*. The Caliph, Giafar the grand visier, and Mesrour the chief of the eunuchs, went down together to Bagdad: they passed through the principal streets in disguise, and every thing seemed in good order. In returning to the palace, the Caliph passed near the shop of a pastry cook, where so great an air of neatness prevailed, that his curiosity was excited to examine the pastry of it, which was set out with profusion. Nothing could be more flattering to the sight or the smell.

As soon as Haroun had got back to his apartment, he pointed out the shop of the pastry cook to one of his officers, and commanded him to go there, and order an hundred *cataifs* *. The officer executed his commission; and, after seeing the *cataifs* made in his presence, sent them to the palace. The Caliph no sooner received the pastry, than he put a piece of gold into each *cataif*, covered them with pistachios, sprinkled the whole with sugar, and caused the treat be carried to the Persian princess his spouse, letting her know before-hand, that, the year of the oath being expired, the commander of the faithful would come to her that very evening.

The

* *Cataifs* are a kind of little tarts.

The eunuch, who carried the message, had orders likewise to enquire of the princess, if there was any thing wherein the Caliph could gratify her wishes. "I want nothing," replied the lovely descendent of Kaffera; "as soon as I shall have the happiness to behold the Caliph in person, all my wishes will be fulfilled."

The Caliph was highly pleased with the wisdom of this answer; but wishing very much to do something agreeable to his new spouse, he ordered Mesrour to insist that she would think of something by which he might do her a pleasure. "Since the Caliph," replied she to the eunuch, "intends by all means to oblige me, you will tell him, that I wish to have a thousand pieces of gold, and a woman in whom he can trust, to accompany me through the streets of Bagdad, where I am desirous to go in disguise, that I may distribute alms among the poor, to whose number I made an addition but a year ago."

The Caliph smiled at the request, and ordered the object thereof to be immediately accomplished. The princess and the woman who attended her, passed through the streets of Bagdad, distributing alms on all sides, until they had spent the thousand pieces of gold.

The day was exceedingly hot : the princess, in returning to the palace, felt an excessive thirst, and signified to her companion her desire to drink : the latter perceived a man who sold water, and proposed to call him. " No," said the lady, " I will not drink out of the same vessel from which all the public refresh themselves : I feel a dislike to it."

They then drew near to a great inn : the attendant, as soon as she had set her foot upon the threshold, which was made of sandal wood, perceived, through an open window, a golden lustre suspended from the middle of the vestibule by a twilled rope of the same metal. A curtain richly embroidered, and serving to keep out the wind, was stretched out on both sides, and two sofas made of the finest marble, the one on the right, the other on the left of the door, constituted the furniture of this place.

After taking this short survey, the attendant knocked at the gate ; it opened ; a young man, handsome and well dressed, appeared and asked wherein he could serve her. " You see my daughter, Sir," answered she ; " she has a violent thirst, and she does not like to quench it from the vessel belonging to the man who sells water ; give her a glass

it, and you will lay us under the strongest obligations to you."

"Your desire shall be granted instantly," replied the young man. He went away, and returned in a moment after, with a golden cup full of water, which he presented to the woman; she delivered it to the princess, who, taking it into her hands, turned her face to the wall, that she might drink unperceived. The vessel was then returned into the hands of the young man; the woman expressed her own, and her pretended daughter's gratitude: both departed, and soon got back to the palace.

When the Commander of the Faithful had arranged, as we have already told, the plate of *cataifs*, he farther gave it in command, that they should tell the princess his spouse that he sent her a pledge and token of peace. The chief eunuch, who carried the dish, not knowing how the Caliph had seasoned it in private, nor the great importance of which it was; considering it, in short, as nothing but a common piece of gallantry, did not repeat exactly the words which he had heard. He believed, that, in presenting the plate of *cataifs*, the most important part of his compliment was to announce the visit of the Caliph; and the princess, equally attentive to the same object,

object, caused the pastry be set down upon a little table in her apartment, and gave herself no farther trouble about it.

Returning to her chamber, after distributing the alms, she perceived the plate of pastry, and thought it would be a proper return for the glass of water which she had received. She addressed her discourse to the woman who accompanied her: "Carry immediately," said she to her, "(but as coming from yourself,) this dish of *cataifs*, to the young man to whom I have just now been indebted for the water, and for the civil manner in which it was given."

The woman executed the message: she found the young man sitting on one of the sofas in his vestibule. "My daughter and I," said she to him, "are very grateful for your goodness and politeness: accept from us in return this pastry, as a proof of the sense we entertain of your generosity." "Since you wish, Madam, to acknowledge so trifling a service," answered the young man, "I should be afraid of disobliging you by refusing your treat; you may therefore set it down on that sofa." Some civilities, on both sides, concluded this interview; and the woman returned to the palace.

At that very moment, the keeper of that quarter of the city, came to the inn of the young man, to pay him the usual compliment, upon occasion of the festival of the *Haraphbat*. Having finished it, he asked his gift. "Take that dish of *cataifs*," said the young man. The keeper accepted it with gratitude, kissed the hand of his benefactor, and returned well satisfied to his house.

The wife of the keeper, seeing him return with so shewy and large a dish, exclaimed, "From whom got you this dish, husband? Have you been so unlucky as to steal it?" "No, my dear," replied the keeper, "the *Hazeb**, that great officer of the Caliph, has just now treated me with it. May God preserve his life! let us satisfy our hunger with the *cataifs*: they are an excellent thing."

"Glutton!" replied the wife, "would you venture to taste victuals of so great a price? Go and sell them along with the plate; such dainties were not made for poor people like us: We will purchase, with the money which you will get for them, provisions more useful to our family."

"Wife! wife!" cried the keeper, "God has sent us *cataifs*; and I mean to eat them."

"You

* The *Hazeb* is the first officer of the household to the Caliph.

“ You shall not taste a single one of them,” replied the wife, in an angry tone: “ Your son has neither a bonnet nor shoes: I am almost naked; and you are clothed in nothing but rags: go, sell this dish immediately, and bring back the money.”

The keeper could not resist his wife: he went to the market, and gave the plate to the public crier. A merchant bought it at a price sufficient to pay the dues of the crier, and carried off his purchase.

The buyer, while on the road to his own house, examined the purchase which he had made, and saw the name of Haroun Alraschid written around the dish: he immediately returned and accosted the crier: “ Take back your dish,” said he to him; “ do you wish to ruin me, and expose me to the suspicion of having stolen a vessel belonging to the emperor?”

The crier inquired into the fact, read the characters engraven upon the edge of the dish, and, mightily astonished, flew with the greatest swiftness to the palace. He requested to be presented to the Caliph, gained admission, and shewed him the *cataifs*, and the vessel whereon they were placed.

Haroun instantly recognized the plate which he himself had prepared for one of the dishes,

at his collation with the princess. This great man had the failing to suppose all his actions of the greatest importance. In arranging the *cataifs*, he believed he had prepared an agreeable surprise for his new spouse, and thought that he had afforded her a small opportunity of diffusing her bounty around her, while she seemed to all her slaves, to give away nothing but *cataifs*. The deranging of this little scheme of gallantry, gave offence to the sovereign who formed it. A reflection still more troublesome, was connected with it. A present coming directly from himself, was neglected and despised, notwithstanding what he had ordered the eunuch to tell in his name. He got into a furious passion against the Persian princess.

“Tell,” said he to the crier, in a tone of rage, “from whom you got this dish of *cataifs*.”

“Most powerful Caliph,” answered the crier, “it was the keeper of such a quarter of the city who gave it me to expose to sale.”

The Caliph ordered the keeper to be brought before him in chains, and with his head and feet uncovered. The man was seized, and conducted to the feet of the Caliph, in strict obedience to the orders. The unhappy wretch, seeing himself in this deplorable condition, on
account

account of the dish of *cataifs*, uttered dreadful imprecations against his wife. "Curfed creature!" said he, "made to betray the man you meant to ferve: No, nobody ought to trust you, though you should feem to advise him to what is proper. Had you let me eat this dish of *cataifs*, nothing difagreeable would have happened to me—but you wifh to be frugal and œconomical. Your like ruined the firft man; and your like will not fail to do the fame to the laft. Here I am, expofed to the wrath of the Prince of all the earth: Come now and give me an advice, which fhall extricate me from danger, if it is poffible for any good thing to come out of that mouth which has always deceived."

The Caliph interrupted this loud complaint, by asking the keeper, who had delivered to him the dish of *cataifs*: "Speak, wretch!" said the enraged Sultan; "tell the truth, if you would efcape death."

"O Commander of the Faithful!" cried the keeper, trembling, "may your highnefs fufpend the effects of your wrath, and prevent them from falling on an unfortunate man, who is altogether innocent! It was the *Hazeb Yemaleddin*, your grand officer, who gave me the dish and the *cataifs* for my yearly gift."

At

At the name of Yemaleddin, the anger of the Caliph seemed to increase: He ordered this officer to be brought before him, with his head and feet uncovered, his hands bound, and having the muslin of his turban round his neck: The same decree bore, that the house of this officer should be razed to the ground, and that all his goods and moveables should be confiscated.

The bearers of the order went to the house of the *Hazeb*, surrounded his inn, and knocked at the gate. He opened it himself, and, to his great astonishment, heard the severe order of the Caliph intimated to him. They let him remain ignorant of the cause; and his first step was submission. "I obey God," said he, "and the Prince of the Faithful, his representative upon earth."

One of the officers raised his hand to the turban of the *Hazeb*, and put the muslin of it round his neck. "Is it by the order of my sovereign," says Yemaleddin, "that you use me thus?"—"Yes," answered the officer, "I must confiscate your goods, and raze your house, and I must conduct yourself in chains, with your head and feet uncovered, to the Sultan. I will not execute my orders in all their rigour: We remember with gratitude the good which you have done us, and that your house

was

was always open to us," "Since this is the disposition of your mind with regard to me," replied the *Hazeb*; "when you destroy my house, leave an asylum to my aged mother, and to my young sister."

Yemaleddin was conducted before the Caliph, and prostrated himself at his feet. "May the God of heaven," said he, "confer all happiness upon the sovereign disposer of his will upon earth! O wise and equitable Haroun Alraschid, wherein has your humblest slave offended you, to have deserved so severe a punishment?"

"Do you know," answered the Caliph, "shewing him the keeper, that man who is in chains beside you?"

"It is the keeper of our quarter," replied the *Hazeb*. "Do you know this dish?" continued Haroun; "who delivered it to you? Why did you prostitute it so shamefully, as to give it for an yearly gift, to the vilest of my slaves?"

"My sovereign lord!" answered Yemaleddin, "be so good as hear me. I was in my own house, when a person knocked at the gate; I opened it myself, and an aged woman told me that a lady, who was along with her, was her daughter; that she was dying of thirst, and did not choose to drink out of the vessel
which

which belonged to the man who sold water: "Give her some to drink, I pray you," said she. I went back into my house, and gave a cup full of water to the person who addressed me. The young lady drank, and they both departed. I remained sitting to enjoy the fresh air, upon one of the sofas which are at the entrance to my inn, when the same woman returned, and brought this very dish of *cataifs* which I now behold. "My son," said she to me, "the lady to whom, in so obliging a manner, you gave to drink, thanks you for your kindness, and begs you to accept this small mark of her gratitude." She set down the dish on the sofa opposite to her, and departed. The keeper of the quarter, in a little after, came to pay me a compliment upon occasion of the festival of the *Haraphat*, and asked of me the usual gift. I gave him some money and this dish, which I never touched. This, O Commander of the Faithful, is the most exact relation which I can give."

The Caliph, during this detail, felt that indignation which is natural to a man of so elevated a station. "A woman whom I have taken from the very dunghill," said he to himself, "gives to one whom she does not know a hundred *cataifs* seasoned with gold, pistachios, and sugar, and that too with my own hand,

hand, merely to repay him for a glass of water! She was right to demand that the revenues of two provinces should be sacrificed for her dowry. I sent her a token of love, a pledge of peace: She gave it to the feller of water; and such is the estimation in which the grand-daughter of King Kaffera holds the presents which are made her from affection, by Haroun Alraschid. But let us see how far the Princess has carried her forgetfulness of me, and of herself." Then addressing the *Hazeb* in a disordered and frightened tone of voice: "Yemaleddin," said he to him, "did you see the face of the woman to whom you gave drink?"—"Yes," replied the *Hazeb* in confusion, and without attending to the answer which he gave.

At this confession, which was equally false and involuntary, jealousy was added to the indignation, which burned in the breast of Haroun. He ordered that the Persian Princess should be instantly brought before him, and that her head, and that of Yemaleddin, should be cut off.

The grand-daughter of Kaffera appeared. "Madam," said the Caliph, "under pretence of comforting the poor and the unhappy by your alms, you traverse the city only on purpose to shew your face to this young man."

The

The princess cast her eyes upon Yemaleddin. "Did you see my face?" said she to him: "Who has been the author of this falsehood which will cost us both our lives?" "Pardon me, Madam," said he to her, "it was I myself; my lips uttered it, without the consent of my heart and mind. Blame the fatality of the stars, and the wretchedness of our destiny, which have led me to tell a falsehood, which my soul disavows."

This explanation made no alteration in the order given by the Caliph. The executioner blindfolded the two supposed criminals, and then addressed himself to Haroun. "Commander of the Faithful, am I allowed to give the blow?"—"Strike," said the Caliph. The executioner made one or two turns round the condemned persons †, always renewing the question to the Caliph, and receiving from him the same answer. After the third turn, the executioner addressed Yemaleddin: "Have you any thing to say to the Caliph before you die? Take advantage of the only opportunity you can have of speaking: consider that you have lost all hope of life."—"Loosen the bandage," said Yemaleddin to the executioner, — "which

† The Caliph Haroun caused the custom be observed of going three times round the criminal, before striking the blow. The reason of it is obvious.

“ which you have put upon my eyes : I wish to see my relations and friends.” The *Hazeb*, having his eyes at liberty, cast a look on all sides, but saw nobody who dared to shew any concern for him ; so much did they reverence the Caliph.

A mournful silence prevailed throughout the whole assembly. Yemaleddin availed himself of it, and cried out, “ I wish to speak to the Prince of the Faithful.” He was allowed to approach him. “ Dispenser of rewards and punishments,” said he, “ suspend my fate for one month only ; and in the three last days of the delay which I ask, you will see wonderful things, the knowledge of which is of the greatest consequence to you.”

The Caliph was struck with the prophetic tone in which these wonders were predicted : curiosity being more powerful with him than every other passion, and it being out of the power of the criminals to escape, he determined to send the princess his spouse and Yemaleddin to prison, determining to do himself justice, as soon as the fatal term was expired, if he had been abused by a false prediction.

Years roll on ; months fly ; but days vanish. The Caliph, who, having heard so many extraordinary things related, and even having

seen them himself, had become credulous on many subjects, expected every moment the appearance of one of those wonders which Yemaleddin had foretold with so much confidence. Twenty-seven days had elapsed amid ordinary affairs. At last he said to himself; "miracles will not come in search of me to my palace; I must go to meet them: I must go down to Bagdad, and take no companion along with me in my adventures." To this fancy of traversing his capital altogether alone, was added the most extraordinary disguise in the world. He had a coarse turban on his head; a buff doublet, almost wholly covered with a leathern girdle, constituted his apparel: underneath was a short robe of cloth of the most common kind. His whole dress bore an air of antiquity; and half boots made of a very thick leather completed it.

He armed himself with a large damas, mounted with a box handle; took in his hand a bow and arrows; and, after having altered his complexion, pressed down his eye-brows, and made his beard stand on end, he set out from the palace, exhibiting the picture of an Arab just escaped from the desert. A purse containing a thousand pieces of gold was fixed to his girdle.

Scarcely

Scarcely had he passed through two streets, before he saw a man come out of a *Kan* *, and heard him say aloud, "this is the most wonderful thing in the world." He approached the stranger, "What wonder is this?" said he to him. "It is an old woman," answered he; "who seems to be in the utmost poverty. Since morning she has been reading the Alcoran near the mosque, as readily and perfectly as God dictated it to Mahomet himself; she has been asking alms, but nobody has thought proper to give her any; and this happens in a country subject to the law of the great prophet: can any thing be more wonderful?"

The Caliph having listened to the man, entered the *Kan*, and saw the old woman of whom he had heard him speak. She was sitting upon a seat of stone, and reading the Alcoran with a remarkable distinctness and facility: she was at the last chapter of it: he stopt to listen to her, and saw in reality that there was an attentive crowd around her, but who gave her nothing. Having finished her reading, she shut the book, rose up, and departed.

Haroun followed her in order to give her charity; but, as there was a great crowd be-

* A *Kan* is a place where merchants resort.

twixt them, before he could reach her, he saw her go into a merchant's shop. Curious to know who this woman was, and what she could have to do in this shop, (for her tattered appearance seemed to indicate that she had neither the intention nor the ability to make any purchase there) he followed her, and saw her enter into conversation with the proprietor of the shop. He drew near without being perceived, and listening, heard her say to the merchant, "Fair young man, you are not yet settled; would you wish to receive in marriage a lady of the most consummate beauty?" "Undoubtedly," said the merchant. "In that case," continued the woman; "follow me, and I will shew you one of the wonders of the world."

When the Caliph heard this proposal, he understood it in his own way. "Abominable old woman," said he to himself; "I took thee for a saint, and thou art only an instrument of seduction. Thou shalt have none of the alms which I intended for thee; I must follow thee, and see the means which thou employest to ruin youth. I left my palace to go in search of the wonders which were foretold to me, and I will not lose the opportunity of knowing that which thou hast now held forth." Saying these words, he followed close upon the steps of the old woman

woman and the young man. She opened a door, by which she introduced the man, full of curiosity, whom she had brought with her; took out the key, and shut herself up with him in the house.

Haroun Alraschid would have lost his trouble had not the hole of the lock been very large: he applied his eye to it. He saw the merchant standing alone; but in a moment after, the door of a closet opened, and the old woman came out of it, leading by the hand a young lady of such exquisite beauty, as dazzled the Caliph while he looked upon her. Her easy shape resembled the stalk of a young tree planted on the brink of a river; her black eyes, like the fruit of the rich almond tree of Damas, sparkled sweetly as the morning-star: her finely arched eye-brows threatened with unerring and deadly darts, all those who ventured to look upon the charms of her face: her mouth was like the ring of Solomon, on which was written the ineffable name of God: the vermillion of her lips outshone the brightness of the coral; her teeth were disposed in the most ravishing order; they were white as alabaster, and covered with the same enamel which gives a brilliancy to the pearls of the Red-Sea and the Persian gulf. The few words which escaped from her lips, seemed to sur-

pals in sweetness the honey Palestine: her breathing might be said to embalm the air, while it gently raised upon her bosom, her breasts, which were whiter than the lily, and rounder than the pomgranate. In short, she was above the praises which the most inspired poet could bestow upon her beauty; and an angelic modesty tended to set off her perfections. The sight of her enchanted the Caliph, who observed with pain that she had not linen enough to cover her.

When the young lady perceived that her mother had exposed her to the view of the merchant, she was covered with a confusion which did not detract from her beauty. She endeavoured immediately to escape from his sight, by going back into the closet, whence she had come out. "Ah! mother," cried she; "what have you done, to expose me to the sight of this man? God forbid, that women and girls should be seen before them!" "Take courage," said her mother; "there is no harm in what is done with a good intention. A man may see at once, the person of whom he is in search: if fortune unites them, all is well; if they do not agree, he sees her no more, and there is no harm done."

The young beauty having withdrawn, the Caliph, instead of his eye, applied his ear to the

the hole of the lock. While he heard the discourse of the old woman, he thought himself mistaken in supposing her to be a pimp. "This poor woman," said he, "has a beautiful young daughter to marry; and it is very proper for her to use the only means she has of procuring her a husband, namely, to let her be seen."

While the Caliph thus reasoned with himself, the mother entered into discourse with the young merchant: "I promised you a wonder," said she, "and I have not deceived you; she is as good as she is beautiful; does she suit you?" "Madam," replied the merchant, "she suits me so perfectly, that there is nothing more to do, but to know what you demand for her contract and dowry." "Four thousand sequins for the one, and as many for the other," answered the mother. "Madam," replied the merchant, "I would be reduced to complete beggary; I am only worth four thousand altogether. I offer a thousand of them for the dowry, as many more to furnish dresses for the nuptials, and furniture; and there will then remain to me two thousand for trade, and for the support of my wife; it is impossible for me to make any other sacrifice." "By the name of God, which is written on the forehead of the great prophet

phet!" swore the woman, "if a single one of the eight thousand sequins which I ask, is wanting, you shall not possess a hair of my daughter." "I will deem myself, then, very unhappy, after knowing her, Madam," said the merchant; "but what you ask is impossible for me:" So saying, he bowed and departed.

One suiter made his retreat, and another presented himself: it was the Caliph himself. The beautiful lady whom he had seen, was far superior in charms to the princess of Persia, who, even by the law, was no longer his spouse, whom he had condemned to die, and whom he left to languish in a prison, waiting for the event of the prophecy of Yemaleddin, on which her fate and that of this officer depended.

Haroun Alraschid entered deliberately into the house of the old woman, and saluted her: "What want you?" asked she. "I come, Madam," said the Caliph, "on the part of the young trader to whom you intended to give your daughter; he has given me in charge to tell you, that you must think no more of him." "We know," replied the old woman; "he left this, on the footing of returning no more." "Very well, give her to me," replied the Caliph, "and you will find me ready to pay you down the eight thousand

thousand sequins, and whatever you choose to ask for your furniture and other fancies: I will not limit you on that head."

The old woman examined the Caliph from top to toe. "Robber that you are," said she, "(for you have the dress of one), do you depend upon plundering the caravan of Mecca, in order to give eight thousand sequins, such a quantity of linen, so many dresses, and so much furniture? You have not even wherewithal to cover yourself: get you gone, you vagabond, or I will call assistance."

"Whether I am a robber or not, Madam," replied the Caliph, "is not your business. I offer to pay down on the spot the eight thousand sequins, and I will add to it a present to you, which you will find a very handsome one: all the furniture——." "You mean to laugh at me, robber, do you? but there is justice to be had at Bagdad; it is not there you can come to impose upon a poor defenceless woman. I hold you at your word; if you keep it not, but fool us here with lies, the Commander of the Faithful will order you to be strangled this very evening."

"I agree to the terms, and am ready to sign them," said the Caliph; "I am to marry your daughter, and you shall see that I will keep

keep my promise. Upon this declaration, the old woman conducted him into her chamber where he sat down and said to her, "take your precautions against me, during your absence. Lock up your daughter securely; go to the house of such a *cadi*, (it is just at hand) tell him, that a man called *Il Bondocani* wants him here, and beg that he would come immediately."

"And you think," said the woman, "that the Cadi will come here for a man of your fort? If you are rich, it must be so much the worse for you; your wealth must have been acquired in a wrong way; you are nothing but a ruffian, and would a Cadi bestir himself for you?" — The Caliph smiled at this answer; "Go, Madam," said he to her; "give yourself no trouble, only tell the Cadi to come, and to bring with him paper and pens."

The old woman at length determined to go to the Cadi. "If the judge comes," said she, "as soon as he hears of the person who proposes to be my relation, I may well consider my intended son-in-law as a chief of robbers. But, either the Cadi will do what I tell him, or he must make me quit of this vagabond." Making these reflections, she arrived at the house of the Cadi. She would
not

not enter into the apartment where this magistrate was, along with some nobles of the city. Shame, which attends poverty, and fear of being driven out, restrained her. "Yet if I don't enter," said she to herself, "I will gain nothing. I must at least try to learn who the man is who wishes to be my son-in-law, were it only to get quit of him.——Come, I must venture." She then advanced near to the door of the apartment; but quickly drew back, from an apprehension lest any improper step should draw upon her some disagreeable consequence. Scarcely had she given time to let them get a glimpse of her face, when a terror with which she was seized, absolutely deprived her of the courage to shew herself fully.

The Cadi observed the head which first shewed itself and then disappeared. He ordered one of his officers to see what the persons meant who presented themselves in so extraordinary a manner. The old woman was brought to him. "What want you, good woman?" said the judge to her. "Sir," replied she, "there is a young man at my house who orders you to come to him."

"What say you, insolent old woman?" replied the Cadi: "A man orders me to come to him?" At the same time he turns towards his

his officers: "Put this impertinent woman in chains, and carry her to the hospital for mad people."—"Merciful God!" cried she, as she heard the order, "O! cursed robber! who has sent me here to ruin me. Did not I tell him that he was not a man to command the Cadi to come to him? Do not impute it to me, my Lord," said she, addressing herself to the judge; "there is at my house a robber, a ruffian, a rascal, who forced me to take this step. I came much against my will; but, in a word, I was a woman, and alone: This wicked man had made himself master of my house; he wished positively to marry my daughter; he said that you knew him, and that his name was *Il Bondocani**.

As soon as the Cadi heard the name pronounced, "give me my *farragi*,†" cried he. "Set that woman at liberty. My good woman," said he to her, softening his tone, "you say that the young man who has sent you to me is named _____."

"Do not, Sir," replied the old woman, "force me to repeat his name; it makes my heart die within me. Assuredly it is that of a great rogue, and of a chief of robbers; but since

* When the Caliph went out in disguise, he assumed a warlike name known to all the principal officers.

† A robe of state, worn by the Cadis.

since I must repeat it, he is called *Il Bondocani*.

At this name the Cadi discovered that it was the Caliph himself. He wrapt himself up in his farragi. "Madam," said he, "I ask you ten thousand pardons for the equivocation I have used, and the blunt manner in which I spoke to you, without knowing you." The spectators were greatly astonished to see the Cadi, in a moment, change both his tone and his manner, and at the name of a man, only because he was called *Il Bondocani*. "Where are you going, Sir, with so much eagerness?" they asked him: "He replied, 'I have business which I cannot communicate.' Then addressing himself with great politeness to the old woman: 'Is it at your house they wait for me, Madam?'—'Yes, Sir.'——'Do me the favour to conduct me thither.'"

It may well be supposed that the old woman walked back with more spirit than she had come. When she set out from her house, she was much afraid; the commission which she had to execute appeared to her extremely dangerous, and was in reality sufficient to have made her pass for a person fit for bedlam. Now she sees herself treated with respect, and honoured with the title of

Lady. "Certainly," said she to herself, "my future son-in-law bears a very respectable name with the Cadi, or fear must have seized the magistrate, on hearing this terrible chief of robbers named, to such a degree as to render him mad, since he is going to my house without *babouches* *. What a change! It is no more I whom they must put into the hospital, but he, who, on hearing a name, which to me appeared just like any other, hurried away, in his robe of state, bare-footed, and without knowing well what he says. This Cadi must be very much afraid of robbers, and my future son-in-law must have more authority with him than any other, by having played him, without doubt, some wicked trick."

These thoughts engaged the old woman, till she arrived at her house. The Cadi, who followed her, entered it, and recognized the Commander of the Faithful. His first motion was to prostrate himself; but a signal from the Caliph prevented him, and informed him, that the Sovereign wished to remain unknown. Then, after a common salutation, the magistrate seated himself by the side of *Il Bondoni*, who said to him; "Sir, I wish to take
this

* A sort of shoes worn by the inhabitants of eastern countries.

this old woman's daughter to wife." The woman and the daughter then appeared, and the Cadi asked them if they would accept the proposals which *Il Bondocani* made them, and the daughter, in particular, if she would take him for her husband. Both having answered, "Yes, Sir;" the Cadi pressed them to say, what they demanded for the contract and the dowry. The old woman replied, "four thousand sequins for the one, and as many for the other."—" *Il Bondacani*," said the Cadi to the Caliph, "do you agree to the proposal of paying the eight thousand sequins?"—"Yes, Sir," replied the Caliph, "you may draw up our contract."

The Cadi was a little embarrassed how to obey the Commander of the Faithful. He had been inattentive to the orders which had been given him, to bring paper along with him. He had it, however, in his power to make up for this neglect, by writing the contract on the lower part of his *faragi*.

After having written the first lines, which were taken from the book of forms, he addressed himself to the old woman. "Madam, you must tell the name of your daughter's father and grand-father."—"Were my daughter's father and grand-father alive," cried the old woman mournfully, "I would not have

been obliged to give her to a man, of whom I dare not speak what I think.”—“Very well, Madam,” said the Cadi, “but they are not alive, and their names are necessary here. “My daughter,” replied the old woman, “is called Zutulbe; and my name is Lelamaïn. I cannot express the rest. It is not necessary to be the daughter of a good family, in order to marry a robber.”

It may easily be imagined how much the Caliph enjoyed the embarrassment of the Cadi, the vexation of the woman, and, in one word, the incidents of this little scene, which the oddity of his disguise had procured him.

The contract was at length drawn up. The lawyer gravely cut off the piece of his *faragi*, on which it was written, and put it into the hands of the young woman. But being ashamed to go out in so tattered a garment, he threw it off, and gave it to the old woman, begging her to give it in charity to the poor: And his service being no longer necessary, he made a bow, and retired.

“You must surely,” said the old woman to her new son-in-law, “have played some of your tricks upon this Cadi. One may see that you are a chief of robbers, who know how to make yourself be feared. This poor man hath run here, without giving himself
time

time to put on *babouches* ; and he hath returned half naked, having left his *faragi* here : and over and above all, he is gone without being paid. You have given him nothing for his contract ; so that, for having served you, he is without money, and without his robe of state. Are you robbers, then, so great misers ?"—“ My good mother,” replied the Caliph laughing, “ what have you to do with the robe, and the payment of the Cadi ? Don’t trouble yourself about these things. There are more essential ones with which both you and I are concerned. I am going out to get the stipulated dowry, and stuffs fit to dress my wife ; you shall see that I am not avaricious, but on proper occasions.”—“ And who is the unfortunate person,” cried the old woman, “ whose strong coffer, and treasures, are to supply your liberality ? He will be much surprised to-morrow to find himself thus spoiled, without knowing by whom ; for I am pretty sure, in a city like this, you perform your work without much noise.”

Haroun, without making any reply to this new question, returned to his palace. He then dressed himself in robes suitable to his dignity, sent for his architect, shewed him the house which he wished him to adorn, and ordered him to carry along with him all the

workmen who were necessary to repair it immediately; so that, as far as it was capable of ornament, it might vie with the richest apartment in his palace. "The grand vizier," said he to him, "will furnish you with every thing necessary to complete the work. But the whole must be finished before sun-set. Make sure of all your assistance, and know, that your life must answer for your fidelity, in the execution of my orders. If the woman, to whose house you are going, ask you, from whom you come, to work in her house, you shall answer her, "from your son-in-law." If she urge you to know what is the profession and name of her new relation; you shall say "We know not what trade he exercises, but we can tell you that his name is *Il Bondocani*." Let there be question about my rank in reply to any person. Choose well your workmen, and remember, that under pain of death, you are responsible to me for your own and their discretion."

The architect only replied, "I will obey the Prince of the Faithful." He got together every thing that was necessary: In a word, the old woman Lelamain's house was filled with workmen, furniture, carpets, and stuffs; ladders were applied to the walls; and on every side they began the work. "Who sent
you

you here?" inquired Lelamaïn of the workmen; "what have you come to do?"—"We come," they replied, "to embellish your house, to place in it this joiner's work of aloes wood, and these marbles, furniture, and hangings, by the order of the husband to whom you have given your daughter."—"But how do you call him? What is his situation and quality?" said the old woman. "We know not his rank; but as to his name, we can easily satisfy you; it is *Il Bondocani*."

"I know well," said the good Lelamaïn to herself, "that a chief of robbers makes himself dreaded over all the country. It appears to me that this terror hath reached even to the city. Not one of the people here dare say that a robber is a robber: This is very extraordinary!"

While she was making these reflections, a man arrived, followed by porters, who went to set down, at the bottom of a second apartment, a coffer of steel inlaid with gold. "What do you carry there," said the old woman? "The dowry," replied the man to her, "of the new spouse: you will find, in this coffer, eight thousand sequins of gold, and two thousand more for your expences; there is the key." "Very well," replied Lelamaïn; "my son-in-law, in his own way, is a man of his word:

word: But whence hath he taken all this? Who is he? What does he do?" "I know not," replied the messenger, "either who he is, or what he does; you ought to know your daughter's husband better than I: I know nothing about him, but that his name is *Il Bondocani*."

Meanwhile the workmen had completed their work, and it was not yet night; two large and very tattered rooms, whose whole furniture consisted of two planks supported by some flints, two wooden stools, and two worn matts, were so changed in appearance and shape, that they might have made part of a royal palace. Lelamaïn examined piece by piece every object which contributed to produce this change; and in spite of the ill success of her first attempts, could not refrain from going to the workmen, one after another, and saying to them; "You certainly know who my son-in-law is, and what he does?" But she always received the same answer, "We know that his name is *Il Bondocani*."

At last, the old woman was left alone in the house with her daughter: "Your husband," said she to her, "must be a very extraordinary man; he hath caused to be done in one day what any other person would have in vain attempted to finish in a year. None but the Caliph

liph or a chief of robbers could have so many people at their command. These people, however, although they obey my son-in-law, dare not avow who he is ; they would be forced to blush both for him and for themselves ; besides, they are all in a state of sad fear. I addressed myself to one of the youngest of them, and he told me, ‘ if any of us were so imprudent as to discover the rank of your relation, it would cost us our life.’ See, daughter, you have married a chief of robbers, and observe the terror with which that inspires every body. God and his Prophet defend us !”

The architect came to give the Caliph an account of the execution of the orders which his Sovereign had given him. He immediately received a reward, both for himself and those whom he had employed. The lodging was as yet fitted up with no more than necessary furniture : Haroun ordered Giasar to carry thither all those sumptuous ornaments, which are lavished in the apartments of monarchs, and which serve to increase their magnificence rather than their convenience. Lelamain saw this increase of grandeur arrive, and attempted again to get information concerning the quality of him from whom all these fine things came : “ We know,” said the porter to her, as they put the things into their pro-
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per order, "that they are sent you, by your daughter's husband, whose name is *Il Bondocani*: we received the order concerning them from him." Scarcely were these porters gone, when a knocking at the door announced the arrival of others. The old woman opened it to them; they were loaded with bales of all kinds of magnificent stuffs: They opened them up, and displayed them before her. "Why do you display these fine things?" said she;—"To let you see them, Madam."—"But you shew me them in vain; these stuffs cannot be for us; we are not rich enough." "Is not this the house which was repaired yesterday?" said the porters.—"Yes," replied Lelamaïn. "Then," answered they, "the whole is for you; he who is become your relation, hath sent you them. Furnish your house, clothe the new wife, and all your family; your son-in-law hath every thing in abundance, spare nothing: We are directed to tell you, that he will come to-night to your house, at eleven o'clock;" and saying this, they withdrew. "He will come at eleven o'clock!" repeated the old woman; "robbers never ramble but in the night, when all the world is asleep." After this short reflection, observing that there were many things to put in order, she asked the assistance of some
of

of her neighbours. Great was their astonishment at seeing her house changed in one day, from a kind of hovel into a superb palace. They were naturally curious to know how it could have been done ; it appeared like a piece of enchantment, an illusion, or a dream. " It was done quite naturally," said old Lelamain : " a man came here this morning asking my daughter in marriage : He sent for the Cadi ; the contract was drawn up, and in a moment after, by order of my son-in-law, all the workmen of Bagdad came to display and arrange here the magnificence you behold." " In this case," resumed the neighbours, " you have given your daughter to a prince, or to the richest merchant in the country." " He must have plenty," replied the old woman, " since we are so well provided. I fear, by what I have seen, that my son-in-law is a robber ; and by the terror which he strikes into all those whom I have seen employed by him, I cannot but look upon him as one of their chiefs." At this declaration, the neighbours were seized with fear : " At least, madam," said they to the old woman, " frequently remind your relation, that it has always been the custom of robbers to spare the people of their neighbourhood." " Don't be afraid, replied the old woman : Assuredly my son-in-law

son-in-law is a robber, but I don't believe him capable of doing any injury to his neighbours. I will prevail upon him to treat you kindly; you may rest at ease on my word."

Upon this the neighbours took courage; the men set the furniture of the house in order, and the women assisted the young wife in dressing herself: Nature indeed had done so much for her, that she had little occasion for the assistance of art; a jewel, while it contributed to embellish her, as soon as it approached her, seemed to rise in its value.

The work within the house was interrupted by the noise which was made at the door: some men knocked at it, that they might be admitted with dishes which should make up a most delicate and sumptuous repast. This was followed by a second course consisting, of the finest and rarest fruits, and of the most exquisite preserves; the most delicious wines, and finest liquors accompanied the other preparations for this magnificent banquet. The dishes were all of porcelaine and gold. "Take that, madam," said the bearers to the old woman; "and regale yourself and your friends."

"You come from my son-in-law?" replied Lelamain; "now, once for all, out of complaisance and charity, tell me who he is, and what is his rank?" "We know no

more of him than you," answered the bearers; "all that we can tell you is his name." "Ah! I know that better than you," replied the old woman; "I have no occasion to have it told me so often."

The bearers went away, and Lelamain's neighbours, looking at one another, began seriously to believe that the new husband was a chief of robbers. They sat down to table, after having put aside what was most delicate for the husband's and the wife's supper, and determined to make the most they could of the adventure, by eating very heartily. The repast being finished, they took their leave of the daughter and the mother, congratulating them on the happy change of their fortune, and wishing them much prosperity. Immediately they were dispersed into every quarter of the city, in order to spread the news, that a chief of the robbers of the desert, had married the charming daughter of the old Lelamain; that it was done openly, without mystery or ceremony; and that the plunder of ten caravans was to be found in the house, which was filled with riches.

The young merchant, to whom Lelamain had offered her daughter, had become highly enamoured of her; he was offended that a robber should have been preferred to him; he meditated

the destruction of his rival, and the recovery of the object, of whose enjoyment he had deprived him; he went to find out the judge of police, to make a declaration before him, which witnesses were there to support. The robber, he thinks, will be seized and strangled without any other form of trial. He will have his share of the confiscated goods; and, besides this advantage, in spite of the accursed mother, he will marry the daughter on her being adjudged to him: such was the plan, which love, jealousy, and avarice, made him conceive and instantly execute. He went to the judge, whose eyes he opened, by exaggerating the description of all the riches which the pretended robber had imprudently displayed in the house of Lelamaïn: and above all, he began with touching the hand of the judge.

This magistrate, who was a very selfish fellow, received the money which was given him, listened to the information with an appearance of patience, took time to reflect, and assuming the tone of gravity which became his station, "Go," said he, "return home; it is only eight o'clock; you may come back again at ten: then is the time of supper, and the favourable moment for surprising the robber. I will have him seized, put in chains, and strangled;

I will

I will put you in possession of the young girl, and cause the bassinado be given to the old woman, as a punishment for her having given you such a rival; but nothing of all this must transpire." The young merchant went away, and returned at the hour appointed. The judge had got together three hundred bailiffs; he mounted his horse, and took his way to the old woman's house, preceded by the accuser. He arrived there without meeting any person on the road, every one having retired to his own home. The old woman's house was surrounded: the mother and her daughter were sitting quietly, in expectation of the new husband's arrival, when they heard the noise. Lelamain looked through a window of the court, and, by the light of a number of lamps, recognized the judge of police, in the midst of his officers and a numerous party. They knocked at the door with redoubled strokes; the old woman took care not to open it; but the strokes became still more frequent and loud. He who encouraged them even till they broke the knocker, was called Chamama. Never could an avaritious and corrupt judge have made choice of a fitter officer: this devil incarnate gave himself out for the son of Satan, and the brother of the devil Camas. "Let us break open the door," cried this mad-

man, "since they don't choose to open it to us; we run the risk of losing the treasures which are here; while this resistance is made, perhaps they are burying them, and we may not be able to find them. Besides, a round of superior officers may pass by, and people alarmed by the noise, will come hither and share the plunder with us: the door is indeed strong; but we must find to get levers, and set to work immediately, if we wish nothing to escape us."

This quick dispatch fell in with the secret inclinations of the judge; but he had under him as second in command, an officer named Hazen, naturally mild, beneficent, charitable, and even disposed to take part with the unfortunate. "The counsel of Chamama is violent and dangerous," said this officer to the judge; "the house which he wishes to insult was never suspected of being a retreat for robbers; may not the young merchant, blinded by jealousy, have made a false declaration? Then, to what danger are we exposed, for having violated the asylum of women, which is under the express protection of the law; we, who must render an account of our conduct to the Prince of the Faithful?"

Lelamain listened to all these discourses. "Alas," said she, running to her daughter;
"we

“ we are most unhappy, the judge is going to search for the robber and arrest him.” “ Open not the door, mother,” replied the young girl; “ perhaps God may send some assistance to extricate us from this great embarrassment.”

In the mean time the judge continued to make them knock at the door: “ Who are you,” said the old woman, “ who knock with such violence?” “ It is the magistrate of police,” replied the detestable Chamama, with a terrible voice; “ open, infamous old woman, who prostitute youth, and afford a retreat for robbers; do you know to what you expose yourself by your resistance?” “ We are only two women here,” replied Lelamaïn; “ you ought to know and respect the law. We cannot open to you; you have nothing to do here.”

“ Ah! hag that you are,” replied Chamama, foaming with rage; “ open the door, or we will break it open, and burn both you and your daughter.” Lelamaïn made no reply either to his threats or his reproaches, and went to join her daughter. “ See,” said she, “ if my fears were not well founded; is it not now evident that you are married to a robber? Heaven grant he may not come to night! If

the judge and his officers get hold of him, they will tear him to pieces. Alas! my daughter, if your father were now alive, if even your brother were not overwhelmed with misfortune, would we have formed a connection which hath exposed us to see our door beset by the judge and all the villains in his train?" "What do you mean?" said the young girl; "for some time past, the destiny of the stars, which regulates all, hath pursued us. It is enough for us to submit to it; let us spare ourselves the pain of uneasiness, which can do us no good."

While the judge and Chamama were insisting with the two women, who were more or less bewailing themselves, to open the door, the Caliph had taken up his bow, his arrows, and his boots, and was coming to enjoy the rights of marriage with his new spouse. The splendour of flambeaux, the officers of whom the judge's party consisted, the crowd who were rambling about Lelamain's house, and the noise which he heard, warned him that something uncommon was going on. He soon recognized the chief of the whole troop, and saw at his side the young merchant into whose shop the old woman had entered.

Chamama continued to knock at the door, seasoning each stroke with a horrible imprecation.

cation. He repeated the abuse, the threats of the bastinado, the gallows, and the stake, by which he had hitherto attempted to intimidate her, and called to his assistance the power of the levers to break open the door.

Some of the party were preparing to put this method in execution. Hazen the lieutenant stopped them: "Comrades," said he to them, "commit not that violence against a house in which there are only women: They will be seized with terror, which may occasion their death. Besides, who hath assured us that the man whom we seek is a robber? We all hazard our lives by intringing the law, and are ready to commit an act of very great injustice.

"What, scruples of conscience!" exclaimed Chamama, "in an officer of justice; you are not fit for your place, Hazen; while you lose yourself among nice points of law, the guilty will escape. A woman who makes a trade of the virtue of others, and gives her own daughter to an avowed robber, has no right to the privilege of her sex: And can you doubt that the man whom we seek here is a rascal by profession, since the neighbours, at whom you may inquire, attest it?"

"Infamous Chamama!" said the Caliph to himself, on hearing this discourse, "dearly shalt

shalt thou pay for thy conduct and principles, I will make a striking example of thee." Saying this, he began to consider how he might, without being seen, get into Lelamain's house. It was contiguous to the gardens of a great palace, whose door opened to a side lane. This palace belonged to Ilamir Youmis, the first, and chief of the princes and nobility of Bagdad, a man of a cruel and sanguinary disposition. The door of this palace was lighted within by a great number of flambeaux; and an eunuch sat at it on a sofa of marble.

The eunuch, seeing the Caliph enter, rose up, and advanced to him with his sabre raised. The Prince of the Faithful opposed to it the blade of his own sabre. "Ah! cursed negro, son of a bastard," said he to this vile fellow, "thou art always ready to put people to death, even before they speak."

The words of the Caliph, and the sight of the sabre, had such an effect on the eunuch, that he fled, trembling, and took refuge in the house of his master. The latter, astonished to see him in such confusion, asked him the cause of it. "I was, Sir," replied the negro, "at the door of your inn. A man of a terrible aspect presented himself there, and I wished to dismiss him, or strike him with my sabre, if he did not withdraw. He drew his,
spoke

spoke to me with the voice of thunder, and I believed that I saw the lightening and the stroke fall upon my head."

"Infamous coward!" replied Ilamir Youmis, "you was afraid of your own shadow; yet I wish to know who that audacious fellow is, who hath been so bold as to treat my slave with disrespect. Did you say he called you a scoundrel, and the son of a bastard? His life shall answer to me for this insolence. The man who insults my slave, attacks myself." So saying, Ilamir Youmis armed himself with his enormous club of brass, and issued out of his apartment in search of the man who had exposed himself to his resentment.

The Caliph, having remained in the same place, saw the chief of his Emirs coming to him, and thus spoke to him. "Youmis," said he, "is this your inn?" As soon as the chief of the Emirs recognized the voice of the Caliph, the club dropped from his hands: He fell upon the ground, and remained in that posture. "Commander of the Faithful," said he, "your slave is at your feet, and waits your commands."

"Man without courage, minister without vigilance, deservest thou to receive them?" said the Caliph. "Chief of my Emirs, and
com-

commander of this quarter, what have you done to maintain good order? A poor woman, your neighbour, has been vexed and harraffed. The judge of police, at the head of his barbarous officers, has committed this outrage, abusing the prerogatives of their office; and you have not interposed your authority, to check this excess. You sleep, intoxicated, in the arms of your women: your eunuch guards you all. In your own house, moreover, you are nothing but a woman, and you shamefully let your equals and your neighbours be insulted."

"Commander of the Faithful," answered Youmis, "I had not the smallest thought of this riot, which I now hear of for the first time. If the report of the excess committed by the magistrate of the police, had reached my ears, I would have treated him and his company as they deserve; and if you will allow me, I will now go and teach them whether or not they have a right to disturb the public peace."

"Forbear making an unseasonable parade of zeal and courage. The house which was insulted is close by the walls of your garden; we will cross it, and I intend to introduce myself into the house of the injured woman, by the assistance of two ladders; let me have them directly."

Youmis

Youmis obeyed. They crossed the garden : Youmis held the foot of the first ladder, which leaned upon the wall, and, by the help of the second, the Caliph alighted on the roof of the house where his new spouse lodged. Youmis followed him : “ Stay there,” said he to this officer, “ until I call you.” Then drawing near to a window which looked into the apartment, he found that the industry of his architect had in reality made it a terrestrial paradise. The lustres and branched candlesticks, filled with tapers, diffused through it a splendor equal to the clearest day. The young spouse, superbly dressed, and sparkling amid all these lights, surpassed the very idea which it is possible to form of beauty. It was the sun rising above the horizon, in the midst of a clear sky. One would say, that dew resembling pearls, came from her forehead ; and that the drops which flowed from her beautiful eyes, bathed in tears, were like manna, uniting in itself every most exquisite taste. The full moon could not shine with so lively and so soft a brightness. The enamoured Haroun Alraschid was in raptures ; but he was recovered from them by an exclamation of Lelamain.

“ O my daughter !” cried she, “ they knock like madmen ; the door will be broken in pieces

pieces. What will become of us among the hands of these tigers; we who are only poor women, and have no support but God? What increase of fatality hath sent us this robber, whose connection has completely brought us into the most cruel of all misfortunes?"

"Mother," answered the daughter, "you distress me very much, by considering my husband as a robber. I do not believe that he is so: but, with your consent, I have received him from the hand of God, and I ought to submit to the decree which unites me to him. I am hurt by every reproach which is cast upon him."

It is easy to conceive how much these few words would enchant the Caliph: they were as the sweetest melody to his ears.

"God be praised!" cried Lelamain, "since you, my poor girl, are contented with your choice; for my own part, I find in him many things which by no means displease me: I wish I were a bird to go and tell him not to come this evening; I would wait at the end of the street, to make him turn back. But if he comes, if he falls into their snares, and is taken, he is a dead man. These villains there will cut him in pieces; they will come and take every thing; and we, my dear child, will be like sheep in the jaws of the wolf."

The

The Caliph, to interrupt such lamentations, took a small stone, threw it at a candle which was by the side of the mother, and extinguished it. Lelamain lighted it again, without examining from whence this little accident happened. A second stone extinguished the candle which had served to light the first; and the good mother took a third to light this one again. "There must be a great deal of wind," said she, "or else some spirit of the air is amusing himself with blowing out the candles." As she was speaking, a pebble fell upon her hand, which greatly surprised her: she looked towards the window, and perceived the Caliph above. "Behold your husband," said she to her daughter; "he comes by the way which all his fellows take; never robber entered by the door, to execute his designs. Maintain to me now that he is not a robber: here he is, thank God, escaped for a time from the hands of justice; and I am quite overjoyed at it." Then addressing herself to him, "Return quickly the way you came," said she; "it is not your interest to be here. Don't you hear the noise which a band of robbers, who are not of your gang, are making at our door? these madmen will give you no quarter."

During this harangue of Lelamain, the Caliph had put off his boots, cloak, and girdle; he tied them up in a bundle, in which he put his bow and arrows, and sprung into the apartment with the lightness of a bird. He affectionately saluted the mother, fell on the neck of the daughter, and tenderly embraced her, without allowing time to speak.

“Robber!” said the mother, “is this a time to embrace, when they come to seek your life? The least that it can cost you, is both your hands: this is the way that they treat you robbers, and even this is a favour. Is it possible that all these people do not terrify you?”

“No, good mother,” answered the Caliph; “I have seen many; and such as you behold me, I am formed for noise. Let us allow these people to make it: they have supped, and no such agreeable business as mine is here, waits for them at home. Let my dear wife and I sit down to table; their noise will be instead of music. Serve us up some of your best dishes; you will have entertained your neighbours, but you have undoubtedly something remaining.”

The old woman set the table, and covered it, saying all the while; “he is truly a devil: he is no more afraid for three hundred men, than I would be of an insect. Well, notwithstanding

withstanding all the ill that is said of the profession, I conceive that a woman may love a robber; they are lively as the wild goat, and bold as the lion."

The table was set; the Caliph was by the side of his spouse; Lelamain was opposite to them: she saw her son-in-law eat very heartily, and constantly caress with his looks, his charming spouse. From time to time, tender and polite discourse was intermixed with this silent language.

"Delight of my soul," said the Caliph, intoxicated with love, "give me that small bit which has touched your rosy lips, and has been perfumed with your delicious breath. Ah! could I but there surprize a sigh for me!"

"What an inchanter!" muttered the old woman; "where can he steal this magic of the tongue, which makes my daughter so fond of him, that to-morrow she will weep her eyes out for him?"

"You speak to yourself, good mother; what are you saying?—I wish you were more civil with respect to me: in your eyes, it would seem, I do not deserve the attention of a gentleman. I honour and respect your wrinkles; they express venerable experience, and complete maturity."—"Plague on your maturity!"

I have seen the day, when I deserved a better compliment."—"I believe so, though you was never equal to this charming girl."

So saying, Haroun affectionately embraced his spouse. But suddenly Zutulbe began to tremble, on hearing a frightful shout, which proceeded from the terrible Chamama. "Open, open, old hag!" cried he; "while he seemed to knock with arms of iron."

"Fear not, my sweet dove!" cried the Caliph. Let us here enjoy the delight of loving one another, and let us give proofs of our affection. Nothing is so sweet as pleasures, where we meet with opposition; every other is cloying. Knock, thunder, move heaven and earth, unruly Chamama! oblige this tender and trembling beauty, who is terrified at your dreadful threatenings, to seek an asylum in my arms: let her soul take the road to my lips, that it may find refuge in my heart."

"Will you have done? rascal of a robber?" cried the old woman; "will you leave us? save yourself by the window; the house is going to fall; do you intend to set fire to it by your words? for my part, I am already more dead than alive."

"No," said the Caliph; "I will not go from hence, I am too delightfully employed; but, as it is time to go to bed, and the music of

our nuptials is disagreeable to you, I must send away the musicians. Take this ring; speak through the key-hole to the people who are knocking, and say to them: 'My daughter's husband is here, and has bid me deliver his ring into the judge's own hands, that he may see what he has to do.'

"And you think to turn their head with your ring, as you do that of my daughter by thus encircling her with your arms? Though the Cadi may sometimes connive with you, certainly all these people do not. But if you enchant them, as you have done others, I will instantly gird myself with a double girdle, that I may have that spruce air which becomes people of your profession, and get a lesson in cheating from you, were it only to know how to steal a woman's shoes from off her feet, without being perceived."

"You are pleased to be witty, good mother; but so much the better; you will be the fitter for executing my commission. Take my ring, and, softly opening the door, give it to the judge: Say to him as you deliver it; 'this is my son-in-law's ring, who is called *Il Bondocani*;' and pronounce this name with some firmness."

"I will go," said the old woman; "I recollect there is magic in that name, which

makes men stand immoveable like statues of marble."

While Lelamaïn was executing the commission which was given her, the Caliph, by the help of a table, which he had brought to the window, ascended to the roof. He addressed himself to Youmis, who had remained there to wait his orders. "Take my sabre," said he; "go down quickly by the help of your ladder, into the street; observe if there is any person so daring as to command or execute the smallest violence, and instantly cut off his head. As soon as you have perceived that my ring, which is now to be delivered to him, has caused the troop disperse, from respect to my orders, make yourself known; depose the judge; and let the *Hazeb* be immediately clothed in his robe, and put in his place. Cause the prevaricating judge Chamama, and all the rest, whom, from the place you was in, you must have seen either advising or committing excess, to be conducted into your court-yard, under a strong guard. Put them in chains till to-morrow; and as soon as it is day, inflict punishment on all the criminals.

The Caliph, after this conversation with Youmis, returned to the apartment; and the chief of the emirs eagerly set about executing his orders. He went behind the troop who
threat,

threatened the house, with his naked sabre concealed under his robe. The woman was in treaty with Chamama at the door.

“Do not strike the door thus, diabolical fellow that you are !” said she to him ; “withdraw a moment, and give place to the judge, to whom I wish to speak : I have a ring to deliver him.”

“Open the door, and give me the ring, old sink of iniquity !” answered he ; “the judge is on horseback, and will not alight for you.”

“But he must alight,” replied the old woman ; “I have my son-in-law’s ring to give him ; he can surely read the motto on it.

“Sir,” cried Chamama, turning towards the judge, “I am going to give three blows with my hatchet ; when once the door is broken down, we will lay hands on the villain, and his jewels, together with the infernal old woman and her daughter, who is as debauched as herself.”

“Sir,” said the *Hazeb*, “I cannot think it wise in you to allow Chamama to proceed in so violent a manner. You can soon know what this ring is. We are informed, that the man we are in search of has got into the house ; but how, we know not, for it is completely surrounded. It is no longer, then, an asy-
lum

lum of women, about violating which there is any question. If, after seeing this ring, you think proper to break open the door, in case of resistance, I will be the first man to strike a blow; but first of all, allow me to put some questions to the old woman, and cause the band to withdraw a little."

To this the judge was obliged to consent. Chamama withdrew, uttering the most horrible imprecations. The *Hazeb* went up to the door: "Open in confidence," said he to the old woman; "give me that ring; from whom have you got it?" "From my son-in-law," replied Lelamaïn; a little encouraged by the soft language of the *Hazeb*: "he says his name is *Il Bondocani*."

The *Hazeb* faithfully delivered the ring, and repeated exactly every word of the answer to the judge of the police. The name of *Il Bondocani* produced no effect upon the diabolical Chamama, who was ignorant of its true import. "Who, pray, is this *Il Bondocani*," said he, "who sends us his ring? I will give him an hundred strokes of the bastinado, with his ring on his finger, from the respect due to his great name. I will tear his old woman to pieces, and reduce her to dust and ashes, to increase the dirt of the kennel. Let the fold-
ing

ing door be opened, or I will take up my hatchet."

"Be silent, wretch!" said the judge, full of consternation, upon hearing the name of *M Bondocani*, and examining the ring*: "Your infamous and insatiable avarice, together with your dreadful wickedness, has ruined us all." At the same time, a sound escaped from the trembling lips of the judge, which was carried in a whisper from mouth to mouth, and at length reached the ears of the villain, with these terrible words, *it is the Caliph*.

If vipers, hydra, and all the venomous reptiles in the world, had all at once hissed into the ears of Chamama, he could not have been more terrified. He fell to the ground like a lump of clay, tumbled about, and bit the earth in despair. His tormented conscience, at one view, presented to him all his crimes. His nerves were suddenly contracted; he became epileptic and frantic. "I am convicted, I am confounded, I die," cried he.—He was in this dreadful state of despair, when, by the orders of Youmis, he was put in chains, and dragged to the emir's house.

The

† The Caliph's ring was well known to all the principal officers: it was a kind of seal.

The good Lelamaïn observed the effect which the name and ring of her son-in-law had produced, and returned to him, tranquil indeed, but still more and more astonished. "Well," said she, "the word and the talisman have here produced their effect. You have truly a terrible name: I shudder when I think upon it. They are all as it were petrified at this affair: and as to this worthless fellow Chama, I don't believe there is an inch of life in his body. You must, in your time, have done a great deal of mischief to the officers of justice who prosecuted you; seeing you are so much dreaded by them.—Observe, there is no more noise in the street; and no more lights are to be seen. I could wager they are all gone, without inquiring for those who might be left behind. I should not be displeased that many things were done for me through love; but God keep me from ever inspiring such terror, for of every thing we must one day give an account."

"Yes, good mother," said the Caliph, "you must give your's also; and if there is any punishment for much speaking, it will be a very severe one." Then drawing near to his spouse, "delight of my soul," said he, "are you recovered from your fright." "Alas!" answered she, "I trembled only for you."

you." "What charming little words!" said Haroun; "an angel seems to engrave them on my heart, never to be effaced.—But, O my dear Zutulbe, for you see I have not forgot your pretty name, tell me, is your soul wholly at ease?"

"No," replied Zutulbe, "I feel an emotion stronger than that of fear; but it gives me no pain; and methinks I wish to find it increase. I feel at the same time, as it were, a slight fear ——"

"You are ever the same," said the Caliph; "delight of my future life, fair flower found in a beautiful garden at the dawning of the morning"—— "Yes, my dear husband, I was found there."—— "Well! but the new blown rose, adorned with all the pearls of the morning dew, fears and desires to be looked upon by the luminary of day. Such is my charming Zutulbe."

"And such is my robber son-in-law," said the old woman (with her arms across, and looking on the two lovers), "who, after having left nothing any where else, is going to begin here also, and steal away my child's heart. May God, and the great Prophet, bless your union, such as it is; it is a marriage at last: for my part, I have nothing to do here, but to put out the candles."

Haroun Alraschid, more disposed to love than he had ever been in his life, undressed Zutulbe himself, and the old woman drew the curtain on the two lovers.—Here we will leave them, to see how Ilamir Youmis executed the orders which he had received. The *Hazeb*, being invested by him with the robe of the deposed officer of police, and being mounted on his horse, departed along with all those of the band, in whose conduct there had been nothing worthy of blame. Chamama, the judge, and four villains of the same cast with Chamama, loaded with irons, passed the night in the emir's court-yard. At day break, the judge was committed to prison: Chamama was led to the next street, and expired under the bastinado: his four companions, after receiving a pretty severe handling of the same kind, were carried away half dead to a dungeon, and their crime was described by the following label: *Ministers of justice who have been guilty of oppression and prevarication in the exercise of their office.*

This exemplary execution was finished before Haroun and Zutulbe awaked. The Caliph arose: he knew well that Youmis would inform Giafar and Mefrour of the night's adventure, and that every thing was quiet at the palace;

palace ; but business called him thither, and he must go.

The good mother Lelamain had prepared a collation, which proved very agreeable to the husband and wife, and with which some general conversation was intermixed. " Grant, heaven," said the old woman, " that this may be the conclusion of our calamities ! Never were there poorer and more unfortunate women than we, after having been rich and happy, even beyond our wishes."

" What !" said the Caliph, " you possessed riches ; what has deprived you of them ?"

" Misfortune and injustice," answered Lelamain.

" And did this happen to you at Bagdad?" replied the Caliph, full of anxiety.

" Where could it be else," answered the old woman, " since we have never been out of it?"

" Can this be, replied the Caliph, under the reign of Haroun Alraschid?"

" Was he not reigning a month ago?" answered Lelamain.

" But they say," replied the Caliph, " that he is careful to prevent the commission of injustice."

" Yes," said Lelamain, " he severely punishes the injustice of others, but he easily par-

does his own, unless we suppose that he knows not what he does."

"You astonish me, good mother; you must tell me your story; his name has certainly been abused."

"No," said Lelamaïn, "it has not been abused. It was he himself, the wise Haroun, the mirror of princes, who committed all the injustice. Still, had he been satisfied with depriving of our fortune people of our birth and station, with reducing us to that dreadful state of wretchedness wherein you found us, with forcing me, in short, to give my turtle dove to a man like you, to prevent us from perishing with hunger, I could have forgiven him: But he has cruelly taken from me a beloved son, a jewel, whose equal you cannot boast of, though you possess his sister Zutulbe. He was straight as the rushes of the Nile, and tall as the cedars of Lebanon. He had the meekness of the lamb, and the innocence of the dove. He was like the eagle for attention and dispatch in business, and like the squirrel for activity. He was the *Hazeb*, and served the Caliph with unexampled love, attention, and zeal. You would have thought he was beloved by the Caliph: but trust not these tigers of princes. He has condemned him to death, and in one moment completed his and our ruin. Ah! poor Yemaleddin!" exclaimed the
the

woman at this part of her story, "the tyrant who pronounced sentence of death on you for a glass of water, must himself have drunk thirty glasses of wine too much."

When the Caliph had heard this story, he began to feel the injuries which he had committed. He had himself afforded some lessons in his life, but he had never received any; he wished to appear blameless in his own eyes. "I have heard," said he, "of the affair of the *Hazeb Yemaleddin*: there was something more in it than a glass of water."

"You mean a dish of *cataifs*? A very pretty story truly! My son was too well fed at home, to have any liking for such trash: he did not know whence the dish came; he gave it to the keeper of the quarter."

"But," said the Caliph, "there was something still more serious in it; he looked upon the woman who drank the water, and the law condemns——"

"Hold; are you going to plead here for the law and the Caliph? Believe me, people like you, who do not practise the law, cannot be supposed to understand it. My son never looked at that woman; the poor young man was as innocent as a lamb. But, though he had seen her, what then? had he the eyes of a basilisk? would he have killed her? did he know that she was another's wife? Were

every man who has accidentally seen a woman in the streets of Bagdad, to have his eyes put out, we would meet with none but blind people."

"But it was one of the Caliph's women, and he who looks upon them forfeits his life——"

"Why does he allow them to walk in the street, then, if a sword is always suspended over the heads of those who may chance to see them? let him put a label on the forehead of those whom he allows to go abroad, and I promise you they will find neither a man in their way, nor a glass of water to drink.

"But, tell me, you who are a robber by profession (for I cannot suppose that you are not, since every body says so, and you are pursued as such), could you be capable of a cruelty equal to that with which I have a right to reproach the commander of the faithful, God's viceregent upon earth?

"When you attack people, it is only for their money: you do not put them to death, but in self defence, when they make resistance; you leave them their hands and feet to extricate them from trouble. Could you butcher without mercy the man who had faithfully served you?

"Now, you are not sovereigns, but robbers: and let me tell you, I am inclined to be—

believe, that out of an equal number, there will be found in paradise, a hundred robbers for one king ; since it is impossible to deny that Haroun Alraschid is the most perfect of all the kings of the earth."

The good Lelamain stopt : it was high time. Haroun, struck with the truth of what she had advanced, was quite beside himself.

" I perceive you are right, good mother," said he to her : " The Caliph has erred : he has allowed himself to be carried away by his passion, and nobody is exempted from its power. He has not found in all his court a faithful friend and wise counsellor, who considered it as a duty to stop him. He is certainly highly blameable, but he is still more to be pitied."

" Luckily, there is no ill done of any consequence. Your son is still alive ; and, though the ruin of your fortune has been completed in a moment, it can, in a moment, be repaired. I will set out to the palace, where I have some connections ; I will use all my influence to serve you, and I promise you that this very day you shall have your son in your arms."

" My son-in-law," answered Lelamain, " you impose upon us in this matter. The Caliph is not a man whom you can make run after you without shoes ; you have not the ring which made the cut-throats of the judge of

police fall into a fit of convulsion. Forbear intermeddling with the affairs of the great Haroun Alraschid, who ruleth over sea and land, and before whom the stars of heaven bow down their heads, as the vicar of our great prophet. Giafar, the Grand Vizier, would not venture to undertake what you mean to do. Remain at peace here, while you are allowed to do so; change your manner of life; stay with us, and be an honest man; give alms to the poor. God is merciful, and will pardon you for what is past: but if you go out, and expose yourself to danger, you will kill us with fear. Behold the eyes of my poor Zutulbe, which beg of you a favour for yourself; and consider that these geugaws of gold, silk, and jasper which you leave us, will not have half the value, in our esteem, with that which we will lose by your abandoning us. My son is innocent; he is under the protection of heaven; and though I love him more, yet I am less afraid for him than for you."

The Caliph was melted into tears by this discourse of Lelamaïn, which breathed so much affection and religion; he rose up, in order to go away. Zutulbe and her mother held him by the cloke: "By the name of God, which is written on the golden breast-plate of the Jewish

Jewish high-priest, we beseech thee, do not leave us."

Haroun, still more affected, took Lelamain by the hand, in a manner full of tenderness and respect: "O my good mother," said he to her, "you have given me a treasure in the person of your amiable daughter; but you have conferred upon me a still greater good, by the instruction which may be derived from the maxims you have given me for the regulation of my conduct. Henceforth I vow to you the warmest attachment and the sincerest gratitude, of which you will soon receive the most signal proofs. But allow me to go out, and intrust to myself the care of my own preservation: business which cannot be dispensed with, calls me away.

"Adieu! my dear Zutulbe! I will soon see you again." So saying, he made his escape from them, and got to the palace by the secret passages which led to his apartment.

As soon as he arrived, he dressed himself in his robe of state, ascended his throne, and assembled his Vissiers, Emirs, and other ministers. While each of them was taking his place, the forehead of the Caliph rested on his hand.

"Cruel Caliph!" said he to himself, "thou hast driven headlong into misfortune, an illustrious

lustrious family, whose rank and services entitled them to regard: thou wert on the point of imbruing thy hands in the blood of one of thy most faithful subjects; thou still allowest a princess respectable for her virtues and misfortunes, to languish in a prison; thou hast acted like an odious tyrant, and yet thy courtiers extol thee to the skies! With them thou art always the great Haroun Alraschid!

While the Caliph made this melancholy reflection, all the people of the greatest distinction in the state were prostrated before him. He beheld, with an air of discontent, this deceitful homage; and the adoration of the court made him contemptible in his own eyes.

“ Rise, I command you,” said he; “ let the *Hazeb Yemaleddin* be taken from prison, and brought hither adorned in the richest robes. I myself have examined into the unfortunate affair, for which he was brought before me, and am fully convinced of his innocence. Instead of punishment, he deserves reward: and this day I intend to recompence him for the unjust sufferings to which he has been exposed.

“ You, my visiers, who now hear me, and who know that I am not inaccessible to truth, tell me the reason, since you must have been
better

better acquainted than I was, with that subject against whom appearances had prejudiced me, why there was none of you who ventured to undertake his defence, or ask a pardon for a man of such rank and merit?"

"O Caliph," answered the Visiers, "respect for you kept us silent." "I hate," replied the Caliph, "that respect which hides from me the truth: think not for the future of shewing me such respect." The Visiers kissed the earth in token of obedience.

Yemaleddin now appeared, and prostrated himself at the foot of the throne. Haroun descended from it to put on him the richest robe in the wardrobe of the palace. "May God preserve your life! Commander of the Faithful," said the *Hazeib*, "since he has led you to look upon me."

"Prince," said the Caliph, "I raise you above all the princes of my Empire, and I appoint you my chief emir; go now, and console your mother." Yemaleddin hastened to obey so agreeable an order.

He intended to go there on foot, as a private person: but a horse richly caparisoned was waiting for him at the gate, and the Visiers were ordered to join the retinue, and attend him to his house. Four horsemen went before to announce to Lelamain her son's arrival;

rival ; lest surprise should occasion some disagreeable event.

While Yemaleddin was on the road to his house, Giafar and Mesrour conducted the young princess of Persia back to her apartment. Haroun had offended her too much, to venture to appear before her. She was his wife only in virtue of a contract which might be broken. His two confidants were therefore charged to inform her, that she was now at liberty, and might remain in the palace all her life, under the name either of the wife or daughter of the Sovereign, and in the full enjoyment of all the honours connected with such a station.

The princess of Persia had consented to give her hand to Haroun. She considered it as a great honour to be among the number of the women belonging to the Commander of the Faithful : but her heart was free. She felt consequently a secret satisfaction at the proposal which was made her. " You behold in me," said she to the confidants of the prince, " the submissive, grateful, and respectful daughter of the Commander of the Faithful."

Haroun was delighted with the manner in which his proposal had been received, and instantly formed the design of marrying his adopted daughter to the young man whom he had

had just now raised to the first dignity among the princes and emirs of his empire.

Yemaleddin's mother and sister ran to meet him. It was with difficulty he could free himself from their embraces. After these demonstrations of mutual affections, equally natural and well founded, he entered the pavilion which his mother and sister occupied, and sat down.

"What house is this you are in?" said he to them. "Our's was spoiled and razed to the ground: and here I can observe nothing with which I was formerly acquainted, though I am on the very spot from which I was carried away about a month ago. I see, at one view, more riches than we ever possessed."

"Alas! my son," replied Lelamain, "these very riches are a proof of the depth of misfortune into which we had fallen. When you was torn from hence, every thing was carried away and destroyed; they left us neither clothes, bread, nor a vessel to go for water: Our station was above working, and I was reduced to the necessity of begging bread for my daughter and myself. Yesterday there came a man to our house who asked Zutulbe in marriage, and offered eight thousand sequins for her dowry. He is tall and well-made, but he is only an Arab of the desert; I suspected he was
not

not much worth ; but what could we do, for we had not a single ounce of bread in the house ? He proposed that I myself should go for the Cadi, and bring him to draw up the contract. At the first word I spoke, the Cadi ordered me to be carried to bedlam : but suddenly changing his opinion, he treated me with a thousand civilities, and run here after me, without taking time to put on his *babouches*. He had no paper whereon to draw up the contract : but he tore his *faragi*, wrote it upon it, left us the piece, and there it is with all the writing upon it. He left his robe here torn in the manner you behold it, and made his escape without looking behind him."

" My son-in-law went out, and in a moment after, the house was filled with architects, upholsterers, stone-utters, painters, and gilders. We knew not where to turn ourselves. I asked them the profession of my son-in-law, but could get no answer. After that came a coffer, containing the dowry ; along with it fluffs and furniture ; and last of all, a supper that might have served a king. All was well hitherto ; but about ten o'clock, the judge of the police came with thirty flambeaus, and a troop of three hundred men, to carry off the robber, considering us as receivers

ceivers of thieves. They gave us very abusive language, and intended to break open the door.

“ Suddenly our man fell, as it were, from heaven, upon the roof of the house. He entered by the window, eat, drank, rallied, and made love, as if they had been celebrating his praises at the door. At last, when he wished to go to bed, and appeared to be wearied with the noise, he gave me a ring, whereon certain characters were written. I opened the door, and delivered the talisman to the judge. They were all seized with a terrible panic, and fled: we went to bed as quiet as if nothing had happened.

“ This morning my son-in-law arose, and we talked of our affairs. He wished to take the Caliph’s part against us. What think you did a wild Arab, a chief of robbers (for he certainly is one) intermeddle with? But I said enough to him about it; and he at length agreed that the Caliph was wrong. What is more remarkable, he told me he would go and use his influence to speak to the Caliph in our behalf.

“ This is the protector we have got. Still, however, there is something good about him, and he has shewed me that he is susceptible of amendment: but I do not feel myself less un-

fortunate for having bestowed my daughter on a robber, a wretch of his kind."

While Yemaleddin's mother was speaking, one cause of astonishment followed upon the back of another. That a robber should do so many things openly, and in Bagdad! that he should command a Cadi to come to him, who should obey his orders barefooted! that a contract should be drawn up on the skirt of a *faragi*, and the complete monument of this extravagance left in the house! that an apartment which might lodge the Caliph himself should be furnished in one day! that he should escape from the search and pursuit of three hundred officers of justice, by a talisman!

There was enough in it, in short, to confound wisdom herself. Still, however, by the steps which the lieutenant of police had taken against the author of these wonders, it appeared evident that the man whom justice pursued in a body was undoubtedly a robber.

"Mother," replied Yemaleddin, "every thing in your relation bears at once the appearance of truth and of improbability, and quite confounds me. But what could induce you to give your daughter to a robber?"

"Ah!

" Ah! poverty, povery," exclaimed Lelamain.

" This rascal," replied Yemaleddin, " took advantage of your situation : but, by the favour of heaven, it is changed. I am the head of the family, and as long as I was alive, my sister could not marry without my consent. I have both the law and the Caliph on my side : and I swear by the *Caaba* *, that if your vagabond comes here, I will treat him as he deserves." So saying, he laid his hand upon his sabre : his eyes flashing with fire, terrified the tender and timid Zutulbe.

" What misfortune !" cried the mother, " none of all this would have happened if the Caliph had done us justice one day sooner. We would not have had the mortification to be obliged, in order to procure bread, to give her hand to this robber *Il Bondocani*."

" What name is that you mentioned, mother?" replied Yemaleddin, with a troubled air.

" It is my son-in-law's," answered Lelamain, " *Il Bondocani, Il Bondocani*; have I said it enough?"

" And is it he, who has married my sister?"

H 2

" Hold

* The *Caaba*, or square house, mentioned in the Al-Coran.

“ Hold ; if it is not sufficient to say so, read it on the contract: here it is in full letters. *Contract of marriage between Zutulbe the daughter of the widow Lelamaïn, and Il Bondocani.*”

Upon seeing this, Yemaleddin suddenly prostrated himself with his face upon the earth. Lelamaïn burst into a fit of laughing.

“ Ha, ha, my brave son ! you boasted well, but behold you upon the earth like the rest ! Draw your sabre now. Well, this name of my son-in-law is a most valiant name ! I am very glad I know it. The caravan of Mecca is expected : I will go out to meet it ; I will pronounce aloud the name of my son-in-law ; and I will see India, Armenia, Persia, Egypt, and Romelia, bend the knee before it. I will not grant them even a camel.”

“ Come, will you keep your face always on the earth ? Rise, my discouraged lion ! throw off your shoes, tear your robe, do a thousand extravagant things. Your excuse is quite ready ; you have heard the name which turns every body’s brain. Yet I want the ring which has equal influence in another way. Rise, then, I command you, in the name of *Il Bondocani.*”

“ Yes, my mother, I will rise,” said Yemaleddin, “ at that name to which every thing
on

on earth either bears respect, or owes obedience. I will thank the great Author of being, for those blessings which he hath conferred upon our family, in giving to my sister for a husband, the wise and magnanimous Haroun Alraschid, the prince of princes, and the king of kings: for your son-in-law *Il Bondocani* is the Caliph himself."

"Ah! wretched that I am," exclaimed Lelamaïn, "where shall I find a cave to hide myself in? I have told him on your account a thousand enormities concerning himself."

"Have you told him the truth in every thing?" replied Yemaleddin; "for though he is above men, he is still a man, and one may speak ill of him."

"I invented nothing," said Lelamaïn, "and I only spoke of ourselves." "Then," said the young man, "you see the ill he intends to do you, by what he has done me. Along with my liberty, it has procured me the title of prince of princes, and the place of chief Emir. It is thus that a great man punishes a disagreeable, but useful truth."

Scarcely was this conversation ended, when Mesrour appeared, and announced the arrival of the Caliph. The good mother wished to conceal herself. Yemaleddin and Zutulbe kept her back, each holding her by one of her

hands. "Come, mother," said the young prince, "honour virtue with confidence: the Caliph is not a common man."

Haroun entered alone, shining in all the pomp which grandeur and richness of dress could add to dignity. Lelamaïn, Yemaled-din, and Zutulbe bowed down their foreheads to the earth: the Caliph raised them up one after another, with eagerness, goodness, and affection.

"Madam," said he to Lelamaïn, "your fears on my account are a little calmed: and I assure you none ought to remain. I will always esteem you as the mother of Zutulbe, the sovereign of my heart, and of Yemaled-din, a man worthy of my confidence; in short, as the woman whose wise admonitions have opened my eyes to my faults, which I am happy to have it in my power to correct.

"I flatter myself I shall obtain your forgiveness for all the vexation and grief which your son's disgrace has occasioned. His palace shall be rebuilt in a style suitable to his new dignity; and, as I intend to draw him near to me in every way, I will this day give him for a wife, the noble and amiable descendant of Kaffera Abocheroan, sovereign of Persia, who, in consequence of my new arrangements, is become my adopted daughter, instead of one of my wives.

“ With respect to my Zutulbe, who condescended to cast some looks of regard upon an Arab of the Desert, and to take an affectionate concern in his interest, which every thing seemed conspiring to destroy ; since she appeared willing to attach herself to my fortune, whatever it might be, I hope, I offer her nothing below her, by calling her to the participation of that of the Caliph Haroun.”

It is impossible to describe the satisfaction which this discourse of the Caliph diffused in the hearts of his new family, in stronger terms, than by saying, that Lelamain lost the faculty of speech. The Caliph had ordered a litter to be brought for her and her daughter. They went into it ; and he followed them on horseback, riding in the middle between Yemaleddin and Giafar.

The princess of Persia was married the same day to the new favourite. Magnificent feasts, and a plentiful distribution of alms, enabled the people to share in that happiness which reigned in the palace of the monarch. Yemaleddin carried his spouse and his mother to his own palace, and, every day, the good Lelamain went from the one to the other, in a stately litter, to congratulate her children on their good fortune, instead of reading the Alcoran at the door of the Mosque, and asking charity from those who were unwilling to hear

hear her petition. If any of them had heard it, there would have been no cry of a wonder; if there had been no cry of a wonder, the Caliph would never have run to see the most ravishing of beauties, namely Zutulbe; Yemaleddin would have been a false prophet.

Heaven, it must be allowed, directs every event by threads equally slender and imperceptible to mortal eyes.

Here Scheherazade ended. "You have finished, sister," said Dinarzade to her; "I cannot express to you the pleasure which you gave me by describing the amorous Caliph, leaping through a window, with the consequence of this adventure."

"I am happy," answered the beautiful Sultaneſs, "that the youthful follies of this renowned Sovereign have given you any pleasure; but I can shew him more seriously occupied, in an adventure, wherein he put his favourite minister to very extraordinary trials; and in which, I am persuaded, he will appear to no less advantage."

Dinarzade smiled in expectation of hearing this new story. The Sultan signified, that he would listen to it with pleasure; and Scheherazade began in these words:

The Power of Destiny ; or, The Story of Giafar's Journey to Damas ; containing the adventures of Chebib and his Family.

GIAFAR was Grand Visier to the Caliph Haroun Alraschid, and seemed to enjoy the friendship and confidence of his master. This favour seemed one day to receive a check, sufficient to alarm all Arabia, by whom the whole race of the Barmecides, and particularly Giafar their chief, a Prince of great merit, was highly beloved.

It was then the month of the *Ramazan*. The Caliph was a scrupulous observer of fasting, but, wishing to escape the weariness which it occasioned, he took it into his head to go into his Archives, accompanied by Giafar, and Mesrour, the chief eunuch. He ordered the Visier to open the press which contained the most valuable manuscripts, in expectation of finding there some object to divert his attention ; and he caused give him the first on which the Barmecide laid his hands.

This

This work was the *Giaffer* *, the reputation of which is well known throughout Arabia. It cannot be understood without the help of calculations; but it contains certain presages of future events.

Haroun opened the book, read the first pages of it, and suddenly burst into a fit of laughing. Instantly he seemed affected with a contrary emotion; sadness, and after that, grief appeared to take possession of his mind, so far as to make him shed tears. This latter sensation seemed to vanish and give place to an emotion of joy. The Visier observed these different changes, expressed his surprise, wished to know the reason of them, and ventured to signify his curiosity. The Caliph quickly put the book into its place, and, assuming a grave and severe air, addressed Giafar in this very unexpected language:

“Leave my presence; go and find, where you can, an answer to the question you have now put to me; appear not before me till you are able to give me one. Your life depends upon your obedience.”

Giafar

* The *Giaffer* is an Arabian work, in the library of the French King. It is ascribed to a Prince of the race of the Barmecides, one of the ancestors of Giafar the Grand Visier. It contains predictions, and is, in short, the Nostradamus of the Arabians.

Giafar was astonished at the severity of the order, and the tone in which it was pronounced. How could he have lost in one moment the good graces of his master? he, who, but a quarter of an hour before, had received from him the most flattering marks of his goodness; he who had been admitted to all his amusements, as well as to his counsels; he, whom the Caliph had allowed, contrary to the custom of the East, to converse in private, and in the greatest familiarity, with the favourite Zobeide.

The minister, overwhelmed with sorrow and confusion, retired to his house, and abandoned himself to grief; believing his fortune for ever ruined, and his life in danger, if he must give an answer to a question of which he had not the smallest idea, and explain facts of which it was impossible for him to conceive even the nature.

To no purpose did they serve up meat to him when the hour of fasting was past; in vain did he try to sleep, in order to get rid of his anxiety. His perturbation, trouble of countenance, and deranged habit of body, expressed the disorder of his soul. All this could not escape the interested and penetrating observation of Fatmé his spouse. She did every thing in her power to force the secret from him; but, although connected with him

by

by the ties of blood and friendship, as well as by those of marriage, and, notwithstanding her claim to his confidence, she could not obtain it.

Three days had passed in this situation, so distressing to them both, when Hichia Barmekir, Giafar's father, arrived from the country, whither he had been to spend a few days. Fatmé went to meet him, and communicated to him her uneasiness. Hichia entered his son's house, asked him the cause of the grief to which he seemed abandoned; and the intreaties of a father at length prevailed.

The Visier omitted no circumstance which had occurred in the archives, nor any of those mournful reflections which his misfortunes suggested. The old man received what was entrusted to him with an air of serenity "Be calm, my son," said he; "have I not always guarded you against trusting appearances; and, above all, against what the vulgar ignorantly ascribe to fortune? Favour often deceives those who think they enjoy it; and it also arises from causes which would seem to destroy it. In your case, either my judgment deceives me, or the disgrace into which you seem to have fallen, is the introduction to greater good fortune.

Fatmé, hearing this proceed from one who was both her father and her uncle, burst into tears

tears of affection and joy. "O venerable father," exclaimed she, "O thou who art wisdom and goodness itself! shew us how we shall get out of this distressing situation."

"Alas!" said Giafar, "how can my father tell me what the Caliph read, when he reserves it as a secret to himself? How is it possible to guess the answer? I saw him change successively from joy to grief, and afterwards resume a satisfied air; and I must tell him the reasons of these different emotions. It is impossible for me, and must be so to every human being."

"My son," answered Hichia, "the Caliph has read a chapter of a work renowned throughout the earth, of which one of our ancestors was the author, I mean the *Giaffer*. His weeping and laughing in succession must have been occasioned by a prediction relating to some event decreed in the counsels of heaven, in the execution of which you must act a part; and which will of itself furnish the answer which is demanded. Your destiny at present calls you from Bagdad: You must yield yourself to it implicitly: You must, alone and unknown, take the road to Damas: There you will see one wonder on the back of another, and facts themselves will discover to you this secret, of such importance to your repose, as well as to your happiness and good fortune."

Giafar placed the greatest confidence in the understanding and wisdom of his father. He took leave of him and of Fatmé, mounted an excellent mule, and, in a disguise in which it was impossible to discover him, took, with the utmost secrecy, the road to Damas.

There was, at that time, in this magnificent city, a man of the name of Chebib. He was rich, affable, generous and humane, and he received, with hospitality, every stranger whom accident or business brought to the place. His gate, at which much alms were every day distributed, was the resort of the needy. He never went abroad, but to succour the afflicted: His house was the refuge of the unfortunate; and his generous protection extended itself to all the oppressed.

At a little distance from the city, he had a magnificent garden, abounding in every delight. The nobles of Damas enjoyed the use of it along with himself: but, while he paid them all the attention which was due to them, without confounding them with the vulgar, he found means also to admit this important class of mankind to all the enjoyments which could be granted them; so that even the traveller there met with the most agreeable retreat.

To describe, in one word more, the character of this extraordinary man, he was a perfect

perfect disciple of Mahomet. The great resort of company to his house, and the multitude of business wherein he was engaged, never prevented him from discharging his duties: equally active, and frugal of his time, he always found some leisure hours to devote to study; he prayed five times a-day; he practised fasting, and fulfilled every duty prescribed by the religion of the prophet.

Such was the character of Xakem-Tai-Chebib, whose eminent virtues and generosity, flourishing at Damas like the rich tuberoses, diffused their grateful odour to the most distant corners of the earth.

Chebib was in his garden without the city, when Giafar passed by his walls. This minister, absorbed in thought, was surprised to hear himself accosted by young slaves, elegantly dressed.

"Stranger," said they to him, "it is almost noon; the hour of dinner draws near; the city is still at a considerable distance, and your mule must be tired: You yourself ought likewise, at this time of day, to withdraw from the rays of the burning sun. Chebib our master saw you coming at a distance, and begs of you to come and share of his hospitality, for however short a time. He will esteem it a favour from heaven, to have it in his power to serve you in any thing,

and a kindness on your part, if you will be so obliging as accept of his offer.

So gracious an invitation, given to a single man like Giafar, appeared to him the beginning of those wonders which his father had foretold. Besides, as he was to yield himself entirely to the disposal of events, he must not refuse an adventure which bore so favourable an appearance. He entered, therefore, into the house of Chebib; and his astonishment increased in proportion to the kindness, and respectful attention, with which he was received by the master.

He was surrounded with a numerous company, composed of all the principal people at Damas. A magnificent entertainment was served up, and water was presented to every person in basons, and beautiful ewers. But those with which Giafar was served, were of gold, and the linen given him to wipe his hands with, was very richly embroidered. In short, at the invitation of Chebib, he occupied the first seat at table, and the whole company were surprised at the respectful attention with which a stranger was treated, of whom nothing announced the importance, and who seemed to be brought among them only by accident.

Three hundred and sixty covers were placed upon the table; the rarest and most nourishing

rishing dishes were there collected. Never was there a repast where more variety was joined to so much magnificence. No where was there ever presented a better assortment of wines, and other liquors fitted to please the most delicate taste. The air was embalmed with perfumes, and the ear was delighted with the most ravishing music, varied without end. Different kinds of poetry, recited betwixt the different courses, amused the mind, while they waited for the renewal of the appetite by the novelty of the dishes. The princes and grandees of the city of Damas, although brought up in the midst of delicacy and luxury, were forced to admire the order and taste which were displayed in this elegant profusion; but they could not guess the reason which led Chebib to indulge in it, nor who the stranger was, in whose honour it seemed to be given.

Giafar was still farther than any of them from suspecting the cause of it; for he had many reasons to think that he was totally unknown: But Hichia Barmekir his father had prepared him for meeting at Damas, one wonder upon the back of another; and he considered the reception which was then given him on the road to that city, as intended to familiarize him with occasions of surprize.

When the repast was ended, Chebib took his new guest aside, and said to him: "You may be fatigued with your journey; if it is agreeable to you to repose yourself in this mansion, consider every thing in it as your own; if it is more convenient for you to prosecute your journey to Damas, you will there find a house of which you shall equally be master; and if you can possibly form a wish which your landlord is unable to satisfy, he himself will supply every thing you may want."

As Giafar signified his curiosity to see the city of Damas, which was quite new to him, Chebib, having disengaged himself from his other guests, went along with him to the city, conducted him to his house, placed him in his own apartment, where he had moreover caused a bed be spread of the utmost magnificence.

That hospitality which entered into circumstances of such delicacy, and which was observed with so much candour, frankness, and confidence, excited the admiration of the prince. It strongly prejudiced him in favour of his noble and generous landlord. Their conversation, which was at first of a general nature, gave him an opportunity of observing, that he possessed a mind polished by an acquaintance with the world, improved by study,

study, and enlightened by experience; that he possessed, in short, a sound judgment, and an excellent heart. One thing, however, astonished him, that a man like him, in the flower of his age, and apparently very rich, should live alone, and without a family, as he appeared to do. How could one who was so scrupulous an observer of the law in every other point, be led to forsake that part of it which enjoined marriage as a duty on people of his rank, and pronounced a curse on those who voluntarily condemned themselves to die without offspring? He ventured, therefore, but with great circumspection, to enquire of him, if he was married.

“What makes you suppose that-I am not?” said Chebib. “The lodgings you have given me,” answered the Visier; “the solitude of your palace, where, for some days, at the arrival of night, I have seen nobody but you and myself; the continual attention, moreover, which you pay to me and to others, and which must necessarily deprive your family of that share which is due to them; in short, you having arranged matters so that we are never asunder.”

“I cannot do less,” answered Chebib, “to shew myself worthy of the good fortune which gives me a man like you for my guest. It is highly proper, that I should be always near him

him to supply his wants, whatever they are; and I could even lodge him in my heart, if he would be satisfied with such a place."

Giafar anew discovered traces of those wonders which were predicted by his father, when he thus saw himself treated with such marks of distinction. Every thing was lavished in the house where he was, to make his abode equally agreeable and convenient.

Still, notwithstanding every thing which Chebib could do to interest, amuse, and divert the illustrious guest he had received into his house, he perceived in his countenance marks of trouble and uneasiness, and he wished to know the cause of them.

The prince, finding him worthy of his confidence, upon the first proposal, thus spoke: "Noble Chebib, you have in your house the unfortunate Giafar, who is banished from the presence of his master, the Commander of the Faithful, who cannot hope to regain his favour, but by fulfilling a condition which is impossible, and who will inevitably lose his life, if he cannot extricate himself from this abyss."

"Though I never saw you, great prince!" answered Chebib, "I knew you perfectly when I received you into my house; and, though I have carefully concealed the secret, I was not ignorant of the person to whom I paid
that

that respect which was due to you. I expected you at my country seat, just when you appeared."

"And who," replied the Barmecide, "could have informed you beforehand of a journey no sooner proposed than undertaken, and prosecuted on my part with too great speed to allow the news of it to get before me?"

"I will confess," answered Chebib, "that I was informed by very extraordinary means. I have in my library a very valuable book, with which you must be acquainted, as it came to us from one of your illustrious ancestors; I mean the *Giaffer*. It can only be opened at certain times, and you must fall upon the truth at the first opening. Whenever it is in my power, I search in it for instruction, that I may be on my guard against future events. The second volume having fallen into my hands, I found in it these three letters, to wit, G, B, and V, which are the initials of your name.

"In the following pages I observed numbers which referred to these letters. I calculated them by the common cabala, and learned from them, that Giafar, a Barmecide and Viceroy, was called to Damas by a decree of the fates, by which he was to accomplish important adventures of various kinds; and that he would come there alone, in disguise, unknown, and

and at a certain hour. Upon this, moved with the respect due to your high dignity, grateful to heaven, whose goodness had enabled me to discover this wonder, and thenceforward considering myself as one of its instruments with respect to you, I went to my country house, and prepared every thing for giving you that reception which you there met with. The grandees of the kingdom, who were expressly invited to the feast, might be surpris'd to see me pay the honours thereof to you, although you appeared to them only a common stranger, who had come thither by chance. But they have often seen me give the preference at my house to a simple dervise; and, as they know that I respect science above every thing else, you pass'd, and still pass in their opinion for a travelling sage.

“ I did not disclose myself to you during the first days we were together, but waited till my behaviour should gain your confidence. Now, when you know me, I require you, in the name of zeal, friendship, and hospitality, even in the name of God himself, who hath not brought us together without design, to inform me concerning your adventure.”

“ O Chebib !” said Giafar, “ although the decree which brings me hither, had not ordered me to disclose myself to you without reserve,

serve, yet the virtues which you have displayed, the friendship which you have testified for me, and the force of sympathy, would have gained you my entire confidence. This book, called the *Giaffer* is the cause of my incredible disgrace, and of my journey hither."

The Visier then related to Chebib every thing which had happened in the archives with the Caliph, upon occasion of the *Giaffer*. He informed him of the strange method which was left him to regain that favour which he seemed to have lost for ever; and, at the same time, communicated to him the encouragement which he had received from his father Hichia Barmekir, who advised him to go instantly to Damas."

"My dear brother!" replied Chebib, "consider what has happened to you as nothing. When the decrees of heaven are to be executed, the Caliph himself is but one of its instruments. Resign yourself beforehand to every thing which may happen to you here. We cannot efface a single line of what is written in the book of the decrees: our only merit must be obedience and submission. I apprehend nothing disagreeable to you, except the torments which you may occasion to yourself by improperly indulging unreasonable anxiety. Besides, you set out alone from Bagdad, and reached my house without any accident.

dent. You have fallen into the arms of friendship; and I have been able to give you some kind of information concerning the object of your coming to Damas, where the fates have conducted you by means of your wise father. Hitherto I see nothing which ought to discourage you."

At this discourse of Chebib, Giafar felt his fears and suspicions partly vanish. Till that time, he might apprehend that he was the victim of some intrigue, which, by false insinuations had deprived him of the esteem, friendship, and confidence of his master. The reading which took place in the archives, the curiosity which he had signified, and the order to interpret smiles and tears, of which it was impossible for him to guess the cause, might have appeared to him a blunt and extraordinary way of expressing a dissatisfaction, the reasons of which it was not wished to explain. But since the explanations which he had just now received, and the promises made him by his father Hichia, as every thing in these little unravellings appeared to him highly wonderful, he was justified in supposing that the other wonders promised would speedily be revealed.

In consequence of these reflections, the Visier resumed his courage, and yielded himself

to every thing proposed by his landlord, for dissipating his cares. One day he was conducted to the public baths, and the next to the grand mosque: At another time he took an airing on horseback, both within and without the town. Excellent entertainment; every thing which could increase or diversify its enjoyment; the pleasures of select conversation; the amusements to be met with in a large city; in short, every thing around him conspired to make him forget how heavy time hangs on those who are impatient for the arrival of a happy event on which the re-establishment of their good fortune depends.

Though all these means were recurred to, weariness still gained ground upon Giafar. Chebib perceived it; and the visier confessed to him, that, being accustomed often to traverse Bagdad in disguise, he wished to enjoy the same satisfaction at Damas. This desire was not opposed by his friend; and next day the Visier alone and disguised, having previously informed them that he would not dine at the house, began his course through the streets and market places of the city.

Being arrived at the mosque which is called *Giameh Illamoué* *, he there offered up his

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* *Giameh Illamoué* is the name of the finest mosque at Damas, and one of the three most celebrated in the world.

confessions and prayers. Leaving this, he found himself, after a few turns, opposite to a cook's shop, which had a fine shew, and entered it to take a repast.

Among five or six persons whom the same object had brought thither, there was a learned man, who, suddenly raising his voice, in the midst of a general conversation, said with a positive tone, "The grand Visier Giafar must certainly be at Damas the very moment I am now speaking."

"How do you know that?" said another person in the same company. "I am reader," said the man who had made the declaration, "to Abdelmelec-Ben-Merouan our king: twenty-five days ago I opened by his orders, the book of the *Giaffer* in his presence; you know that this book is opened only twice a year, at the time of the *Ramazan*, and of the *Haraphat*. On the seventeenth day of the *Ramazan*, we found by calculations, that the Barmecide prince was to come hither. The cause which brings him is unknown; but it is certain that he is here, and the king has not yet been able to get information of the place in which he is concealed. A magnificent apartment in the palace has been prepared for him; for, you must know as well as I, that events foreseen by means of the *Giaffer* must unavoidably come to pass."

Giafar

Giafar hearing this discourse, and fearing every moment that he would be discovered, went into the cook's room, to pay him, and depart. "You have nothing to pay," said the cook to him in a low voice, "on three accounts; first, because you are a prince, and that too of the ancient, noble, and brave tribe of the Barmecides; next, because you are lieutenant to the Caliph Haroun Alraschid; and thirdly, because you are the guest of Chebib, who teaches us generosity by his example, and who serves as a pattern of hospitality to the whole earth. When the thunder, agitating the clouds, causes rain, accompanied with plenty, to descend upon our fields parched by the south wind, it only imitates the beneficence of Chebib. Do not be alarmed that your being here is known to Chebib and me; the very manner of our knowing it is a security for our discretion. I will explain to you the source whence we have drawn our information."

The cook then took a book out of a locked press, and shewed Giafar the title. It was the third book of the *Giaffer*: "here," said he, "I learned that this very day you was to dine with me."

The Visier, on hearing this discourse of the cook, perceived his father Hichia's predictions more and more verified; and wonders, so

to speak, heaped upon wonders. One more wonder of this kind was necessary to convince him that he was really conducted to Damas by a decree, the power of which obliged the Caliph to deprive himself even of the presence of his most useful minister, and of the company of the man who was most agreeable to him.

On a following day, the prince of the Barmecides, in one of his excursions, as it was exceedingly hot, was led to go into a shop where all kinds of refreshments were sold. He sat down, and called for a glass of *laxamas* *.

He was not the only person whom the same desire had brought thither. The master of the shop took him by the hand, and persuaded him with a mysterious air to go into the back shop. "Prince," said he to him when they were alone, "you are not in your proper place; there has been a separate room prepared for you here for some time. Everything is there ready, as far as can be expected at the house of a private individual of my station, for serving a prince of your race, the grand Visier of the empire, and the chief favourite of the Commander of the Faithful."

Giasar

* *Laxamas* is a liquor extracted from the substance of dried raisins, with which perfumes are mixed.

Giafar permitted the seller of lemonade to conduct him into this apartment, where he was seated on an elevated sofa, surrounded on all sides with vases of porcelain full of beautiful flowers. Three beautiful youths, dressed with an uncommon but simple elegance, attended round the sofa; "my children," said the seller of lemonade to them, "behold your prince and mine, whose arrival here was foretold by our ancient prophets in the books which they have left us. Serve him with all the attention you are able, and with the respect which he deserves."

The young men immediately placed a table of sandal-wood before the Visier, and presented him, on their knees, with the *laxamas* which he had called for; one of them filled a pot with perfumes, whose odorous vapours mingled with those of the flowers which already embalmed the apartment. Giafar beheld, with delight, these young shoots of his own tribe, busied around him, and then arranging themselves by the side of their father, as if to seek a shelter. It is thus that three young sprigs, taken from a branch of the *thamarena* *, grow up under the shade of the

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prin-

* The *thamarena* is a beautiful tree, whose small yellow flowers form charming garlands, and emit a very sweet smell.

principal trunk, put forth their leaves and flowers, and prepare ornaments, and an increase of finery for the young beauties of the east.

Reflection on his situation, and a moment of regret at his past fortune, drew a sigh from the Barmecide. "Alas!" said he to himself, "when I was in favour, and had it in my power to protect my whole tribe, how happy would I have been to have met with this pretty family, and taken them to live with me?"

After making this reflection, which was somewhat too mournful, he gave each of the young men fifty pieces of gold, and intended to pay as nobly for the *laxamas*, which he had received.

"You owe nothing here, prince" said the feller of lemonade; "the house and its landlord are your own. You are of our tribe; you are our prince, our standard, and our light, the friend of the great Caliph Haroun, and the guest of the generous Chebib, in honour of whom so many lamps burn under the dome of
Coubet.

smell. The dried leaves are reduced to powder, which has an excellent scent, and which the women of the East wear upon their hair. A colour also is extracted from it, with which they stain their arms and legs.

Coubet-il-Nasser †. Behold this celebrated dome; count the lamps which have been fixed in it, since the great Haroun Alraschid himself set the example. All those who have been partakers of the kindness and hospitality of Chebib, and there are sovereigns among the number, have acquired honour by testifying their gratitude by an ostensible and lasting monument.

“Thus, while the moon rises to comfort the earth with her soft rays, for the absence of the sun’s beams, if an eclipse deprives us of her light, or a cloud obscures her shining, the people of Damas have only to turn their eyes towards *Coubet-il-Nasser*. The lamps which gratitude hath there lighted up, replace the stars of night, and incessantly display the generosity of Chebib.”

Giafar felt real pleasure in hearing his virtuous and magnificent landlord so highly extolled. He conceived, at the same time, that the man who made such an eulogium on him, must himself be, in every respect, above the profession of a seller of lemonade. Knowledge and virtue are confined to no station of life:

† *Coubet-il-Nasser* was a dome placed on the top of a mountain at Damas. This piece of curiosity attracted the attention of the Caliph, who had gone there in disguise, in a journey which he formerly made to that city.

life: Giafar, however, testified some curiosity to know how the master of the house he was in, could be so accurately informed of his residence at Damas, and of the precise hour when he was to come to his house to refresh himself.

The answer was, that it was by the study of the *Giaffer*, at opening the fourth book. The seller of lemonade shewed him the note, which, after calculating, he had extracted from it.

The Visier finished his travels through the city, and returned to his landlord's house with an air of satisfaction, from which the latter drew a favourable omen. He was busy in making the prince quit his disguise, and caused him be served with coffee, liquors, and every thing which, while they waited for the evening's repast, could make up the fatigues of the day.

A delicious and plentiful supper, to which perfumes and music gave an increase of delight, concluded these flattering attentions. Giafar, having eat with a better appetite than common, and having affectionately embraced his entertainer, went to bed, with the resolution of next day renewing his walks through Damas, that he might there discover the steps in which heaven had decreed him to walk.

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He passed a good night : when it was scarcely day, he resumed the dress in which he was wont to seek for adventures, and, taking leave of his landlord till the evening, set out on his journey.

Chance conducted the Vifier to the banks of the river Abana. A poor fisherman was casting a net, and had hauled it several times, but got nothing. After three or four attempts, of which Giafar was a witness, the poor man, while he wrung his net, in order to press the water out of it, spoke so as to be heard.

“ What shall become of us ? I have a wife, three boys, and four girls : We have no bread, and, for these two days, not a fish has come into my net. O my God ! I call upon you in the name of your great prophet ; but I am far from him. I behold from hence the dome of *Coubet-il-Nasser*, which always shines with the generosity of your servant Chebib. I am still encouraged to cast my net, in the name of one whose reputation for goodness is spread over the whole earth, and who has found favour in your sight.”

Having spoken these words, the fisherman prepared his net, turned his eyes towards heaven, and exclaimed, “ In the name of the twelve brightest lamps which are lighted in honour of Chebib, in the dome of *Coubet-il-Nasser* ; in the name of Chebib, and of the twelve

twelve stars companions of our great prophet, which have settled on the house of the servant of God at Damas, to honour with their countenance, his beneficence, and generosity, I now cast my net. O my God ! may the virtue attached to his name, whom thou hast chosen to reflect thy image upon earth, come to the succour of the needy !”

While he finished this address to heaven, the fisherman again repeated in a louder voice ; “ In the name of Chebib !” and cast his net.

It is easy to conceive, from the friendship which Giafar entertained for Chebib, with what attention he followed the throw of the net, to examine the success. It was complete.

The fisherman, deceived by the weight, believed at first that some branches concealed at the bottom of the water had entangled the meshes : but he soon observed the fishes struggling within it, and he must not hazard the breaking of the net.

The proprietor of this little fortune, in order to secure it, tied the rope which held the net, to the trunk of a tree at the water edge, stripped himself, and went into the river. He was then able to bring to land his whole prize, which astonished Giafar with the number and quality of fishes of every kind of which it was composed. While he congratulated the fisherman

erman on his success, he assisted him, with pleasure, in disentangling the net from its great load; and, admiring the wonder which had been wrought in the name of Chebib, he inquired of the man who that Chebib was, whose name he had invoked with so much success.

"Are you then wholly a stranger on the earth," answered the fisherman, "that you know not the generous Chebib? The very birds of passage, whom he has fed with his hand, have spread the reputation of his beneficence from one region to another. He is the son of Chebib, and grandson of that Chebib who assisted the great Omar in the conquest of Damas, and who afterwards entertained the Caliph and his army for three days.

"Omar, grateful for his services, brought him to Damas, built him a magnificent dwelling, and imprinted the mark of his victorious hand on one of the pilasters which support the entablature of the door of his palace. This glorious mark still exists, and every true musulman beholds it with respect.

"The Caliph Haroun, having come to Damas, honoured Chebib with the same favour, by imprinting his hand on the opposite pilaster.

"Open your eyes, and behold these wonders. They still exist, and see how heaven

and its favourites have concurred to confirm the glory of these great men.

“The present Caliph has gone farther; he has caused his name, which you can read, be written in letters of gold, and incrustated with marble.”

Praising Chebib was flattering Giafar. He was now fully convinced, that destiny, by conducting him to the house of so valuable a man, was preparing for him happy events in future life. However, to be farther assured of the nature of that influence which then presided over his fortune, he thought of another method of trying his fate.

While the fisherman was wringing and drying his net, he thus spoke to him: “You have just now convinced me, that this Chebib is a man esteemed by heaven, since you have succeeded so well in his name. I am anxious about the fortune of a man with whom mine is connected, and wish you would do me the favour to cast the net once more in his name.”

“Brother,” replied the fisherman, “it is not prudent to weary heaven: it has already given me a plentiful draught of fishes; and I know not how they are to be carried to my house. I must go and sell them in order to buy bread; for I left nothing at home but water for ablutions, and I have no time to lose. If I cast my
net

net to no purpose, my family will suffer by it; if I succeed, how shall I be able to carry away more than a load of them?"

"You cannot lose your time," said Giafar, "for I will make you amends for it; and you shall not sink under your burden, for I will assist you in supporting the load."

"In that case," replied the fisherman; "as I hazard nothing by obliging you, I will do it with pleasure. Tell me the name in which you wish me once more to try my fortune."

"It is *Gim, Be, Ouaou* *," said Giafar.

The fisherman pronounced the name, and threw in the net, which both of them were obliged to hold on account of the draught. The old man, quite overjoyed, went into the river, and, with the assistance of Giafar, drew out on the sand the largest draught of fishes which had ever been taken in the river Abana.

When the fishes were brought ashore, the fisherman, while putting on his clothes, pronounced in a low tone of voice, *Gim, Be, Ouaou*, the name which he had just now employed. He caused the visier again repeat it to him, then took his stick, and began to trace figures and make calculations on the sand.

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* *Gim, Be, Ouaou*, is the manner of pronouncing the letters G, B, V, when they spell the Arabic alphabet.

Every moment he appeared astonished at the product of his labour, and, when it was finished, he returned to the prince.

“ It only remains,” said he to him, “ in order to exhaust the river of fishes, to cast the net in the name of the Caliph Haroun Alraschid ; for I have cast it in the name of Chebib, and you have made me try my fortune upon the star of the great prince of the Barmecides, the Visier of Visiers, and the principal favourite of the Commander of the Faithful. And how could you seem anxious about the fate of the fortunate Giafar? How much would you be encouraged, if you were acquainted with our books ! The prince of the Barmecides, if we may judge by the conjunction of the star of Chebib’s house with his, must, at this very moment, be the guest of Chebib at Damas. If the great Barmekir, the chief of the house of Giafar, assisted our Great Prophet in the conquest of Bagdad, Omar was indebted to Chebib’s grandfather for that of Damas. Perhaps these two powerful families are now to be united, in order to secure the continuance of the empire, as they have already contributed to its increase. These are events which the fates accomplish by means incomprehensible to us. But let not man be proud, when the powers on high seem to be
put

put in motion for his sake ; rather let him rejoice in being their instrument."

Giafar was much more astonished to find so much learning and depth of knowledge in a man of the lowest class, than he had been at the house of the cook and seller of lemonade. This sage had no library but the firmament of heaven, and no port-folio but the sand under his feet.

The fishes which had been taken, were now to be disposed of. Giafar called to mind the goodness of Chebib towards every thing in nature which was possessed of life. " Brother," said he to the fisherman, " you have, without intending it, given me great satisfaction in many respects. Nobody has greater love or regard for the generous Chebib than I have ; and it is impossible to be more interested than I am in the fate of the prince of the Barmecides. Nobody takes greater pleasure in honouring virtue and knowledge in that class of men among whom you was born. I should even like to see it shine with a brightness sufficient to awaken the emulation of those who think their rank or fortune makes it unnecessary for them to be distinguished by merit of any kind. I am richer than might be supposed from my dress : Grant me the satisfaction of having it in my power to put your numerous family in easy circumstances, and accept these

two hundred pieces of gold. Pick out whatever of these fishes may please your family, and let the remainder, which have been taken in the name of Chebib and Giafar, be set at liberty in the name of Chebib alone, that they may no longer be mute in publishing the praises of that generous man, even in the bottom of the waters."

"I will not keep a single one of them, O my prince! cried the old man in an ecstasy of joy; I was acquainted with the name of Giafar, and knew something of his high destinies. His virtues could not but discover to me his person, and I fall now at his feet—No, there shall no being be unhappy by any deed of mine, on a day so fortunate: All these fishes shall be restored to the element from which they were taken.

"Go," said he to them, in a kind of transport, "recover strength and courage, traverse the seas from south to north, and make known that Chebib and Giafar, united on the earth, do there exhibit an example of every virtue, and promote the work begun by our Great Prophet. May the report of this union reach even unto Leviathan*, and make him tremble on his throne."

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* According to the Arabians, there are devils in the sea, as well as on the land, and Leviathan is the prince of the former.

The Visier left the fisherman, wishing him all the blessings which can attend virtue, and the glory which is the reward of labours undertaken for the good of mankind. They parted at length, as if they had been long acquainted.

The time of taking a repast drew near. Giafar had been engaged in violent exercise, and went to the house of his trusty cook. He dined there, but met with nothing to gratify his curiosity and taste for the marvellous, or give him any information concerning the work to which he was called by the fates.

He passed through a market-place, at one corner of which was the most considerable coffee-house at Damas, called *Il Manachie*. A small branch of a river passed through and embellished its garden. Here Giafar sat down upon a marble sofa. This seat was placed at the back of an arbour, covered with a well-spread vine, which formed a summer-house.

Scarcely had he taken his coffee, when three dervises entered, without any previous concert, through three openings in the summer-house, which was shut only on the side against which the marble sofa leaned. Giafar observed, through the leaves and branches, the astonishment of the three dervises, who were

strangers to one another, and whose steps had led them by opposite entrances, to the same place, at the very same instant of time. They saluted one another, sat down, and remained silent, while they were taking their coffee: but mutual curiosity pressed them to come to an explanation concerning a meeting of so extraordinary a nature. The oldest, at last, spoke thus :

“ Brothers, does it not appear to you very extraordinary that chance should thus have brought us together in this place? There must be some mystery in the case. Our station, which puts us, whatever we are, upon a footing of equality, entitles us to speak freely; let us therefore communicate to one another the design of our coming hither. That you may be induced to conceal nothing from me in your story, I shall relate my own.

“ Although I am now, by the grace of God, a Mr'ometan, I was born in China, in the city of Kanko, and descended from a rich family, who were worshippers of Kahihu. From every thing which my parents told me, in their instructions, I concluded, that our ancestors had deified one or more men, and I wished to find out that God by whom I myself and my friends were made, that I might serve and adore him. A desire in my friends to settle me in
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the bonds of wedlock, added to the embarrassment of my mind on this important subject. For my part, being long persuaded that a man ought to enter into no enjoyment, without knowing himself, and allow or deny himself no engagement without inquiring into the object thereof, I determined to leave my father's house, and travel through China in quest of that information which I was anxious to obtain.

“ It was easy for me to collect in gold and jewels what was necessary for the expences of my journey. I went from province to province, inquiring into the worship which was there paid to the divinity, and examining the reasons of it. Some worshipped idols made with men's hands ; others paid homage to a calf, or some more ridiculous object. They all wished to persuade me to adopt their manner of thinking ; while I plainly saw, that to bow down before one's own work, was a mark of the greatest weakness, and that he must be worse than a madman who could believe, that the system of the universe, constituted as we behold it, proceeded from the head of a calf. Lastly, I found some who worshipped the sun. As this luminary enlivens every thing with his heat, if he did not appear to be God, I thought he might at least pass for a tolerable image of him. But my
thirst

thirst for travelling having led me to places where his influence ceased to be felt, I saw that in him also there was still something wanting to make up the complete idea of God.

“Returning the way I had gone, I entered the city Damgad, and took up my lodgings in the quarter allotted to strangers. I was there familiarly conversing with a man whose humour and principles seemed to agree with my own, when another came up and accosted him: What!” said the man who was with me, “you are in this city then; where do you lodge?” “I lodge,” replied the man lately arrived, “at the house of Tantour-Kous-Kam, the most respected man in China, for a virtue which is very seldom practised there, I mean hospitality. He is so charitable, that they say he supports more than a thousand people every day. As I was a stranger at Damgad, I went to the house of Kous-Kam, making use of the name of Chebib of Damas: and, at this name, my landlord, if he had been able, would have poured down on me dew of pearls. It was at the house of Chebib of Damas that Tantour-Kous-Kam received lessons of generosity, and of the exercise of hospitality.

“Are you well acquainted with this Chebib?” said I. “I have been his guest twice,” answered he; “whoever has not seen
Chebib

Chebib of Damas practise these virtues, has no conception of them. They procure him the respect and love of all around him; and his reputation is so widely spread, that it is said the birds of heaven every where form concerts in his praise. I myself have been a witness of the love they bear him, and of the grateful attention and regard which he bestows upon these creatures.

“ One day, while I was at his house, an *ibis* * uttered piercing cries, flying round a pavilion in his garden, where he was used to go and enjoy repose for a few hours during the great heats. His slaves, wearied with its cries, wished to shoot it with an arrow; but Chebib opposed this, and opened one of the windows of the pavilion. The bird came in, and uttered new cries still more piercing, opposite to a great sofa on which Chebib was accustomed to sleep. He ordered the furniture to be lifted up with care, using the same precautions with respect to the tapistry. They found under it an enormous serpent which had got in by a subterraneous hole. Chebib prevented the slaves from killing it, and ordered the animal to retire into its hole. It obeyed; and he was perfectly satisfied, to
prevent;

* The *ibis*, a species of stork, is a bird very common in the East.

prevent, by shutting up the hole, its return into the pavilion.

“ I listened with avidity to this story, and immediately took my resolution : “ Good actions,” said I to myself, “ can only proceed from good principles : truth is the only basis of virtue : I will therefore go and seek it with Chebib.”

“ I set out for Damas, and came to find the sage whose acquaintance I was ambitious to obtain. Scarcely had I entered the city, when a slave came to invite me to honour his master’s house with my presence. I was conducted to the house of the very man whom I sought. His excellent lessons made me wish to become a Mahometan ; and soon after I assumed the habit of a dervise. I never let three years pass without coming to Damas. My love of retirement makes me prefer staying at his country house ; and he is pleased to let me enjoy it. We have our times for meeting one another, and this day I came to see him.”

When the first and eldest of the three dervises had done speaking, the second began. “ You will see, my brothers, that it cannot be without some sort of design, whatever it is, that destiny has brought us together ; for I am an admirer and disciple of the same Chebib of whom I have just now heard, and have this moment come to Damas to claim his hospitality. I

was born in India, of a powerful family, who enjoyed every blessing of prosperity. But I learned very early that this appearance is deceitful, and that there is something else to be sought after besides pretended enjoyments, which occasion more trouble than they give satisfaction. I wished to travel for instruction, and left my father's house.

"I was passing one day through the streets of Surat near the great Pagoda. A blind man had been asking alms to no purpose ever since morning; and, in despair at not having found one compassionate soul, abandoned himself to grief. Being pressed with want, he suddenly burst into tears, and exclaimed, "whoever you are who pass by me, if not in the name of God, give me alms in the name of Chebib of Damas."

"At this name, which I had never before heard, I felt an uncommon emotion, and was anxious to know why the blind man seemed to make it his last resort. I went up to him, and, after putting two pieces of gold into his hand, "Brother," said I, "what man is that whose name you have just now mentioned?" "He is," answered he, "a pattern to all those who wish good to their fellow men. His generosity shines abroad, to rouse to imitation those who behold him, and to render inexcusable those who shut their eyes and ears against the

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the tears and cries of the unfortunate. It is also concealed, in order to relieve from the burden of gratitude, those whom he might oblige by sacrifices which might appear too burdensome to him. Such is his beneficence, that not a single being has approached him, who has not felt its effects."

"Upon this representation of the blind man, I could not resist the strong desire I had of coming to Damas, in order to become acquainted with a man who had been announced to me in a manner so very extraordinary. Being arrived at this great city, I found it easy to gain access to him. I abjured before him the extravagant worship of Brama, Witsnou, and Rutren, and took the habit of a dervise.

"I will conclude with mentioning a circumstance in his character which agrees with that respecting the serpent which you have now related. The King kept a lion of an enormous size, in an iron cage, at one of the gates of the palace. Chebib never passed by the animal, without bestowing on him some marks of his friendship, and of that disposition which he possessed, to make every thing happy which lived upon the earth.

"One day, through the fault of the keeper, this terrible animal, who had been ill treated, made his escape. He was committing most

dread-

dreadful ravages both in the city and country, when Chebib fell in with him. At the sight of his daily benefactor, the fierce animal grew calm and gentle, and allowed himself to be conducted by him to his cage, as if he had been the tamest creature in the world."

The second dervise thus concluded the recital of his adventures, and induced the third to disclose with equal confidence the motive of his journey. He did so without being asked, wondering how they had all three met together at Damas, for the sake of the same man. This one was born a Mahometan, and had become a dervise before he knew Chebib: But he declared that he was indebted to him for much information concerning the nature and extent of man's duty upon earth; and that, if he taught the rich by his example, to make a noble and rational use of their wealth, he also shewed the poor how to find resources in their inferior station.

"Brothers," added he, "you have told me of his beneficence to the animals; let me add, it extends even to the plants. Whenever he takes a walk in his garden, he waters those which are parched, raises up those which are broken down, and gives support to those which would be forced to creep on the ground. He would never allow the water at his house to

be confined and forced to fly into the air; he wished that it should be allowed to follow its natural current; in one word, he is the friend of all nature."

When the third dervise had finished his relation, the first again spoke thus: "The star of the man of whom we have been speaking, is very strong; but though it has drawn us to it almost irresistibly, I am of opinion, that we are at this moment ruled by another still more powerful constellation. We travelled in the name of Chebib, and we are assembled here in the name of G. B. V. of which I know no more but the letters I have mentioned.

"Brothers, we are prepared by books, but we are instructed by events. Let us wait patiently for those which are to give us information concerning that singular accident which has this day brought us together."

Thus ended the conversation; and the three devotees rose up and left the garden and the coffeehouse.

It may easily be believed that Giafar lost not a word of this discourse. It would have been highly interesting to him, though it had contained nothing but the praises of his landlord and friend Chebib. But his attention was much more awakened, when he heard the oldest of the dervises say, that he and his
bro-

brothers appeared to be assembled in a name, whose star ruled that of Chebib himself; and there could be no doubt but this name was his own.

The prince did not give himself up to any emotion of pride; he had too high an idea of virtue to be wholly satisfied with his own. The star of Chebib must be more brilliant than his in heaven; but that of the lieutenant of the Caliph might prevail upon earth, where virtue does not confer power and crowns.

In the mean time, the Visier, by reflecting on what was wonderful in the accident which had brought the three dervises together, that they might hold a conversation so nearly connected with his own situation, felt himself reanimated. He concluded from it at least, that he had not lost the favour of the Caliph so much as he formerly had reason to believe: For, in the decrees of Heaven, he always was Visier, as was denoted by the three letters G. B. V. spoken of by the dervise.

He went back to his landlord's house, and appeared satisfied with the different objects which he had seen through the day, without entering into the particulars of an adventure which might hurt the modesty of Chebib.

The Visier, submissive to the influence of his star, the activity of which had been so well marked out to him, determined to remain concealed, that he might not thwart its effect by any act of imprudence. Besides, as the streets of Damas had been a great source of information to him, he must not renounce the pleasure of walking in them, nor disregard the precaution of disguising himself so as not to be distinguished.

One day when he was returning in haste to Chebib's house, through bye streets, he made a very great circuit. The day was exceedingly hot: he thought he was only three or four hundred paces from the house; but being little accustomed to so hard a walk, and being quickly out of breath, he sat down to breathe a little, on a very convenient marble sofa, which he perceived under a kind of portico, and drew out a handkerchief from his girdle, to wipe his face.

He was then opposite to a palace supported by twenty-six pillars of very grand architecture, and lighted by twenty-four casements. At each casement there was a little garden upon a terrace, every one of which exhibited a kind of variety. While his attention was fixed on this agreeable object, one of the casements opened, and there appeared at it a
young

young lady of sixteen, whose beauty was more ravishing than any the Visier had ever beheld.

“ It is indeed written,” said he to himself, “ that the sun and moon were three times eclipsed for Mahomet, who is the true constellation of the earth : but I am now tempted to believe that our writers have deceived us. The lights of the world have yielded only twice to our luminous prophet the privilege of enlightening it. They waited undoubtedly for the birth of that ravishing object which I now behold, to honour her with their third eclipse.”

While Giafar indulged this first enthusiasm, the young lady watered her flowers, which seemed to revive at the very approach of that kindly moisture, which she was about to sprinkle on them. When this heavenly beauty had exhausted on the flowers all the water contained in the porcelain vessel which she held in her hand, she retired, shut the casement, and disappeared.

The Visier expected that she would come and water the other little gardens ; but he was deceived. He remained with his mouth open, his eyes fixed, and his neck stretched towards the place where he had seen the object which enchanted him. Night found him in the same

attitude in which Alilcaf * remained for three hundred years, after seeing the magnificent bird of paradise, which came to announce to him the arrival of Mahomet. Perhaps Giafar would have passed the night there, so much had his growing passion taken possession of his soul, had he not been recovered from this situation by the unexpected arrival of Chebib.

This generous landlord came out of the apartment of his women, which was separated by the whole space of the gardens, from the inn in which he commonly received strangers. He was anxious about the safety of the prince, who was later than ordinary in returning to his house. Fearing some accident, and having assumed a disguise, that he might prosecute his search with greater freedom, he came out through a back door ; and the first object which presented itself was the Visier, absorbed in contemplation, opposite to the four and twenty casements.

“ What are you doing here, my dear friend ? ” said Chebib to him : “ I was afraid some troublesome adventure had befallen you.”

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* There is a Chapter of the Alcoran under this name, where the story which is mentioned here, is related at full length.

"I have walked much to-day," replied Giafar: "finding myself fatigued, and this sofa appearing very convenient, I was taking a little repose on it."

"Come and take it at my house," replied Chebib, "you will there be more at your ease." The Visier attempted to rise; but he seemed nailed to the seat by some enchantment, and his body appeared heavier than lead, when he wanted to remove it from a place to which his soul was attached.

He exerted himself however to conceal from his landlord the disorder he was in, and followed him to his palace. But he was incapable of speaking one word, of profiting by the excellent supper which was prepared for him, or enjoying the charms of a splendid evening, which Chebib was studious for his sake to increase *. He went to bed in a state of such distress, as might well alarm his generous friend.

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* Nothing can equal the charms of the night at Damas. The sky, free from every vapour, is perfectly clear; the waters which surround and run through the city, diffuse a delightful coolness, which makes ample amends for the excessive heat of the day. No mildew ever falls. Under the Caliphs, when, in the language of the Arabian poets, *the rivers flowed with streams of milk*, all the gardens and banks of the rivers at Damas, were filled with musicians. It was the season for every kind of enjoyment.

The night was full of tumult and anxiety : the visier enjoyed not a single moment of sleep, or even of repose. His attention was immoveably fixed on the marble sofa ; he tossed about, and could find no place in his bed whereon to rest.

The anguish of the night appeared in his countenance ; and when Chebib entered his chamber in the morning, he found his pulse high, his eyes inflamed, and his complexion altered. He was very uneasy, and immediately called his physician. This man possessed great skill, and very soon gave proofs of it. He examined the patient, studied his breathing and his eyes, took hold of his arm, and felt his skin in several places ; at last he stopt to examine the pulse. After observing him for a quarter of an hour, he asked for pen and ink, wrote down his advice, and delivered it to Chebib without saying a single word. The latter opened it with eagerness mixed with fear, and read as follows.

“ The disease of your guest is a violent inflammation, which is seated in the heart : it has been introduced by the eyes, and cannot be cured but by the object which has occasioned his complaint. Every other remedy would be useless.”

Chebib delivered the paper to Giafar, who read it with an air of astonishment : and the gene-

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rous Chebib availing himself of this moment of surprize, thus addressed him.

“What!” said he smiling, “my dear guest, my friend, my brother, have you a secret of this kind with which I am not intrusted, till a physician let me know your complaint? Since his art is of no avail, why do you delay making use of my assistance? Could any other person be more zealous than I to procure you the object, the possession of which is so necessary to your happiness? Is it at Damas? Where have you seen it?”

“Recollect, my dear Chebib,” said Giafar, “the place where you found me sitting; a young lady equal to what we read of the Houris, in beauty, elegance of shape, and graces of person, came to water some flowers in a little garden, upon a terrace opposite to the sofa on which I had laid myself to take repose.

“She had the finest eyes I had ever beheld. Notwithstanding the inexpressible softness by which their brightness was tempered, the fire of her looks transformed into a rainbow, the water which came from the watering pot, to be imbibed by the root of the plants. She smiled at her work, like the rising sun in the morning of a fine day. Her arms, which had a delightful roundness, pliancy and beauty, were slightly coloured with *tamarena*. The powder of its
leaves,

leaves, which she wore on her hair, diffused even to me a delicious perfume; while her charming countenance, assisted by every thing which art could add to give expression to her features, seemed, along with my homage, to demand that of all animated nature, which appeared to rejoice at the sight of so much perfection."

"O my dear friend," replied Chebib, "what happiness it gives me to be able to contribute to your satisfaction, and restore to you that repose and health, of which you might have been deprived by a passion decidedly unfortunate! I know the object by whom you are inflamed; and you may aspire to the possession of her."

"The beauties of her soul are equal to those of her body; she is innocence itself. The husband, however, to whom she was lately married, has found himself under the necessity, in consequence of an accidental transgression of the law on his own part, of imposing on himself the severe obligation of divorcing her. This has taken place to-day; and, in consequence thereof, I promise to bring her into your arms. In indulging your passion, make no scruple about what it must cost those who are to contribute to your satisfaction. Be happy my dear Visier, and be assured

fured you are about to become much more so than you imagine."

Giafar was both surprised and delighted by the engagement which his landlord had entered into with him. "It must be allowed," said he to Chebib, "that my father did not deceive me, when he declared that Damas would present to me wonders upon the back of wonders. The lady appears in my eyes a prodigy of beauty, and love works another prodigy in my favour, by putting me in possession of this ravishing object by the assistance of the most affectionate friendship."

At the same moment, Chebib left the apartment, crossed the gardens, and went to the little palace supported by twenty-four columns, opposite to which the prince of the Barmecides had fallen into an ecstasy at the sight of Negemet-il-Soupeh, the youngest, last married, and best beloved of all the wives belonging to the Grand Vifier's landlord. This generous husband, from the short conversation they had had, was immediately convinced that it was Negemet herself who was watering her garden while Giafar was on the sofa.

She must now be prepared for entering into new ties, much more advantageous to herself and her family: but others must be broken, which were not without their charms, and of which

in particular she had never felt the weight. Luckily, Chebib believed that he might congratulate himself on having no passion but his own to combat. He knew, however, that the proposal he was to make, could not be presented without great address.

It did not belong to him to represent to a young lady ideas which might lead her to consider any situation happier than that in which she was placed. An ambitious father and mother will determine her judgment, without hurting her feelings; but Chebib was satisfied with affectionately addressing her in the following words :

“ I love you sincerely, my dear Negemet, and I would do any thing to secure your happiness. Perhaps I am going to occasion a moment's uneasiness to you, while I have nothing in view but your greater enjoyment. In return for these dispositions, of which I should be willing to give proofs by exposing my life, if it was necessary, for your sake, oblige me in wishing you to retire for a week to the house of your respectable parents. Ascribe to an inconsiderate vow the violent effort which I make to be so long separated from you ; do me justice, and believe that I will be occupied about nothing but your happiness.”

Negemet.

Negemet-il-Soupeh, brought up in absolute dependence in the bosom of her family, had never made the smallest use of her own will. She considered the order, therefore, to return for some days to her parents, as a favour which she would not have dared to ask; and, instead of taking offence, her innocence led her to thank Chebib for the proposal.

In the mean time, Chebib had desired Sheffandar-Hazan to come to his house upon business of importance. The Emir arrived at his son-in-law's, and betwixt them the proposal was made in plainer terms.

"Your daughter, my dear Sheffandar," said Chebib, "is a pearl of great price in my eyes; but I have found a method of establishing her fortune and yours for ever, amid all the revolutions to which human affairs are subject. I was delighted with being your son-in-law; but a man, in every respect preferable to me, has heard much spoken in commendation of the amiable Negemet, and adores her. My friendship requires that I sacrifice her to you, to your family, and to him. Carry her to your house; persuade her to desire her real happiness; I will find mine even in the greatness of the sacrifice, and will be too fortunate whenever I have it in my power to make others of the same importance. As nothing must give her offence in the resignation

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which I make of the happiness of possessing her, be not rash in any thing: choose your opportunity, and take proper measures.

“ When you have brought her to agree to our design, inform me of it, and I will divorce her before the Cadi, so as to give no offence either to her or you. But let our secret remain till then, confined to you and your wife. I have no need to enlarge upon the consequences of it; one is sufficient to determine you. He who will espouse your daughter, knows not that I am married to Negemet, although he knows that she is married: and I have reasons for passing with him only for a negotiator, who, without any sort of personal interest, wishes to do him an essential service.”

Sheffandar carried back his daughter to his house, determined to neglect nothing for entering into the views of Chebib, of which he perceived the advantages. Giafar's landlord hastened to rejoin him:

“ Prince,” said he, as he accosted him, “ if the too great quickness of your pulse did not deceive the physician, you ought now to be in a state of perfect convalescence; and you may assure yourself of possessing, in a few days, the lady on whom the complete restoration of your health depends. The husband only desires to see the object, whom by the fatality

fatality of the fates, he is obliged to divorce, enjoying the happiest lot: The relations of the young lady and herself will be careful not to throw obstacles in its way; one thing only prevents your happiness from being very near. You cannot be married while you are unknown; and being conducted hither by the fates, it belongs not to you, but to them, to make the discovery."

However much Giafar was enamoured of the beauty, he perceived, that he must yield to the necessity of delay. At the same time, penetrated with a sense of the great service which his friend had just now done him, he expressed to him, in the strongest possible terms, how much he was affected with the astonishing warmth and activity of his zeal.

"I will take no steps," said he, "but those which are dictated by your wisdom. In order to be tranquil, it is sufficient to feed myself with the hopes which you give me, expecting that your generous cares, and a change of circumstances, will bring about their accomplishment."

Giafar was at the summit of joy: he wanted retirement, that he might meditate at his leisure on the object with whom he was smitten. He sought it in the streets of Damas, and found it every where, even amid the crowds through which he passed. But being

attentive to every thing, as he approached the grand Mosque, he heard two blind people, who discovered one another by their voices, and who gave mutual salutation, thus conversing together.

“ Ah, is it you? Benphiros,” said the elder to the younger; “ I should have many things to communicate to you. You know that my wife is a woman of Barbary, and is acquainted with all the books of occult science, in the *Dom Daniel* * at Tunis. She labours every day, without making us any richer; but she discovers many secret things. She has assured me that Giafar, the great prince of the Barnevides, has been at Damas for some months, whither he was constrained to come, by a prognostic taken from the *Giaffer*. The Caliph wishes to have an explanation concerning a certain fact, and the Grand Visier is in pursuit of it.—But we are not in a proper place here for talking of these mysteries ”

“ On the contrary,” said the younger, “ it is not at present the hour of prayer, and nobody comes here at this time.”

So saying, he extended his arm, and examined all around with his staff, which Giafar carefully

* The *Dom Daniel* was a kind of museum at Tunis, the library of which was said to contain books on the occult sciences.

carefully avoided meeting. When he thought himself well assured that no strange ears were within hearing, he said to his companion, "Let us sit down upon this bank, and resume our conversation.

"Your wife has told you, that the Grand Visier Giafar is at Damas. I inform you farther, that two days will not elapse before he is discovered, however well he may keep himself concealed."

"And who told you so?" said the oldest blind man.—"My father," answered the other, "who was born in Egypt. He has read no books; but he is himself able to make them, for he has intercourse with the genies. The story which I have to tell you, is very long and complicated; have the patience to hear it:

"Markaff, one of those genies of the earth, who guard its treasures, and whom my father sees almost every day, fell in love with the daughter of the Sultan of Hirak, and proposed to shew himself to her by night, and endeavour to please and marry her. He plunged into his common abode, that he might be prepared to present himself in a more brilliant manner to the eyes of the object whom he wished to charm. As he came out of it, wrapped up in a heavy vapour, and carried by a whirlwind of subterraneous air, a cloud

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which

which descended upon the earth from the middle region of the atmosphere, stopped him in his passage. It was the chariot of Tantoura, the queen of the genies.

“ She discovered her subject, notwithstanding his extraordinary dress. ‘ Where goest thou,’ said she, ‘ loaded with such magnificence? Whom meanest thou to enchant?’ ‘ Great queen!’ answered Markass, prostrating himself to the earth, ‘ I am in love with the most beautiful the daughters of men, and I am going to try my fortune.’ ‘ It will be such as you deserve,’ replied Tantoura; ‘ Can you be a judge of that matter, half blind as you are? It will be some beauty made after a model resembling your own.’

“ ‘ My queen, by day the sun dazzles my sight; but by night, and with the light of flambeaux, I see as clearly as another, and perhaps more so. I can assure you, that the daughter of the Sultan of Hirak, with whom I am violently smitten, is the most beautiful princess on earth.’ ‘ That is a great encomium,’ replied Tantoura; ‘ but where would you find expressions of praise, if you had seen the young mortal whom I have just now been visiting at Damas? You would call her a prodigy! I have seen her sixteen times within this month, and can never tire looking at her. I have now left her, but am impatient
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to get back to her: Come along with me; trust your thick body to the light vapours by which I am born up; they have great elasticity, and will be able to support you. I wish to bring you to a confession, that your choice is not equal to mine.' Such was the will of Tantoura; she was queen, and Markaff could not disobey.

"The chariot of Tantoura arose and flew away. It hovered for a moment over Damas, and stopped upon one of the appendages of Chebib's palace. It was his only son who was the object of the queen's wishes; and Markaff, when he saw him, was obliged to allow that there was not a more beautiful object on earth, but still maintained that the princess of Hirak was equally so.

"They were obstinate; the beauties must be compared; and if none of the two would yield, a third person must be called to decide the point. The son of Chebib, Tantoura, and Markaff, were immediately carried off in a cloud, and soon arrived in the apartment of the princess of Hirak.—It was only about midnight; but all the officers of the palace were asleep. Tantoura, by an enchantment, increased their sleep, and thought that nobody could resist the force of her charm. But the beautiful Zizialé, instructed by her nurse in all the secrets of the Persian Magi, and expos-

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ed by her knowledge to all the inconveniences thereof, never reposed without having her little book of power under her pillow. She only slept with one eye; and, if her right arm was carelessly stretched out of the bed, her little ring, kept by a ribbon, was tied to her left.

“When Markaff had seen her formerly, he believed she had not perceived him; but he was mistaken; and when he thought it in his power to gain an authority over her, she had already designed to place him among the number of her slaves. When she saw him enter along with Tantoura, she pretended to be in a deep sleep, but kept herself prepared for whatever might happen.

“Young Chebib, whom she took at first for a celestial being, was placed by her side; but the conversation of Markaff and Tantoura soon let her understand, that the beautiful young man, who shared her bed, was only brought thither as an object of comparison. She herself became the victim of a charm against which the precautions which she had taken were of no avail, to wit, that of love.

“In the mean time, Tantoura and Markaff were warmly disputing about the pre-eminence of the object of their choice; they could not agree, and none of them would yield to the other. At length Tantoura de-

terminated to call a third person to decide betwixt them : she knocked with her foot, and the genie Karkafs appeared.

“ In appearance he was a kind of animal, of less than three feet in height. He was something of the nature of a man, for he had half a face, but the other half was entirely destroyed : a beard, which descended from this wrinkled profile, trailed upon the ground : his chin leaned upon his knee : behind, his whole body exhibited a lengthened bunch, supported by a foot resembling that of a goat, which went and came pretty neatly with the help of two crutches ; the other foot was turned up over his shoulder. I am able to describe this genie, because my father has shewn him to me ; he is as cunning as he is ugly, and he suggests expedients to the other genies in their necessity.

“ When Karkafs appeared, Tantoura addressed him : ‘ Old monster,’ said she to him, Markaff and I are disputing about the idol of our affections, who are both here together. Upon the head of beauty, nobody can be so disinterested as you, for you have no sort of pretension to it. Look at these two objects in the bed ; and without regard to their sex, decide which of the two is superior in beauty.’

“ Karkafs hopped towards the bed, displaying his hideous and lean skeleton, buried under his beard, and his half head raised six feet high. Bending forwards, he several times brought his bleared eye near the two charming countenances; and when he thought himself able to decide, he returned to the middle of the apartment to recover his former attitude, and thus spoke:

“ ‘Great queen! and you Markaff! your disputes are vain: both the beings whom I have now considered, according to their sex, are absolutely unequalled in beauty: they are made for one another; and as I have without doubt viewed them more narrowly than you, I have observed the mark of the star by which they are infallibly to be united. I know not what your views might be, but I know that nothing can be gained by opposing their destiny; for, according to the common proverb, *Where fate has determined, sorcery is of no avail*. Do things with a good grace; give up your pretensions whatever they are, and anticipate that destiny which you cannot alter, by instantly uniting these objects of your affection.’

“ Tantoura went up first to the young Chebib, and then to Zizialé. She observed the infallible sign of which Karkafs had taken notice, and immediately took her resolution. She had

had on her finger two superb rings, the most beautiful of which she put on the finger of the young Chebib, and the other on that of the princess of Hirak : She took their right hands, joined them, and kissed them both. Markaff and Karkafs wished very much to do the same ; but respect for their queen restrained them.

“ The young pair were no sooner united than separated ; for Tantoura having dismissed the two genies, carried off her charming care, and took him back to Damas.

“ The beautiful Zizialé, while she appeared to be in a profound sleep, had heard every thing which had been said, and had taken advantage of what had happened. She saw herself destined for the loveliest of men, and was already assured that she was by no means indifferent to him. She knew neither his name nor rank ; but it was in her power to discover both. Her soul was full of the softness which growing love inspires ; and scarcely had Tantoura withdrawn, before she fell asleep, amid those pleasing dreams which hope never fails to produce.

“ Her waking was not so agreeable. An ambassador from the Sultan of Curdistan had arrived at Hirak, to ask the princess in marriage for the heir of that crown. This union was

on many accounts highly desirable to the Sultan of Hîrak; and he expected not the smallest opposition from his daughter. Great was his surprise when she told him she could dispose neither of her hand nor her heart; and that she would die rather than marry the prince of Curdistan.

“ Upon this extraordinary declaration, the Sultan, who could not suspect that the princess was ignorant of its force, was about to get into a violent passion; but he thought it better to restrain himself. ‘ Princess,’ said he to her, ‘ you do not surely pretend, that my daughter and the heiress of my crown has the absolute disposal of herself: Your equipage is to be got ready, and you are to set out with the ambassador, who has come to demand you.’

“ This answer threw Zizialé into consternation. Soon after, her mother entered her apartment, and found her bathed in tears. ‘ What! my daughter,’ said she to her, ‘ would you have us refuse a young and handsome prince, who brings you a crown, to be united with that which you will one day inherit? Why do you refuse him your hand? What obstinacy is this?’

“ If Zizialé had known the name of her lover, so much was she smitten with him, that she would ingenuously have replied, ‘ Because

I love young Chebib :’ but, though she persisted in her refusal, she was forced to be silent concerning the motive thereof.

“ ‘ Whether it is agreeable or not,’ added the mother, ‘ as the matter is determined upon, and you must depart in three days, conceal from your husband’s ambassador, your unfavourable disposition of mind. This is incomprehensible in you who have never given cause but of satisfaction,’

“ After her mother’s departure, Zizialé remained in a state of great distress. She must disoblige her parents, to whom she bore the greatest affection : fate and love prescribed to her a law. She was not able fully to explain her motives : the preparations and nearness of her departure, gave her disquiet only in as far as they would oblige her to have recourse to supernatural means, to separate herself from a family which she was about to plunge into distress. And where could she go to be united with the object of her affections ?

“ While she was absorbed in these mournful ideas, Markaff, who had not so completely renounced his pretensions to her, as Tantoura had done with regard to Chebib, impertinently intruded himself. At any other time, his appearance would have been disagreeable : ‘ What want you ?’ said she, ‘ and who

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are you?' 'I am,' answered Markaff, 'the genie who last night contributed to your union with a charming young man, of whose ring you are possessed; I know what is going on around you; I love you, and have come to your assistance.'

" 'He who loves, will obey me,' answered Zizialé; 'go into that circle.' She marked out one; and the enamoured Markaff, entered it. The young magician, who was wiser than he imagined, so completely subjected him to her power, that he became the most devoted of her slaves. When Markaff was brought so far as to be able to refuse nothing, the princess said to him, 'Since you know my lover, carry me immediately to the entrance of the city where he dwells.' The heavy Markaff became swift as an eagle to obey the person whom he loved; she appeared lighter than a butterfly.

" He set her down at the approach of night, in one of those gardens which are at the entrance to the suburbs of Damas. She preserved her features, but had disguised her sex, and darkened the colour of her skin. With a bow and arrows on her back, she presented herself at the door of a house, as a young Arab of the desert, who came to ask entertainment till the gates of the city should be opened.

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"She was kindly received; and after being offered whatever refreshments could be met with among people who were more honest than rich, she was shewn into a place where she might repose during the night. The only inhabitants of this little dwelling, were, a man, his wife, and their daughter, a young girl of fourteen years of age, and extremely beautiful, whom they had carefully concealed from the eyes of their new guest.

"Zizialé passed the night quietly; for vexation had deprived her of sleep the preceding night. She would not have soon awaked; but a great noise was made at the door of the place where she slept. It was opened; and she was awaked by these words, *there is the ravisher*. A woman with dishevelled hair pointed her out with her finger as she pronounced them; and the officers of police at Damas seized her before she had time to rise.

"She was carried before the cadi, and there informed of the unpardonable crime which she had committed, in brutally attempting the honour of a virgin, whose father and mother had received her with so much humanity.

"The supposed criminal could easily with one word have proved her innocence; but she must have disclosed a secret which she wished to conceal: and she expected to be able, with-

out exposing herself, to get rid of the affair, by means of her book, her little ring, and the assistance of Markaff. The crime of which she was accused, made her hold down her head, and be silent. But her silence being considered as a confession of guilt, she was ordered to be put in prison till her sentence was made out; and she was conducted thither without making the smallest resistance or complaint.

“As soon as the jailer had shut her up, she called upon Markaff: Her faithful slave appeared, and she bade him get her out of this place.

“‘That is not so easy a matter,’ answered Markaff: “both your ring and mine are useless in your present situation; but there are other means. I know the crime which is imputed to you; and a spirit of the air has informed me of the guilty person. He got by night into the house, with which he was much better acquainted than you, by the help of a ladder, which he likewise made use of to escape. Having met with resistance, and got his nose scratched, and his face bruised, he did not carry away the ladder. I am going in pursuit of him, and will easily be able, if you are led to punishment, to cause him take your place. But not a moment can be lost; and I am going to add to the remorse which he must already feel.’

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“Markaff went away. Zizialé was quiet, and occupied entirely with her love, when, in a moment after, she saw her slave return.

“‘I have just now,’ said he, ‘met our queen Tantoura. The face of affairs is changed; for, by what I have learned from her, you are brought here by the fates. You must allow yourself to be conducted to the foot of the scaffold; she will follow you, without being perceived, and inform you what you are to do. At this moment, we are all three controuled by a superior power; but you must not despair.

“The princess of Hiraik, naturally disposed to confidence, and encouraged by the protection of the queen of the genies, to whom she was indebted for the first instance of her good fortune, patiently resigned herself to the wishes of Markaff, and yielded wholly to the destiny by which she appeared to be guided.”

Here the youngest of the blind men concluded his relation. “To-morrow,” said he, addressing himself to the old man, we shall know how this affair is to terminate; and, if my father is not deceived by Markaff, we may expect some wonder.” Upon this, the two blind people separated.

Though the conversation had been long, not a single word of it escaped Giafar. It did not

particularly respect himself; but it was too interesting to his friend Chebib, to be indifferent to him. Zizialé, the victim of love and fate, exposed to danger, though perfectly innocent, awaked in him the feelings of justice and benevolence; and the wonder predicted with so much exactness to happen to-morrow, inflamed his curiosity. He determined therefore to go, disguised in the best manner possible, to the place where the young lover of his landlord's son was to be carried to punishment.

When he returned to the house of his friend Chebib, he told him none of the discoveries he had made during the day. Hitherto his host had concealed from him, that he had a son of great expectation. He kept the secret which had been communicated to him, waiting for those extraordinary events which would necessarily cause it be entrusted to him.

The two friends spent this evening as agreeably as the former. Giafar appeared most cheerful and most at his ease. The attention of Chebib frequently wandered: the amorous Visier, whose passion for the ravishing beauty of the garden, who had made a conquest of him, naturally led him to be uneasy, immediately suspected that the treaty which was begun in his favour, had met with some opposition, and expressed his fears to his friend, who thus encouraged him.

“ No,

“ No, my dear friend,” said Chebib; “ whatever procures happiness to you, can meet with no opposition: the occasion of my uneasiness is entirely confined to myself. Fortune, you know from your own experience, spares no person here: Since Giafar is its sport, should Chebib be alarmed when he sees himself subjected to its caprice? I am exposed to a very extraordinary trial in my own family; but it is useless to speak of it to you now, for to-morrow it may have entirely disappeared. Let us be calm, my friend; here we are like pieces at the game of Chess, which are played by the hand of another; we ought to do all the good in our power, and wait till he who conducts the game shall have put us in our proper place.” Upon this discourse, the countenance of Chebib resumed its serenity, and the two friends went to take repose.

As soon as it was day, Giafar prepared to go in search of the adventure about which his curiosity had been so strongly excited by the blind men. He disguised himself, so as not to be known by his most intimate friends, and went to find out where the execution was to take place, that he might choose the most proper station for observing what should happen.

He entered into the nearest cook’s shop, eat moderately, from thence went to place himself

himself on a tree not far from the post to which the criminal was to be tied, and ascended it.

He was now in the most agreeable situation possible for a man full of curiosity: nothing could escape his observation. In a short time, three beggars came and placed themselves under other branches of the same tree. He was secretly rejoiced at the strange company with which he was accidentally associated; and, thinking upon his amour, "If, in my present situation," said he, "Chebib and my beautiful gardener were within reach, and he should tell her, that her lover was one of the four persons on this tree, it would not be very flattering to her. But then, I was never more completely disguised in my life than I am at this moment."

While the Visier was making these reflections, the supposed criminal, surrounded with all the officers of justice, slowly drew near to the place of punishment. When he was at the foot of the scaffold, he raised his hands to heaven, and turned his face towards the tree on which Giafar was placed. "O Giafar!" cried he, "prince of the Barmecides! whose power, next to the Caliph's, is above every power on earth! I know that you are here, and now behold me. Since you have been informed that I am innocent, preserve me from a premature

premature death and a disgraceful punishment. You in vain attempt to conceal yourself at Damas: You will soon be discovered; embrace the opportunity of making yourself known by a beneficent action, worthy of your character."

The eyes of all were turned towards the tree; but Giafar's three companions, being known to be beggars, he was taken for another of the same profession.

The address, however, which was thus seasonably made to his name, made the judge suspend the execution. They knew that Abdelmelek-ben-Merouan, king of Damas, was uneasy at the arrival of the Grand Visier into his dominions, as well as his obstinately concealing himself, and had caused search to be every where made for him. As they supposed, therefore, that the young criminal might be able to give some information concerning him, he was instantly carried before the king.

"Who told you," said the monarch to him, "that the prince Giafar was at Damas?" "I saw him, and spoke to him," answered the person who was taken for a criminal; "he was on a tree opposite to me in the midst of three beggars: as I know him perfectly, if your Majesty will proclaim a public festival three days hence, he will be there, and I will discover

discover him, in whatever manner he is disguised." The king of Damas sent back Zizialé to prison, and immediately ordered the festival to be proclaimed by the public crier.

Sire, said Scheherazade, interrupting her narration for a little, and addressing her discourse to Schahriar, it may appear extraordinary, that the visier was never suspected to be the guest of Chebib, who received into his house all the strangers of distinction who came to Damas. But it must be observed, that the chief people of the state had seen the reception which he had met with at Chebib's country-house, and perceived the honours which were there conferred on him. It is not common to treat in such a manner those who wish their rank to be concealed.

The magnificent and generous Chebib respected virtue more than greatness; he honoured a sultan, but he doubly honoured a sage. Giafar was lodged in his own apartment, and he passed for a learned astrologer, with whom he spent the night in studying the conjunction of the planets.

It is now time to return to Giafar, whom we left on the tree. When he saw Zizialé address him, he was exceedingly embarrassed; but though the eyes of all were turned towards him, he perceived no advance made to the place where he was. He only saw the execution
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tion of the sentence suspended in his name, which had been so happily employed by the criminal, and marked the road by which he was led away.

It was the road to the king's palace. He might well suppose, that Zizialé, instructed by the queen of the genies, would assure the king of Damas, that she had actually addressed the visier himself, who was placed on a tree over against the scaffold. He must not hesitate a single moment to leave a place where he had been discovered, and hastened through the most private streets to the palace of Chebib.

When he got back to his landlord, he related to him his adventure, without letting him understand that he knew the young criminal who had brought him into so great embarrassment. He concluded with saying, that, with regret, he saw it impossible for him to continue longer concealed.

"My friend," replied Chebib, "you must consider it as a very great wonder, that you have been so for two months. Are you not surprised, that the astonishment which your absence must have excited at Bagdad, has not reached this place? that Abdelmelek, the most restless and suspicious man upon earth, has not found you out by means of his spies; he who has so many of them at Damas, and

to whom your affecting to conceal yourself, gives the greatest uneasiness.

“Let us allow that it is the fates which hide you from the king, for purposes unknown to us, and let us wait with patience, till he who holds the veil over us, takes care to raise it up. If any man is happy, it must be he who submits to his destiny, and waits for it without distrust. You have no cause to repent of indulging your curiosity : yield to the same inclination which leads you to see and hear every thing in this place. You will perhaps acquire from it information highly useful both to you and the Caliph, which I am totally unable to give you; and if the mask which hides you should suddenly fall off, you will then reap that advantage, which the consideration and respect that will surround you, must unavoidably suggest.”

“My lot is very extraordinary,” said Giasfar.” “Not more so than that of other men,” replied Chebib : “There is always some malignity attached to our fate here below. I must appear to you very happy; and indeed I esteem myself so, in having at my house a friend like you, and in being the instrument marked out by heaven, for sweetening what is bitter in the short trial to which you are exposed. But think you that I have no sufferings of my own? I have an only son, about
the

age of sixteen, who is as dear to me as a son can or ought to be to a father. Hitherto, I thought I could only congratulate myself on my good fortune in having such an heir. I keep him in the country, at a distance from his mother, and my other women, who are too fond of him. There he has it more in his power to dedicate himself to study, under the care of a wise governor. I expected to surprise you by presenting him to you before your departure, and beseeching you to carry him, who was dearer to me than myself, along with you: but a small precaution was first to be taken.

“ I have an intimate friend, who has a charming daughter; and we agreed that she should be married by the Cadi to my son, a short time before his departure. He would have spent two or three years with you, and would then have returned from Bagdad, worthy of the name of a man. I thought it necessary to prepare him for the union which was projected by my friend and me; but, my dear prince, imagine my distress, when my son told me that he could not take any woman, for he was already married, had slept with his wife, who was beautiful beyond expression, and would never have any other.

“ I have great confidence in his governor, who is a real sage. I suspected some treach-

ery on the part of the eunuchs; but I am now certain that no woman has been allowed to approach my son. He shewed a ring which was given him, and which seemed very valuable; they wished to bring it to me, but he has concealed it. His mother has made many fruitless attempts to draw from him an account of an extravagant dream which he had. In short, he has fallen ill; and you behold me in great distress."

Giafar, who was not yet cured of love himself, felt for the situation of the young Hazad, and the vexation of his father Chebib. He could easily have explained matters; but did not think it proper to do so. He had no farther knowledge of the princess of Hirak, than what he had received from the story of the blind man, and wished to keep it secret both from the father and the young man, until he should see the story of the princess brought to a conclusion, and discover whether the marriage made by the genies was an illusion, or really a decree of the fates. In the meantime, he prevailed on the father to carry him immediately to his beloved son, who was sick.

"Who knows, my dear friend," said he to him, "but the cure of your son is one of those objects for which I have been sent hither as a blind man, to be instructed in it by
blind

blind men? I can explain myself no farther at present. But one day, when we shall be instructed by the event, I hope to be able to demonstrate to you, that those over whom Heaven particularly watches, and who serve as links to the destinies of others, are men chosen above all others. We have examples in Mahomet and our prophets. Your son's star undoubtedly calls him to some remarkable work necessary to the general good; and perhaps I am sent by mine, for his preservation or assistance."

Chebib perceived the wisdom of Giafar's reasoning; and next day they both set out for the country-house, whither the young man had been carried for his more speedy recovery.

They found him walking with his governor, but very weak; the caresses of his father appeared to give him more strength and courage. He saluted Giafar, the intimate friend of his father, whom his mother and governor had mentioned to him, with the greatest grace. Chebib having taken the governor aside, left Hazad alone with the Visier.

When the prince of the Barmecides saw himself alone with the young scholar, he spoke to him, in the softest and most affectionate tone of regard, concerning that melancholy

with which he appeared to be affected, and urged him to explain the reason of it :

“ Alas ! Sir,” replied Hazad, “ I wish I could conceal from myself a passion which so much distresses my father ; but it allows me no respite. I am married, and so violently in love with my wife, that I cannot enjoy the smallest repose.”

“ But was it in your father’s palace,” said Giafar, “ that you saw her ? I have been assured that you was never out of it. Know you who she is ?”

“ I know nothing about her,” replied Hazad ; “ but her beauty outshines that of the fairest flower in my father’s garden. I know not where I was ; but the place appeared to me most brilliant. Suddenly I found myself, as it were, asleep by her side ; she then tenderly squeezed my hand several times. This had almost awaked me : I felt as it were a fire run through my whole body : I softly squeezed her hand in return, without knowing what I did.

“ There were people in her apartment ; but I saw her alone. They said we were married, which greatly rejoiced me ; and they gave each of us a ring. Mine is still in my possession ; and it is dearer to me than life.

“ See, Sir, how unfortunate I am ; I cannot obey my father, for I have been united

ed to the most charming object on earth, though immediately separated from her. They wish me to marry another; but it is impossible.

“If they forbore speaking to me of this wife, I might at least console myself with the hope of one day seeing my own again; for why may I not see her again, by the same means I have already seen her? Her sufferings must be equal to mine, in seeing herself separated from me; for she squeezed my hand very affectionately, and most certainly she is deeply enamoured of me.”

Giafar was much affected by this confidential detail: “Dear young man,” said he, “if you will entrust me with your ring for a moment, I will shew it to your father; and I promise to you, on the faith of a Mussulman, to restore it immediately. I expect to obtain from him the total suspension of the marriage which has been proposed to you: but, if this favour is granted me, you must shew some complaisance to your father and me. At present you take no nourishment; but I am going to cause some be brought you, and you must eat in order to recover sufficient strength to get on horseback, and accompany us to Damas; for your sickness is owing to faintness and want of strength.”

In this expectation, Hazad entrusted him with his ring, and promised to do what was required of him. Giafar went up to Chebib, and shewed him the jewel which had been committed to his care. It was a balass ruby of immense value, on account of its size and brightness.

The governor went to find his pupil, with orders to cause dinner be served up to him. Chebib was convinced, that human plans must yield to those which appeared wholly to be conducted by the fates. He renounced, therefore, the schemes which he had formed for the establishment of his son, and waited till the mystery of the ring should be unfolded.

The young Chebib remained very anxious about the success of his new friend's negotiation ; but his father accosted him with so kind and so frank an air, that he immediately recovered his spirits. Giafar put the ring again on his finger ; they sat down to table, and the young man, being freed from a part of his vexation, recovered his appetite.

The friends passed the remainder of the day and night in Chebib's house ; and next day, as they entered Damas, they heard the public crier proclaiming, in the different quarters of
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the city, a magnificent festival, to which Abdelmelek invited all the grandees of the realm, the citizens, and the strangers, on the following day.

“ I will accompany your son and you to this feast,” said Giafar : “ Strangers are invited thither, and the people will say that you have brought along with you your astrologian. This will be more natural than if you should appear there without me ; but I will take my turban and Indian robe, the better to represent the character I am to act.” This plan being adopted, the two friends prepared for executing the resolution which they had formed.

We have too important details to prosecute, to give a particular account of the magnificent feast which was given by Abdelmelek to the public. This sovereign, though avaricious in his character, wished to appear generous, and upon occasions of great preparation, displayed the utmost profusion : but he knew how to take back from the people what had been sacrificed to ostentation. There were three hundred tables, covered with every dish which could be thought of, in the outer courts, squares, and avenues of his palace. Two thousand slaves were employed in serving them, to the sound of all kinds of musical instruments. Each of the tables were placed

placed under a separate tent. In short, it resembled a camp in the middle of a city.

Abdelmelek congratulated himself on exhibiting to Giafar so magnificent a spectacle, and shewing him how far he could surpass the boasted generosity of Chebib. At the same time, his attention was engaged with the means by which the young supposed criminal would discover to him the Grand Visier in the midst of such a crowd.

"Sire," said Zizialé to him, "he is at the feast under one of the tents." At the same time she shewed him, in the air, a very large white butterfly: "Follow it with your eye, Sire, and go into the tent on which it alights; it will follow you, and settle on the turban of the Grand Visier."

The king obeyed Zizialé's directions, and saluted Giafar, who was seated at one of the first tables between Chebib and his son. The Visier, as soon as he was discovered, threw off his disguise, and received the eager embraces of the king of Damas, with that respect which was due to the sovereign in whose dominions he was. Abdelmelek prevailed upon Giafar and his two companions to go into the royal tent. Whenever they appeared, the people shouted, "Long live the great prince Giafar, and Abdelmelek-ben-Merouan." The shouts soon resounded throughout every part
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of the camp, and the crowd assembled around the place where they knew the lieutenant of the Caliph was.

The king of Damas pretended to load Giafar and his host with attention; but the dispositions of his soul did not accord with his external conduct. As he governed very tyrannically, and viewed Chebib with an eye of jealousy and hatred, he was persuaded that Giafar had got orders, upon the information of this citizen, to come privately and inquire into the truth of those complaints which were made against his government. It could be nothing but a motive of this kind, or some disgrace into which the prince of the Barmecides had fallen, which could induce the greatest person in the empire to absent himself from Damas for so considerable a time; and lead that private and obscure life, to which he appeared to be condemned.

In either of these cases, Abdelmelek determined to ruin Chebib; and, on supposition that the Grand Visier was disgraced, he was resolved to complete his overthrow.

These intentions were concealed outwardly, by the eagerness, respect and pleasure, which he evidenced from enjoying, in his turn, were it but for a moment, a guest who might pass for the second person in the universe.

While

While the attention of the king of Damas was diverted from every thing which was going on in the palace, by his own reflections, and the necessity he was under of doing the honours of the feast, Giafar opened his hand, and found in it a small bit of paper. Markaff, by the orders of Zizialé, was transformed from a butterfly to a billet, whereon this was written: *Be attentive to the fate of the person who addressed you when at the foot of the scaffold.* The billet instantly disappeared; but Giafar forgot not its contents.

“I entertained,” said he to Abdelmelek, “a high sense of the honour which you did me three days ago, by suspending the punishment of a young criminal who called upon my name. I believe I know who he is, and I presume he is innocent. You will do me a favour by bringing him hither, and delivering him into my hands.”

Abdelmelek was prepared to refuse. It was a way of spreading a snare for Giafar, and of discovering the opinion which he had of his own credit with the Caliph. “You know,” replied he to the minister, “that the crime of which that young man has been convicted is unpardonable: the Caliph alone can shew him mercy; it belongs to you, his lieutenant here, to grant it publicly in his name.”

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The Visier was at a loss what to answer, when a flourish of trumpets announced the arrival of new guests to Abdelmelek. It was Almokadan-Hassan, general of the *Zorans* *, accompanied by the officers of his body, and followed by his whole troop, who had been ordered to carry with his own hands, to Giafar, his prince, the letter by which he was recalled to Bagdad.

Among the strong expressions of affection which it contained, there were some particulars relative to Giafar's journey to Damas, expressed in these terms :

“ My dear Visier, you must now have it in your power to answer one of my questions ; and events will enable you and me to answer all the rest. I will have my share in them ; but what that is I am ignorant.

“ It was not your friend Haroun who made you hasten to Damas on a mule : fate willed it so ; the Caliph and your father were only its instruments.

“ Your entrance into Bagdad shall be accompanied with so much splendor, that your private departure will entirely be forgotten ; and the modest obedience, free from every murmur, which you gave to my orders, severe
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* All the *Zorans* were of the race and tribe of the *Bar-mecides*. Their body was very numerous, and composed the Caliph's guard, and the principal strength of his army.

as they were, while it gives you a new claim on my friendship and esteem, will gain you the admiration of the public." While Giafar was reading the letter, the advanced guard of the faithful Zorans arrived in the camp, which it made to resound with its warlike music.

They all displayed their joy at again meeting their prince; and, as they approached, came, with one knee upon the earth, to kiss his hand. Giafar only kept Almokadan with him, and ordered the rest of the Zorans to encamp without the walls of Damas.

While Chebib was overwhelmed with joy at this scene, it gave great alarm to Abdelmelek. From that moment he ceased to be master at his own house, and was afraid least Almokadan-Hassan brought orders from the Caliph of a very different kind from those respecting the recal of the Visier; for what could be the Caliph's design in sending his whole guard to Giafar? The conscience of the king of Damas then made him very miserable.

The first thing which he thought of, in order, if yet possible, to avert the storm, was to send for the young prisoner, and deliver him to Giafar, along with the writs of his trial. While this order was executing, he wished to persuade the Grand Visier to come and take possession of his own palace. But the

the prince of the Barmecides refused the offer with the greatest politeness.

"Chebib received me, Sire," answered he, "when I was a stranger, and when humanity alone could recommend me to him. The honour which, as lieutenant of the Caliph, I can now do him, is but a small recompense for such generosity." So saying, he took leave of Abdelmelek, and returned to Chebib's palace along with Almokadan-Hassan.

They had just entered, when the chief officer of justice came himself to deliver, along with the writs of process, the young criminal into the hands of Giafar.

Hazad-Chebib and Zizialé only looked at one another. Zizialé felt an emotion which he had power to restrain; but Hazad was so violently affected, that he fell sick.

His father Chebib was much distressed; but Giafar encouraged him. "It is nothing," said he, "my friend; it is only a slight symptom of that disease with which I myself am too well acquainted, since I am tormented with it even amid the hurry of business in which I am involved. Put your son to bed immediately, and appoint a small private apartment to this young man whom the king has sent me, and with whom I must have some conversation. I will be with you again in a moment."

Chebib went to pay the proper attentions to his son, and gave orders to get an apartment for the commander of the Zorans, and the young prisoner who had been liberated.

As soon as Giafar knew that he was alone, he entered his chamber, shut the door after him, and thus addressed Zizialé : “ Princess ! from this one word you perceive that we are known to one another : there only remains to me one way of concealing you here, and enabling you to follow your project with propriety. You are to pass for a young eunuch, whom I am conducting to Zobeide, the Caliph’s spouse. I am to be married at Damas ; and you will accompany my wife in your disguise. In the mean time, I will conceal you as well as possible, provided you betray not yourself.

“ Beware, above all things, of appearing in Hazad’s sight ; you will be the cause of his death. Expect to see him, when I have prepared every thing for his becoming your husband, with the consent of those to whom you both owe obedience ; and confide entirely in my care for conducting every thing to that end. Take my advice, and give over using extraordinary means. You must follow the rules of prudence and good conduct, in order to the success of an event, which your star
has

has no doubt pointed out, but which many improper steps had almost disappointed."

Zizialé was confounded at this discourse of Giafar. She believed the prince inspired; and determined implicitly to obey him.

As soon as the Visier left the Persian princess, he flew to his friend Chebib, and found him with his son, who was already recovered from the violent emotion which he had felt. Repose being most proper for the young man, they left his apartment, and used the most earnest intreaties to persuade him to enjoy it.

"I cannot understand," said Chebib, as he returned to his own apartment, "the change which has taken place in my son's health. Before this there could not be a stronger constitution than his: but for this some time past it is affected by the smallest circumstance."

"Your son," answered Giafar, "is really in love."

"How can that be?" replied Chebib; "for, notwithstanding the probability which the ring may give to the event which he related, yet I can only consider it as a dream."

"There is more than a dream in it," replied Giafar; "since he first entrusted me with his confidence, we have had another conversation. He has described to me the apartment where he saw himself laid; and I know

none of that construction in all Arabia. Since he has never been out of your palace, you yourself must know whether any of your women is lodged in a room of which the ceiling and walls are adorned with a grating of gold, and the whole bottom is of painted glass. The apartment which he has seen must have been well lighted, for he said he was dazzled with its splendor. And be assured, that I have certainly guessed, so to speak, what it is he has attempted to describe. Now, my friend, this extravagant luxury characterises the palaces of Persia."

"He was carried to Persia, and brought back in one night then?" said Chebib.

"My dear landlord," replied Giafar, "if your son is decreed to contract a marriage, from which a certain portion of the earth will derive advantage; when heaven interferes, distance vanishes in a moment. Omar was besieging Aleppo, while Fatmé, his wife, was kneeling at the evening prayers at Medina: "O my God," cried she, after they were finished, "could I now be in the arms of my husband!" Scarcely had she formed the wish, when she was instantly carried to him, by the two angels whom she had saluted on the right hand, and on the left, before she began her prayer *.

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* The Mahometans, before they pray, salute the two angels whom they suppose by their side.

“Take courage, my dear friend : Heaven has wrought many miracles in my favour ; and, as you have been one of its principal instruments with regard to me, though, for the trial of your virtue, obstacles seem allowed to stand in the way of your happiness, be assured that your star will shine with a brighter lustre, when it has emerged from these little clouds. Every thing encourages me on your account, while my own soul, tormented by an unlucky passion, has entirely lost its balance.”

Chebib, here quickly interrupting his friend, cut him short, by saying, “The passion which you entertain, ought to give you no trouble. The young woman whom you love is called Negemet ; and to-morrow I will conduct you, along with the cadi, to the house of her father the emir Sheffandar-Hassan. You shall marry her, and she will remain in her father’s house until your departure.”

Giafar was satisfied with this promise, and the two friends separated. Chebib went to give some necessary orders about the reception of his guests ; and Giafar desired Almokadan-Hassan to give him an account of the situation in which he had left the prince Barmekir, and of the opinions of the Zorans, when they observed the long absence of the Grand Viceroy, whose presence seemed so necessary to the Caliph.

Almokadan informed him, that the prince Barmekir had completely removed their fears concerning the situation of his son ; and that this respectable old man had left the retirement in which he lived, and appeared every day at the Caliph's palace, where the sovereign honoured him with marks of the greatest confidence.

“ The opinion which prevails at Bagdad,” added Almokadan, “ is, that you left it in consequence of being employed in a very important commission, with the knowledge of which you alone could be entrusted ; and your faithful Zorans have not ceased to wish for your success and return.”

Giafar discovered in all this, the goodness and wonted prudence of Haroun. “ You have come here in great haste,” said he to Almokadan ; “ has any of your lieutenants brought a wife along with him ?”

“ Prince,” replied Almokadan, “ Fetnè, my spouse, mounted like an Amazon, wished to share the satisfaction which the Caliph procured for me, by dispatching me to you. She lodges in the camp, in a separate tent, with two of her eunuchs.

“ You will immediately,” said Giafar, “ conduct to her another, whom I intend to present on my arrival to Zobeide. Let your wife take great care of him, and treat him
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with every attention. He may, perhaps, be one day useful to you both."

Giafar then went to the Persian princess, and informed her of the plan which he had formed to enable her to live more suitably to her sex, till the time of his departure. Zizialé was delivered to Almokadan; and Giafar rejoined his entertainers, satisfied with the precautions which he had taken, and now occupied only about two things, the charming spouse he was to receive, and his departure for Bagdad.

Chebib was too attentive to every thing which could contribute to the happiness of his guest, not to anticipate him next day in the step which was to be taken, relative to the new ties by which he wished to be bound. He sent for the Cadi, informed him of the contract which was to be drawn up, and sent him to the house of Sheffandar Hassan. The action of divorce was gone through in all its forms; and the beautiful Negemet, enriched with her dowry and all the goods and presents which she had received, returned to the house of her father the emir. She quietly submitted to her fate; but her soul was in the utmost affliction.

Sheffandar was much happier. He was to have for his son-in-law the greatest prince upon earth, next to the Caliph. When the
Cadi

Cadi appeared, he received him with marks of the greatest satisfaction; and the necessary witnesses were assembled. Scarcely were they prepared, in this respect, to observe the form, when Chebib appeared in the house, conducting by the hand the new spouse. The contract was drawn up, and they proceeded to the ceremony of marriage.

Negemet lifted up her veil. Her beautiful eyes appeared ready to be bathed in tears: but the fire which they emitted inflamed anew the heart of the enamoured Visier; it was like the bright and scorching rays which suddenly pierce through the clouds furcharged with watery vapours on a stormy day.

At length, Negemet received the ring, and became the spouse of Giafar. The business in which the prince of the Barmecides was so constantly engaged till the moment of his departure, and the want of a lodging fit for the reception of his wife, prevented the nuptials from following close upon the contract. Negemet must stay with her mother till every thing is ready for her departure, and that of the Grand Visier; and the orders had just been given to prepare for her a very rich and commodious *tarterouanne* *.

In

* At *Tarterouanne* is a litter constructed after the Arabian manner. There is a description of them in one of these tales.

In the mean time, every thing at Damas was preparing for the Visier's departure. He himself was now subjected to a multitude of cares, which were strangers to him while he was the unknown guest of Chebib. They wished every where to pay him court, and present him with their attentions and respect. Giafar, burdened with the homage which was paid him, wished to withdraw from it, and spend some time with his new father-in-law Sheffandar; but the king of Damas intended to entertain him in his palace; and the first minister of the Caliph had no time for making love.

On the other hand, he must not leave Damas without giving proofs of his gratitude to those individuals to whom he was under obligations. He sent for the cook who had been so attentive and polite to him, and gave him two purses of gold. After amply rewarding the feller of lemonade, he immediately received his three children into the Caliph's guard, fitted them with proper equipage, and mounted them in such a manner as to be in a condition to follow him.

He could not find the fisherman, however anxious he was that he should be brought to him; but he recommended him to God and the great prophet. With respect to the
blind

blind men, the king of Damas was commissioned to give each of them an hundred and fifty pieces of gold every year. The dervises had disappeared, perhaps with the design of getting away from his generosity. In short, every thing was ready for his departure; the Zorans, who were encamped on the hill of Coubet-Nafs-il-Saphir, only waited his arrival, and orders to begin their march.

Giafar at length set out from Damas, to go to his camp. The beautiful Negemet, his new spouse, had already gone there in her carriage; she was placed in a separate tent, served by her own eunuchs, and guarded without by the Zorans.

Abdelemelek, with all his court, and all the grandees of the kingdom, accompanied the lieutenant of the Commander of the Faithful, and were received at Coubet-Nafs-il-Saphir under three pavilions, each of which was three hundred feet long, which had apples of gold upon their top, and on which floated silken streamers of every colour.

A magnificent feast was there waiting for this numerous company. Giafar sat down at an upper table between Abdelmelek and Chebib, having first expressly recommended the young Hazad to the faithful Almokadan, and charged.

charged him not to lose sight of him, but to pay him every imaginable attention.

While warlike music induced the guests to indulge in those pleasures which a sumptuous feast can afford, a detachment of Zorans commanded by one of their chiefs, went to Coubet-il-Nassier, to place in the dome the most beautiful of all the lamps which the gratitude of Chebib's illustrious guests had sent thither, since the one placed there in the name of the Caliph Haroun Alraschid.

What passed on the mountain Coubet-il-Nassier, was perceived from the hill of Coubet-Nafs-il-Saphir, which was on the road to Bagdad. The people of the king's guard, who were in the midst of the Zorans, were informed by them of the reason of the movements which took place on that mountain. It was reported to Abdelmelek, whose jealousy and hatred against Chebib it greatly increased. He parted from Giafar, with his heart full of these dreadful sentiments, and returned to the city, accompanied by all his court. He dismissed his courtiers, and went to meditate alone in the retirement of his palace on the means of destroying a man who had arrived at such a pitch of reputation, as gained him more respect and esteem than the splendour and power of the throne could procure.

In the camp at Coubet-Nafs-il-Saphir, almost the whole night was spent in preparations. The beautiful Negemet, whose tent was to be struck very early, passed the night in her carriage, under the guard of her eunuchs. Almokadan had brought thither the one who was destined to be presented to Zobeide, namely Zizialé. The young Hazad was placed where he might enjoy repose; but his father Chebib remained with Giafar, to assist him in the preparations for his departure.

At length, the sun appeared at the gates of the east; the two friends must part; it is impossible to describe their last affectionate farewell. Chebib returned to Damas, and Giafar proceeded on his journey to Bagdad.

The Grand Visier marched forward his troop, with all the expedition which an ardent desire of complying with the eagerness and orders of the Caliph, and of being restored to the bosom of his family, and the place which he occupied, could inspire. They marched day and night, and only stopped to allow the men and the beasts of burden time for eating.

At sun-rise, on the second day after their departure, this little army had need of repose, that they might be able to support the fatigues of the journey. He then ordered them to
I stop,

stop, and erect the tents in the middle of an agreeable plain, at the meeting of two rivulets, the banks of which were covered with trees, and afforded excellent pasturage.

He chose the most agreeable situation in which to fix the tent of his young spouse Negemet, to whom he had given as a travelling companion in the litter, the supposed eunuch, who passed for being intended as a present to the wife of the Caliph. Negemet's tent was surrounded by those of the eunuchs who were destined to serve her, and was placed at a little distance from the camp, with a particular guard.

When Giafar had viewed his encampment, and was assured that nobody remained behind, and that every necessary precaution had been taken, that plenty might reign along with a prudent economy, he sent for Kalil, first eunuch to the beautiful Negemet, and ordered him to tell her, that, if it was agreeable, he intended to come and dine with her. At the same time, he gave him a very beautiful ring to deliver to her.

Kalil executed the message, and returned, bringing back a very obliging answer from Negemet, who received the ring with respect. Giafar having charged Kalil to take aside the young eunuch during the repast, and to make him take some repose in a tent near that of

Negemet, sent him back again to give her thanks, and to let her know that he would soon be with her.

The Grand Vifier, after inquiring at Almodadan about the manner in which Hazad had supported the fatigue, and being satisfied with the answer, flew to the place, where, for the first time, he was to be in private with the object of his love.

Negemet was sitting on a cushion; when she saw the Vifier, she rose up and bowed down to salute him. But she was veiled, as if she had been receiving a stranger. "My dear Negemet!" said he to her, accosting her with a kind of surprise, "I have formerly had the happiness to see your face without a veil and before your husband you are exempted from that law which orders you to conceal yourself from the sight of every other man."

"Prince," answered she in a soft tone, but yet with more firmness than could have been expected from her youth and inexperience, "you are my spouse by the law: but when I have explained to you the reasons why I wear a veil in your presence, the magnanimity, generosity, and sensibility of your soul will lead you to approve my modesty and reserve."

Giafar, more and more astonished, earnestly intreated to know these reasons; and the beautiful Negemet thus continued.

"Great

"Great prince, form an idea of the friendship which Chebib entertains for you, from the astonishing sacrifice which it has led him to make. He saw you inflamed with love to a young lady whom you beheld watering flowers near a casement in our palace, to which you was sitting opposite. He was alarmed for your health, and sacrificed to it an union which had been most auspiciously formed three months before. In a word, to preserve your life, and secure your happiness, he gave up his own; for I am his beloved wife, and you must have recognized in me the person who took care of the flowers."

Giafar continued for some time speechless. Love for a while contended against sentiments of friendship, gratitude, and the principles of true honour. The struggle was violent, but of short duration: his virtuous habits prevailed over the efforts of passion, and the prince of the Barmecides thus spoke.

"O miracle of friendship and generosity, beyond every thing which my father could have conceived in predicting them! The noble and generous Chebib yielded up to me an inestimable treasure, of which he knew the full value, to save me from the fatal effects of my passion! And could I abuse such goodness? No, Madam, you are no longer my spouse; you are that of my dear Chebib; and if you

agree to it, you shall be my beloved and respected sister."

Upon this declaration of the Visier, Negemet lifted up her veil. "Prince," said she, "I ought no longer to conceal myself from the eyes of him who has shewn me all the beauty of his soul; and I beseech you not to impute to vanity the encomium which, as wife of Chebib, I bestow upon you: Yes, you are the worthy and the virtuous friend of Chebib!"

"Ah! Madam," said Giafar, "May I always deserve that encomium! But since you are become my sister, let us think on means for preventing the malevolent discourses of the wicked: You will give room for them by returning to Damas. You shall occupy whatever apartment in my palace at Bagdad is most agreeable to you; and, if you wish to give us great joy and honour, you will be on the same footing with my spouse Fatmé, as I was with Chebib. You will see the court of the Caliph; and you will there enjoy every distinction which can silence the envious, and advance the honour of your husband, for which I am as much interested as you can be."

"Prince," answered Negemet, "my honour and that of my husband are in your hands; I will do whatever you advise."

Giafar

Giafar then ordered the eunuch Kalil to go for the young traveller to Almokadan's tent. "What young man is that?" asked Negetmet:—"He is," answered Giafar, "the son of your husband:"—"What!" said she, in a transport of joy, "is our dear Hazad here? Shall I enjoy the pleasure of seeing him?"—"He is going to be brought to you, Madam," replied Giafar: "I am delighted that his society is agreeable to you, and I will endeavour to make it assisting to you in supporting the weariness and fatigues of the journey. Henceforth, since you are agreeable to one another, I will give you frequent opportunities of being together. I will order his tent to be erected near yours; Almokadan shall be informed that you are the wife of my friend Chebib, and that you wish to watch over your husband's son. Speak to your eunuch Kalil in my presence; recommend this young man to his care; and in reply to every body, take the character of my friend's wife, that no other opinion may be spread through the camp."

At this moment Hazad entered, and Negetmet embraced him with such marks of affection, that she had almost fainted. Giafar admired the power of his friend's virtues; they had an influence even on the manners of the Harem, where commonly one wife cannot en-

dure the child of another. The affection he inspired was of such a nature as to be diffused over every thing which came from him.

Dinner was served up; and Giafar, recovered from his passion, as from a profound and dangerous sleep, was affected with beholding a woman and her son-in-law, whose love to one another seemed to be as strong as it was innocent. He concluded with leaving them together; and, having ordered Kalil the eunuch to remain at the door of the tent, passed into that where Zizialé was, anxious how he should be able to keep her from the sight of young Hazad. As soon as the Persian princess saw the Visier enter, she advanced towards him, and begged that he would grant her a favour.

"Prince," said she, "the heat and fatigue of the journey have made an impression on the countenance of young Hazad, who was newly recovered from a fit of sickness, when he set out. I have seen him through the window of the litter. I have resources which he has not, to defend me from the heat of the sun. Allow me to accompany the Amazon of Almokadan; that manner of travelling is more agreeable to me than thus to be shut up, though opposite to one who is your spouse, and the most beautiful person in the universe."

"She

“ She is not my spouse, princess,” replied Giafar; “ she is the spouse of my friend Chebib, and is going to Bagdad to stay with Fatmé my wife, till Chebib come to claim at my house all the rights of hospitality, which I have received from him. Since you desire it, Hazad shall go into the litter with his father’s wife; and I perfectly acquiesce in the plan which appears to give you pleasure.”

Giafar, after giving orders accordingly, retired to enjoy a little repose. His soul had lately sustained a terrible conflict; but, instead of losing its vigour, it had acquired new force from the struggle which it had made for victory. He could now admire the inconceivable generosity of his friend, without having occasion to blush at his own conduct; and he had got the ascendant of one of the strongest passions he had ever felt.

When night was come, the numerous and splendid retinue resumed their march to Bagdad. Zizialé rode by the side of Almokadan’s spouse, and felt no inconvenience. Markaff hovered over her, in the form of a cloud, and during the day always interposed betwixt her and the scorching rays of the sun.

Hazad, in Negemet’s carriage, confessed and related to her his extraordinary passion, without imagining that its object was so near.

With

With respect to Giafar, the farther he advanced on his road, the more was he taken up with the pleasing thoughts of seeing himself again in the good graces of the Caliph. If he had come from Damas as the husband of the beautiful Negemet, the delicate Fatmé might have been troubled at it, and Barmekir perhaps dissatisfied. He could with pleasure reflect, that his presence would inspire nothing but joy.

Such were the situations of our travellers, when, from a rising ground, they discovered the glittering spires of Bagdad, and saw at the same time troops of horsemen, who came from the city to meet the Grand Visier. The Zorans who had gone before, had warned them of his near approach.

The Caliph had taken care to give the air of a triumph, to the Grand Visier's return to Bagdad ; and thereby re-established the credit of his favourite, on whom he wished to confer the greatest authority.

Giafar did not go to his own palace, whither Almokadan conducted Negemet and Hazad, but went directly to pay his respects to Haroun, and carried along with him the young princess of Persia, who was still disguised as an eunuch.

When the Caliph saw Giafar arrive, he prevented the respectful homage which the minister

minister meant to pay him, by public demonstrations of his sincere friendship; and both of them shut themselves up for a mutual explanation. The Caliph required from Giafar not to omit the smallest circumstance of all his adventures since his departure from Bagdad; and the Visier was scrupulous to conceal nothing from him.

When he was at the story of his love for Negemet, the Caliph could not restrain from laughing. "Go on, my friend, go on," said he; "you shall know why the circumstances of this adventure cause me laugh."

The Visier continued, and passed on to what respected Zizialé. "Where is she?" asked Haroun. "As I entered the city," answered Giafar, "I gave her in charge to one of Zobeide's eunuchs"—"And where is the young lover?" asked he again.—"In my palace," replied Giafar, and continued to relate his adventures till his arrival in Bagdad.

The Visier beheld with how great satisfaction Haroun heard of the generosity of Chebib, which he himself so much esteemed; and read in the eyes of the man who was both his master and his friend, the pleasure which he derived from his victory over his love. The story of the prince of the Barmecides was at length ended; and the Caliph began.

"My

“ My dear visier,” said he, “ if the *Giafer* gave us every year as much business as it has procured for us this, the reading of that book would be very dangerous to our repose. You have in every respect been put into a great commotion ; but it is not all over. The remainder, however, regards you less than it does me, who must set out for Damas, upon the first signal given me ; luckily it will not be ambiguous. But before I explain myself on this subject, I require you to tell me why I began with laughing when that memorable reading of the *Giafar* took place previous to your departure ?”

“ You have been so good,” replied *Giafar*, “ as give me the hint ; the book shewed that I would become foolishly enamoured like a child.”

“ I appeared sad,” said Haroun, “ explain the reason of this second emotion.”

“ You saw,” said the Visier, “ my friend renounce his own happiness to promote mine.”

“ Know you why I wept ?” replied the Caliph—“ No,” said the Visier—“ This,” replied Haroun, “ I must explain to you.

“ You exposed the most virtuous man upon earth to the blackest calumny, and to the most horrible outrage. Be not too much alarmed, since heaven incessantly watches over him. But as soon as the sun’s
disk

disk shall appear red, I must set out for Damas. Get ready the swiftest camels in my stables and in yours, but let it not be suspected that they are for me ; let Almokadan Hafsán hold the Zorans in readiness to march, as if some trifling expedition into the neighbourhood were intended. While I pay my tribute to destiny, you must govern alone, as I have done in your absence. You will readily forgive me for allowing you to set out like a dervise, since you know that you could have learned or done nothing, but by going alone, unknown, and perfectly ignorant of what was to happen."

Day was beginning to appear when this long conversation ended. The Visier went to find repose in his palace, where luckily they had been previously informed that the Caliph and he would not soon part, after being so long without seeing one another.

Zobeide took the young princes of Persia under her protection, and appointed to her, women, eunuchs, and a commodious apartment. Zizialé dismissed Markaff, determined no longer to practise the lessons of her nurse.

Negemet found every possible happiness with Giafar's spouse, who forced her to take her own apartment ; and at the court of the Caliph, she met with the most flattering honours and distinctions.

The governor of the young Hazad was Gi-afar himself, who instructed him in the knowledge of men and things. All went well at Bagdad; but at Damas the scene was reversed, and every thing was on the point of going to ruin.

Abdelmelek-Ben-Merouan, returned to his capital with his heart full of rage. This secret tyrant (for under the government of Haroun Alraschid there could be no open ones) had many crimes to reproach himself with. The incorruptible probity of Chebib was always hateful in his eyes; he considered him as a spy of the Caliph; and he was convinced that the Grand Visier had come to Damas in order to learn the sentiments of the people concerning the existing government. Gi-afar had left it apparently satisfied with his conduct; but there was no trusting to appearances. He had observed, that Chebib had displayed greater extravagance in entertaining this guest than he had ever done before. In short, entirely to gain over to him the second chief of the empire, he had not only given him his only son as an hostage, but had even sacrificed to his desires his own wife, whose charms were every where renowned. It was well known that Chebib tenderly loved his son, and was highly enamoured of Negemet. It was not natural to make such sacrifices to a stranger; and

and that friendship of so late a date from which they originated, appeared a chimera in the eyes of Abdelmelek.

This king, tormented by remorse and jealousy, thought of nothing but of the means he should employ for the destruction of his enemy. His inclination for beautiful women was the pretext for that crime, which was about to be imputed to him.

There was at Damas, in the quarter where Chebib lived, a joiner, whose wife was reckoned the most beautiful woman in the city. The qualities of her mind were not so much esteemed as those of her external appearance. Abdelemelek devised the scheme, of spreading a report, that Chebib was in love with her, and wished to replace by the conquest of her, the daughter of Sheffandar Hassan whom he had given up to Giafar; in short, of assassinating the husband by people hired by himself, and imputing the crime to Chebib. But he must have proofs prepared which should certify the fact in such a manner, that the accused would suffer by the law, and in no respect appear a victim to personal hatred.

Giafar must be deprived of every pretence for taking part with Chebib, and the latter must remain convicted in the opinion of that

minister who was his friend, of the crime for which the judges should condemn him.

It was necessary to procure some striking evidence. The king of Damas, in one of those moments, when he indulged in ostentation, had given Chebib a very beautiful ring. When the latter, who was strictly attentive to the respect due to the king, went to dine at the palace, though he had many more precious jewels, he never failed to put on this ring in preference to every other, before taking his seat at Abdelmelek's table.

This ring was to be taken from him without being perceived. An eunuch, who was a consummate juggler, undertook this task, as he gave Chebib water to wash after the repast. He executed his design at the conclusion of a supper which had continued till very late. Chebib not perceiving it, returned to his own palace without his ring, and even without his poniard; for the juggler had exceeded the orders of Abdelmelek, in carrying off this weapon.

When the tyrant was master of the ring and the poniard, the rest of the abominable intrigue followed of consequence. The joiner, as he was returning to his own house, was murdered before Chebib's door; and the assassins were not perceived. An usher in Abdelmelek's palace, as corrupted as his

his master, and equally abandoned to wickedness, was in love with, and beloved by the joiner's widow. He prevailed upon her to accuse Chebib of having tempted her during the lifetime of her husband, to give herself to him by divorcing her spouse, or obliging him to divorce her; in short, of having sent her, a short time after the murder, his ring and a promise of marriage.

Four witnesses were ready to depone that they had seen Chebib commit the crime; the widow was assured that Chebib's goods would be confiscated to her use; and his magnificent palace, of which Abdelmelek reserved nothing to himself but the furniture, was promised to the usher.

The king of Damas had assembled a Divan, in which Chebib sat at the head of all the grandees of the state. Abdelmelek was informed, that a woman in a veil appeared to demand justice for an atrocious crime committed by a powerful man. The sovereign unconcernedly ordered her to be brought in. The widow appeared uttering loud sighs, prostrated herself, and demanded justice against the murderer of her husband. The whole Divan agreed, that if she knew him, and could bring proofs of his guilt, she should receive instant justice.

The widow then resumed her speech, and told the whole story, which her lover, the usher of the palace, had suggested to her, without naming the guilty person. The first proof she offered was the ring which her husband's murderer had sent her, and which she required to be put under seal; she likewise gave the names of the four witnesses who saw the murder committed, and had taken up the assassin's poniard. Abdelmelek ordered the secretary of the Divan to take the ring and the names of the witnesses; and the widow withdrew.

When she had retired, Abdelmelek spoke as follows: "Here," said he, "a dreadful crime has been committed; and I ask of my officers and ministers, what is the punishment which the law denounces against so horrible an attempt."

"Sire," replied the chief minister of religion, "it is the punishment of death. It is commanded in three books; in that of Moses, in that of Yefac-Ben-Mariann, and lastly, in the Alcoran. No mercy can be shewn to the murderer of a Mussulman."

The whole assembly acceded to the opinion of the Muphti, except Chebib, who spoke last. He added, that if it was just that the guilty should suffer, it ought not to be on mere presumptions; and that the complaint,
and

and the proofs of the crime should be seriously inquired into.

“ Nothing can be more just,” replied Abdelmelek; “ and since religion has here been offended in the attempt to violate the sacred bond of marriage, I charge the Muphti to assemble the Cadis, and instantly to begin the trial, that no respite may be given to the crime, and that the criminal may be judged in the Divan, which shall be assembled again to-morrow.

Chebib, without suspecting it, was in the most eminent danger. But at the very moment when the joiner Houffein had been murdered, the phenomenon predicted by the *Giaffer* appeared over Bagdad. The sun at that place seemed covered with blood, and Haroun was on his road to Damas. This city, in the mean time, was all in an uproar. Chebib's house was surrounded; and he was informed that he must appear next day at the Divan, as accused of murdering Houffein, and of attempting to seduce this workman's wife. The virtuous Chebib raised his soul to God in prayer, and recommended himself to the great prophet. After fulfilling this duty, he supped, and went to bed.

The inhabitants were astonished to see so beneficent and virtuous a man suspected of having committed such a crime as was imput-

ed to him. The poor, whom he had succoured, lamented that they would enjoy his beneficence no more : Those who envied him, but who were few in number, rejoiced at his misfortune ; while the agents of Abdelmelek spread abroad, that an unrestrained love of women leads astray the man of the best established principles. The night which succeeded this day, was spent in tumult and agitation.

In the mean time, at the break of day, the two blind men met at the door of the grand mosque : both of them had come thither to pray for Chebib.

“ My wife,” said the elder, “ has had a singular dream last night. She saw all the lamps which are under the dome of Coubetil-Nasser, almost extinguished ; but suddenly there arose a gentle zephyr which revived them, and made them shine with a brightness insupportable to the eyes.”

“ My father,” replied the youngest of the blind men, “ has seen Markaff, who told him, as he left him, that he was going to throw himself into the Albana, that he might be taken with a line : it is for Chebib,” said he. “ What can this great man do with a dish of fish in his present situation ? My old friend, the genie Karkass, in leaving me, made himself so little, that I entirely lost sight of him.

He

He told me he was going to creep into a place where nothing but the air and himself could penetrate. It is their queen Tantoura who has ordered them thus to dispose of themselves for the safety of Chebib. This worthy man has many enemies here below, brother, but God permits him to have friends as powerful, as they are procured in an extraordinary manner."

"What say you of Chebib?" said one of the dervises, who was likewise going to the mosque; "if you love him of whom you was speaking, receive alms in the name of that truly generous man, and come along with us into the mosque, to pray that his judges may be enlightened, and his calumniators punished."

"You shall not go alone into the mosque," said three men, who came from three different quarters; "we are come here for the same purpose."

One of them held a parrot in his hand; another carried a large fish in a basket; the third had a purse, almost empty, hanging at his girdle, and was accompanied by a young boy. These new comers addressed the dervises: "Since you came here to pray for the generous Chebib, receive us into your company."

"Very

“ Very willingly,” said the dervises, “ but here is a bird and a fish, which cannot go along with us.”—“ I will keep them,” said the youth who accompanied the man that came last ; and they all went into the mosque.

There the most fervent prayers were offered up, mingled with sighs and groans. When they were finished, these people who were accidentally collected together, (namely, the fisherman, the cook, the seller of lemonade, who were mentioned in relating the adventures of Giafar, and the three dervises who were Chebib’s guests) talked together, before they left the mosque, of the motive which had brought them to prayers so early in the morning, and communicated to one another the design which they all had of going to the place of judgment.

The Divan was to be held in the open air, and Abdelmelek had caused the public criers proclaim, that all the people might come and assist at the trial. As Chebib’s friends came out of the mosque, they saw a crowd of people assembled round the young man who kept the parrot and the fish. The bird incessantly cried, *Chebib is innocent*. It was Tantoura, the queen of the genies, who, having changed herself into a parrot, and taken the place of one which belonged to the seller of lemonade, had, since day-break, incessantly disturbed the
house

house with its cry. The seller of lemonade was resolved to present this bird to the council, when he had said his prayers.

The fisherman had, in the morning, been throwing his net into the river. Perceiving a large fish near the edge of the water, he cast his line, and pronounced aloud; *in the name of the generous Chebib, who is persecuted by the malice of men.* The fish sprung at the hook as soon as it was thrown into the river. The fisherman had brought this fish, supposing, that though mute, it would undoubtedly bear testimony in favour of Chebib, since it evidently allowed itself to be taken in his name.

“Some days ago,” said the cook, “four fellows of a very suspicious appearance, came to regale themselves at my house. As they were busy in the entertainment, they began to quarrel about the division of a large sum of gold, contained in a purse. One of them pretended that the largest share belonged to him, because he had done more than the rest. They threw the dishes at one another’s heads, and we were obliged to separate them. One of them complained of being unable to manage himself, for they had given him a blow upon the only eye of which he had the use: the other, though apparently sound, was, in reality, affected with the palsy.

“I pre-

“ I prevailed upon one of his comrades,” continued the cook, “ to conduct him to his own house. These people left my shop in such confusion, that they forgot the purse which had contained the gold they had divided, and in which there remained two sequins. I thought that as I was to be among the people to-day, on account of the trial of Chebib, the purse might find its owners, and I have fixed it to my girdle.”

“ With respect to us,” said the dervises, “ we are the guests and friends of Chebib, and, having prayed for him, we intend to go to the place of trial, to see how far the wickedness of man can go against this mirror of generosity and virtue.”

This little party set out with one accord. Wherever the crowd opposed their passage, the pretty parrot, which was carried on the hand of the young man, cried with a loud and clear voice, *Place! place!* and every one fell back very naturally, without reflecting on the singularity of the order, which they obeyed.

At length Chebib's friends arrived at the inclosure, where the supposed criminal was to be confronted with his accusers. These were already come to the place, and they got so near them, that they could almost touch them; they were separated from them only by a rail.

The judges immediately took the seats prepared for them. Abdelmelek alone was waited for ; he soon took his place, and the accused was ordered to be brought forth.

Chebib was now in the fatal scene. The widow who made the complaint was without the railing, dressed in mourning, and covered with a veil, which descended to the ground. Having received orders, she was about to rise to bring forward the accusation against the person whom she pretended to be guilty of her husband's murder, when suddenly the parrot uttered some sounds in such perfect imitation of those of a trumpet, that the whole attention was drawn towards them, and the widow of Houffein was prevented from opening her lips.

They were beginning to recover from the surprize, which the noise of the parrot had occasioned, when they heard the real sound of trumpets. It was answered by other military instruments, and every thing announced the arrival of the Caliph, who had just alighted from his dromedary, attended by all the leaders of his guard.

Abdelmelek eagerly descended from his throne to meet his sovereign ; and the Caliph advanced towards him with an open and gracious air.

“ King

“ King of Damas,” said he, “ my arrival here must not surprize you. Entrusted with watching over the happiness of Mussulmen, of whom Heaven has constituted me the chief upon earth, I owe them all the same marks of attention ; and I am come to applaud the prosperity, which, under you, I am persuaded they enjoy. I learned, as I arrived, that you was employed in a solemn act of justice, of which you wished the people to be witnesses. Delicacy prevents me from suspecting the motives by which the judges will be determined. I approve, likewise, the precaution which you have taken, to surround the place chosen for such an assembly, with a body of troops, in order to maintain order, and insure the execution of the law. As you are here fulfilling the painful functions annexed to the diadem, I am happy in having arrived in sufficient time to assist you in supporting the burden, and I join myself to you in presiding over the trial.”

Abdelmelek was thunderstruck with this declaration of the Caliph, and only answered with broken words, which had no distinct meaning. At length the Caliph ascended the throne ; and the trembling king of Damas sat down on his left hand. The Caliph saw the person who brought the complaint before him, addressed himself to her, and

with mildness and dignity, ordered it to be renewed.

The widow of Houffein could not bear the awful presence of the successor of Mahomet. The falsehood died upon her lips, as she was about to utter it; and she fell into a swoon, which prevented her from speaking. The clerk was obliged to read the complaint, as it had been written; he then shewed the ring, which was the pretended evidence of the plan of seduction, and the poniard, which demonstrated the murder.

The ring passed through the hands of the judges; some of them recollected that it belonged to Chebib, and Abdelmelek declared, that he had given it to him three years ago. The Caliph took the ring, examined it, and ordered it to be delivered to Chebib, that he might declare if he knew it.

"This was my ring," replied Chebib; "I lost it some time ago, and never gave, nor offered it to any person."

"Do you know the woman who accuses you?" replied Haroun; "Did you court her by means of any one?"

"O sublime Caliph!" answered Chebib, "I have heard her talked of, but I never saw her, nor did I commission any person to speak to her about me; I knew her husband, and have

employed him to work for me: I have done him good, but never any harm."

"There are four witnesses," continued the Caliph, "who depone that they saw you kill Houffein, a few steps from your own door, and then return to your house."

"Protector of the Faithful," answered Chebib, "it belongs to God, and not to me, to confound that imposture, which is intended to overwhelm me: but I see here three dervises, who are my guests, and with whom I was engaged in conversation, when I was supposed to have committed the crime."

The Caliph ordered the four accusers to be heard, and their declarations corresponded exactly. While all the four took refuge under a portico, where they had accidentally met during a storm, and where they were concealed behind the pillars, which served them for a shelter, they saw Chebib come behind Houffein, and stab him twice with a poniard; they took up this weapon, which had fallen from the murderer's hand, and next day carried it to the widow.

The Caliph desired to see the poniard, and shewed it to Chebib. "I know," said he, "the handle and blade of this poniard, on which my cypher is engraved; I lost it at the same time with my ring; but I observe that
false

false stones have been put in place of the diamonds with which it was ornamented."

The Caliph, upon this declaration, was satisfied with saying to the king, "The poniard appears to me very suspicious: In reality, the stones of it are false; they have been set by a jeweller, and we will find him, unless he is an accomplice in the robbery. It is not likely that Chebib, who in every thing is so magnificent, would have the affectation to adorn himself with false jewels."

After this short conversation with the king of Damas, Haroun asked the first witness, "Did you see Chebib kill Houffein?"

"I swear," answered the witness, "by our great prophet, that I saw him with both my eyes."

"*He lies,*" instantly cried a firm, though shrill voice, "*he sees only with one eye.*" It was the parrot carried on the young man's finger, who thus gave him the lie. This address occasioned some small disturbance; and, while they were searching for its author, the Caliph proceeded to interrogate the second witness, putting the same question to him as to the former.

"As certainly," answered the man, "did I see Chebib murder Houffein, as I am a musician."

“ *He lies,*” uttered the same voice, “ *for he is not circumcised.*”

They then perceived that it was the parrot that spoke. Achmet Balan, usher in waiting to the king of Damas, wished to seize the bird, but it bit his hand, till the blood appeared, and with a stroke of its beak, made the stone of his ring leap out. The diamond rolled towards Chebib's feet, who took it up, and said, “ Here is the brilliant which was on the hilt of my sword ; the Caliph will recollect it, for I owe it to his goodness.” The murmur excited by these different incidents was appeased, and the Caliph went on with the proof, addressing himself to the third witness. This man, who was by the side of the fisherman, put his hand upon the large fish, whose jaw had been half torn away by the drawing back of the line. “ I swear,” said he, “ that what I have declared is as certain as I now put my hand upon a dead fish.” No sooner had the man uttered the oath, than the fish, darting from the basket a stroke with its tail at the face of the perjurer, made the blood spring from his nose, leaped over the heads of the bystanders, and plunged into a canal, formed near the place by the waters of the river.

The Caliph, less surprised than delighted with these wonders, passed on to the last witness.

This

This man thought that he discovered at the cook's girdle a purse which belonged to himself, and which he did not believe he had left in the shop.

"I swear," answered he, "that my accusation is as true as I am certain of seeing my purse at this cook's girdle."

"*You lie,*" said the bird again; "*the purse is Achmet Balan's, the king's usher; his mark is on the bottom of it.*"

After all these proofs of the sagacity of the parrot, the Caliph turned towards Abdelmelek. "We have just now, brother," said he, "seen verified what has been so often said, that the goodness of Chebib has interested in his favour every thing in nature, which has the breath of life. Behold the efforts which the bird and fish have now made to rescue him from the blackest and most atrocious of all calumnies. If I have any experience in criminal trials, I already know some of those who are involved in this terrible conspiracy against virtue. I know not who is the chief of them; but I shall be able likewise to discover him."

The Caliph then turned to the parrot, and said, "Pretty little friend of Chebib, tell us the name of Houffein's murderer, who intended also to murder Chebib."

“ *It is on the bottom of the ring stolen from Ghebib,*” answered the parrot, and at the same time flew away.

The Caliph caused the ring be delivered to him; there was no need of a jeweller to take the stone from its place; Karkas, who was inclosed in it, made it leap out at the proper moment; and underneath there was found written the name of *Abdelmelek*.

It is impossible to describe the distress of the king of Damas, during the proof which the Caliph had been taking; but when he saw prodigies heaped up to manifest his crimes, and at last discover him, his confusion rendered him motionless.

“ *Abdelmelek,*” said the Caliph to him, with that awful tone which he sometimes assumed, “ descend from the throne which you have stained; instantly lay aside every mark of that dignity of which I deprive you; take the place of that virtuous man whom you unworthily conspired to destroy, by robbing him of his honour, as well as his life; you have assembled the people to shew them a memorable example of justice, and Heaven has sent me hither to cause it light on you and your accomplices.”

Abdelmelek could not move; he was petrified: Haroun assumed so terrible a tone, that

that terror, rather than obedience, hurled the unforunate sovereign from his throne.

"Let him be seized," said Haroun to the officers of justice, "and allow him to live only till he has witnessed the punishment of those whom he has drawn into transgression. You, nobles and citizens of Damas, who are present, and you, strangers, by whatever motive you have been brought hither, if fear has hitherto restrained you from giving testimony in favour of innocence, and from pulling off the mask from guilt, speak now without constraint, and assist me in discovering the accomplices of such iniquity."

"Sire," said one of the dervises, "my two brothers and I saw the four men who have deposed against Chebib, come out of Achmet Balan's house, the day after Houssien the joiner was murdered; they went to eat at the shop of the cook who is beside us, and fell disputing about the division of a great quantity of gold which they had in their possession. One of them forgot his purse; and the cypher of Achmet Balan, as the bird declared, is written on the bottom of it."

"Let Achmet Balan instantly give up his robe, and usher's staff," said the Caliph, "and let him and his four accomplices be put to death, after a confession of their guilt, and a declaration of the names of their associates have

have been forced from them : let Houffein's widow be thrown into a dungeon, to wait her fate."

The Caliph's orders were immediately put in execution. All the criminals were dragged to the place of punishment ; and Abdelmelek enjoyed the cruel distinction of dying last.

When these disagreeable objects were removed, the Caliph resumed his serene air, and thus addressed Chebib :

" Come, my former landlord, my friend, my brother, come and place yourself by my side. I will not put upon your head the diadem which your predecessor has stained ; but I make you king of Damas. I foresee you will oppose me ; know, however, that I do not beseech you to accept the throne, but that in the name of the Almighty God, who ruleth over you and me, and in that of our great prophet, I command you to ascend it ; and I order all the princes and grandees who are present, to acknowledge you for their king."

Chebib, notwithstanding his modesty and reluctance, was forced to obey the orders of the Caliph ; and was encouraged to do so by a general acclamation, with which all Damas resounded.

When this ceremony was over, Haroun became a second time Chebib's guest. They
discoursed

discourfed together of the intereft of the ftate; and the Caliph gave Chebib information concerning Giafar, the lovely Negemet, and the young Hazad. A meffenger from the Grand Vifier had already informed the new king of Damas, of the generous refolution he had taken with regard to Negemet: and Chebib congratulated himfelf lefs on his good fortune in feeing her reftored to him, than that he owed her to a virtuous refolution in his friend.

When this fubject of converfation was exhausted, Haroun informed Chebib of the plan of marrying Hazad to the Sultan of Hirak's daughter; and related to him the whole hiftory of the two rings, which Giafar had concealed from him.

The Caliph undertook to ask Zizialé from the Sultan her father, and to inform him that ſhe was at Bagdad with Zobeide. Ambaffadors from the Caliph were immediately difpatched to the Sultan of Hirak.

Haroun Alrafchid, having eſtabliſhed Chebib upon the throne, returned without delay to Bagdad. When he arrived, he made his friend the Vifier tremble at the recital of the danger which Chebib had run; and the whole prediction of the *Giaffer* was now completely fulfilled.

While

While the Caliph returned to Bagdad, Chebib having been made king almost in spite of himself, at length employed the treasures of knowledge which he had acquired to a nobler purpose than that for which they were originally designed: for what good may not an intelligent and virtuous king accomplish?

The first instance of his greatness of mind was displayed in succouring the family of Abdelmelek. He restored to them all their possessions, and behaved towards them more like a father than a king. But his generosity shone less upon the throne, for it was more divided. He only considered himself as the manager of the public treasury, to which he had joined his own private fortune.

The sudden disappearance of the princess Zizialé, left the Sultan of Hirak and his spouse in the utmost distress. The envoys from the Caliph and the king of Damas, excited the most lively joy, by informing them that she was with Zobeide. The letters which they received at the same time, explained to them, that the proposed marriage with Hazad was an arrangement to which the fates had contributed; and they agreed to it the more readily, because the generosity of Chebib, Hazad's father, had gained him the esteem of all Persia; and the lustre of his virtues was, in their estimation, increased by the splendour of the throne.

The

The Sultan of H Irak immediately set out for Bagdad : business of state called thither also the new king of Damas ; and the court of the Caliph was soon increased, by the arrival of these two sovereigns. Haroun received the Sultan of H Irak with great distinction in his own palace ; but Chebib was the guest of his friend Giafar. The nuptials of Hazad with the princess Zizialé, followed soon after the meeting of the persons whose consent was necessary.

The charming Negemet entered again into her first ties, with new claims on her husband's heart. These happy union were celebrated by magnificent festivals.

The generous Chebib, loaded with the favours of fortune, and enjoying the sweets of love and friendship, returned to his government ; and the Sultan of H Irak carried into his dominions his daughter's new spouse, who was become the presumptive heir to his crown.

The Caliph and Giafar, Zobeide and Fatmé, felt some regret at the moment of separation from four persons who had become very dear to them. The princesses had conceived as strong a liking for Zizialé and Negemet, as their husbands had done for Chebib and his son. But fate had determined that these two engaging couples should go to constitute the happiness of those states over which they were

to reign ; and the Caliph, his Vifier, and their wives, must agree to this last sacrifice, that the work in which they had been instrumental, might not remain unfinished.

Scheherazade having thus concluded the history of the adventures of Giasar and Chebib, addressed her discourse to Schahriar.

“ Sire, your majesty will agree that the Caliph Haroun Alraschid displayed, in these different adventures, all the activity, prudence, and penetration, which can be expected from a great man. As it is impossible to exhaust the excellent qualities of this celebrated prince, if my recitals are not displeasing to your majesty, I will undertake to give an account of the adventures of *Halechalbé*, and of the young unknown lady ; in which the penetration and justice of the Caliph will appear in a manner truly worthy of himself.” The Sultan, who never wearied hearing Scheherazade, besought her to begin her story, which she did in the following words.

Story of Halechalbé and the unknown Lady.

THE Caliph Haroun Alraschid sent for Giafar his Grand Visier, and Mesrour his chief eunuch. "I intend," said he, "to go down to Bagdad in disguise, that I may visit my hospitals, and examine whether the administration of them is wise and regular, and whether the patients there receive that assistance and relief of which they stand in need. I will assume the disguise of a dervise: do you, who are to accompany me, choose a dress by which you will be completely concealed."

The orders of the Caliph were obeyed, and he set out with his attendants on his expedition. He was in the centre of the establishments which he had proposed to visit, and every thing appeared in the order which he wished for, until he arrived at the gate of a very large court, where he heard a noise. "Whence comes this noise?" said he to Giafar.

"This," answered the Visier, "is the place where mad people are confined. Those whose madness is not dangerous, are allowed

to walk in the great court, and they have their cells or small apartments all around."

"Let us go in," said the Caliph; "this object is also interesting. Let us first ascertain if they are all confined for proper reasons. There are many people left at liberty, who deserve to be confined; perhaps there are some here, whom it would be for the interest both of society and themselves, to restore to freedom. Let each of us examine apart one of the inhabitants of this place; let us determine by lot, which of the three shall begin the examination, and we will immediately set to work." The lot decided that Mefrour should begin.

All three having entered the court, the chief eunuch went straight to the first cell. He found there a man of about forty years of age, smoking a pipe, with a serious air, and leaning his elbow on a table, upon which there were some papers. He saluted the smoker, who made him a due return. "I suppose," said Mefrour to him, "that you are entrusted with overseeing those who make noise in the court."

"Overseeing," answered the smoker, "is a trouble from which I am free; I am entrusted with watching over myself, and that is quite enough."

"But

“ But surely,” said Mesrour, “ you are not kept here in confinement among the number of mad people.”

“ And why should I not be kept in that character? Do you think me wiser than others? They have done me that justice, which they ought to do to all the inhabitants of Bagdad. I cannot complain: I was condemned by my equals; and they are so attentive as to come here every day to visit me.”

“ I understand you,” said Mesrour; “ we have all a small grain of madness: However, when it does not pass certain bounds, we are very properly allowed to enjoy our liberty. It is only extraordinary madness——.”

“ Ah! you are right,” interrupted the smoker, “ men excuse all their ordinary follies, however ridiculous; but when any one raises himself by his ideas, knowledge, and observation, above others, he is a kind of reproach to them for the debasement into which they allow themselves to fall, and they endeavour to remove him from their sight. This is my history: I knew more than the vulgar, and therefore was separated from them.”

“ In what branch did you excel?” replied Mesrour. ——“ In that science, which is the chief of all others, astrology.” ——“ And was you in possession of that science?” ——“ I endeavoured after it, but my progress was in-

terraptured."——" You was in correspondence with the stars then ?"——" Yes, indeed."——

" And by whom was you chiefly favoured ?"

" By the moon."——" Are you no longer in favour with her ?"——" Since I have lost

my liberty, she uses me as she has a mind.

She formerly owed me great obligations ; but now she has forgotten them. She had an enormous wart upon her nose, of which I cured

her. Thus it is to me she owes that beautiful appearance which you sometimes see her

assume. Besides, by causing her go on her side, I saved her from an eclipse, which was expected by all the astronomers. At first she

shewed me some gratitude ; but since I have been confined, if I address her in her increase,

she is yet too weak to act in my favour : if I address her when she is full, she is surrounded

with clouds and mist ; but, if in her wane, all her malignant influences are at my service.

Defluxions, rheumatisms, catarrhs, are showered down upon me. I endeavour actually to deliver myself from this last mark of

her beneficence. Ah ! if I could get hold of her some day, she would find that she has not obliged an ungrateful person."

" And what will you do to get hold of her ?" replied Mesrour.——" Nothing can

be more easy," said the smoker ; " if a man like you would assist me, she will come

this

this evening at nine o'clock, to admire herself, and to bathe in that well which you see in the middle of the court. I will give you my table, and you will lie in wait. She will not suspect you; and while she is amusing herself with making her beams play upon the water, you will suddenly shut the well: then we shall get hold of her. It will make both our fortunes, and we will see how she will be put to it to justify her conduct."

"She will speak then?" said Mesrour; "will we hear her?"—"I don't say that you will hear it very distinctly," answered the smoker, "but I, whose ear is by practice become so perfect as to be able to mark the cadence of the celestial harmony, will not lose a single word. With respect to you, we must know how your ear is formed."

So saying, the smoker laid down his pipe, examined narrowly Mesrour's ear, and, taking hold of it very roughly, suddenly pulled it with all his force, crying out, "your ear is too short." Mesrour uttered a dreadful cry: One of the keepers ran up, and caused the astrologer quit his hold. The eunuch, holding his ear with both his hands, rejoined the Caliph, and related to him his lamentable adventure.

"I have long been persuaded," said Haroun, smiling, "that those madmen who

have an air of wisdom, are most to be distrusted. Come, Giafar," said he to his Grand Visier, "you are warned before hand, not to allow your ear to be pulled : proceed to your examination ; Mesrour and I will not go far from the cell which you enter, that we may be at hand to assist you, if there is occasion."

The Grand Visier had already cast his eye upon a door, by the side of which sat an old man with a venerable beard, and an engaging air. He began with giving him alms, and then saluted him. He appeared more attentive to the civility of the salutation than to the alms he had received. He returned the salute, and made a sign to Giafar to sit down on a seat, a few paces distant from him.

"You are undoubtedly come here to be instructed, young man," said he to him ; "you ought to thank heaven for having been so well directed. Of what chapter in my book do you wish to understand the text or the explanation?"

The book, of which this man seemed to speak, was a small square plank of cedar, on which there were no characters. Giafar asked what book it was.

"What ! do you not distinguish in these characters the finger of God, and the inspiration of the angel Gabriel ! A Mussulman not
know

know the divine Alcoran, nor discover in him who presents it according as he was inspired, the great prophet Mahomet !”

Upon this exclamation, the Visier rose up and withdrew. Having joined the Caliph, “Commander of the Faithful,” said he, “I have been forced to abandon my project ; the man whom I have left makes me tremble at his blasphemy : he says he is the Great Prophet.”

“It is not certain that he blasphemes,” replied the Caliph ; “every man may call himself a prophet, provided he proves his mission by miracles : go and ask him concerning this point.”

Giafar obeyed, and returned to his place “If you are Mahomet,” said he to the old madman, “who has put you in a place like this ?” “My ungrateful people,” replied the pretended prophet ; “they would not believe in me, and this has vexed rather than surpris-
ed me, for they scarcely believe in God.” “But a prophet proves his mission by miracles, why have you wrought none ?”—“My people should first have demanded them from me ; but they were afraid of being convinced ; they seek to believe nothing.”—“You could work miracles then ?”—“Do you doubt the power of Mahomet ?”—“Work them immediately.”—“Your request shall not be refused.”

fused. Ascend to the top of this spire by this outer stair, and throw yourself down from it without hesitation. When you are at the earth, though you were in a thousand pieces, with one word I will set you on your feet, straighter, and with a better carriage than you now have.”—“I would rather,” said Giafar as he was going away, “believe you a prophet, than oblige you to prove yourself one.” He came and gave the Caliph an account of the proposal which had been made to him.

“You can learn very little,” said Haroun to him, “for you will make no trial.” “If any one wishes to be instructed in this matter,” replied Giafar, “the man and the tower are there; he may try the adventure; I will not be jealous of his success.”

The conversation of the prince and his ministers, was a little interrupted by some persons who accosted them. One of them was Caliph, and came to propose Haroun’s quitting his habit of dervise, and accepting the place of Visier. He intended to clothe him in a magnificent robe; it was an old piece of stuff, full of holes, dirty, and devoured by vermin. Another, with a basket full of nut-shells, came to sell him confections.

These short and public scenes did not answer the design of Haroun, nor the purpose
of

of the agreement into which he had entered with his ministers. It was his turn to go into a cell, where, like his two companions in adventure, he might have a private conversation. He passed near one, which appeared larger and better furnished than the rest. A young man, of a soft and engaging figure was sitting upon a sofa, and appeared to be in deep melancholy; he held in his hand the Alcoran. The Caliph accosted and saluted him, addressing him in that kind and familiar tone, which the robe of a dervise authorised him to assume. "Young man," said he, "why is a man so rational as you appear to be, to be found among mad people?"

At this question, the young man shut his book, modestly opened his eyes, looked at the dervise, and answered him: "All the actions of my life have not been rational; I have given reason for the abuse which is now made of power in keeping me here."—"And could not I," said the dervise, "learn from you your history, when you appear to be so well qualified for giving it?"

"Pious dervise," answered the young man, "were you the Caliph, I would persuade you to sit down by me, and I would open to you my heart. Every day do I beseech God to send me this equitable prince; but it would

would serve no purpose to have any other confident. You see here a victim of his Grand Vifier Giafar, by whose orders I was brought hither, for a reason which appeared well-founded : but I can declare, that there is no reason why I should be still detained ; and without the support of religion, I would sink under the weight of my misfortune, and the horror of my situation."

The Caliph was greatly astonished to hear so reasonable and connected a discourse. He called Giafar and Mefrour, and repeated what he had heard. The Grand Vifier attentively considered the young man, and assured the Caliph, that the prisoner and his history were totally unknown to him.

Haroun's curiosity grew stronger, and made him anxious to hear his history. He entered the cell with that freedom which derives generally use, and sat down beside the supposed victim of Giafar's orders, " Unfortunate young man," said he to him, " you know that people of my character have many privileges, and especially that of approaching the great, and of speaking to them the truth. The Commander of the Faithful is to us of all men the easiest of access ; depend upon my zeal ; it may be possible for me to serve you ; you will intrust your misfortunes to a prudent ear, and to a soul truly charitable."

" The

“ The young man again sighed, mused a short time, shed some tears, and thus began his history.

“ My name is Halechalbé, and my father is Syndick of the trade of Bagdad. One evening he invited to supper the principal merchants in the city, each of whom brought along with him his eldest son. After the repast, which was plentiful and gay, the guests began to converse concerning the disposal of their children.

“ One had sent his son to a foreign counting-house; another had entrusted to his a vessel full of merchandise; a third had given up a certain branch of his trade; in short, it appeared from what I heard, that all my contemporaries were either advantageously placed, or settled in life. After fully discoursing of these different arrangements, the company retired.

“ Remaining behind with my father, I observed to him, that though the son of the first in our profession, I alone was unemployed. He allowed the force of the observation, and proposed that I should open a storehouse of whatever goods I chose, in one of the quarters of Bagdad.

“ This proposal was agreeable to my inclination for trade and independence. I accepted it; and next day was put in possession of

of

of a large assortment of the most beautiful Persian and Indian stuffs. I had slaves who were skilled in trade, and who relieved me of the troublesome part of the business.

“ Being surrounded during the day with all the nobility of Bagdad, with whom I had an opportunity of getting acquainted, I returned in the evening to my father’s house. In the management of my business, I led an active and busy life ; a life, in short, agreeable to my own taste. My father often visited me in my shop, and was pleased to see the concourse of virtuosi and customers of both sexes. He never received any thing uncommon from abroad, but he was happy to send it to me : The manager of his own trade had orders to that purpose.

“ I was one day surrounded with a great many people in my counting-house, when two women of a fine external appearance came in. Civility made the other virtuosi give place ; and one of the two women put aside her veil sufficiently to discover charms which dazzled the sight.

“ They sat down upon a sofa, asked for the richest stuffs, bargained with me, and bought them for three thousand crowns. By this bargain, from calculation, I was a gainer of five hundred crowns. The goods were folded up, and, by the orders of one of the
women

women, who appeared mistresses, were carried away by slaves. I was preparing to hold out my hand for payment, when the young lady began to speak.

“ ‘ Halechalbè,’ said she to me, ‘ I have brought no money with me ; but be not uneasy about what is owing to you : I will return in a few days, and bring it with me ; at which time I intend to make very considerable purchases from you.’

“ The other woman then spoke. ‘ Madam,’ said she, ‘ do you speak to a son of the chief of trade, a man of acknowledged opulence, and whose worth is known to the Caliph himself, as if you supposed that he would not reckon it an honour to give so trifling a credit to a lady like you ?

“ The discourse of this woman, the impression made upon me by the beautiful eyes of her mistress, in consequence of the derangement of her veil, and my natural timidity, prevented me not only from venturing to ask payment, but even from insisting to know the name of the lady to whom I gave credit. She left me, after saluting me in a very genteel manner ; and I remained at my door, fixed like a post, without taking the precaution to cause a slave follow her, and observe the place of her abode.

“ When I was alone, the imprudence, of which I had been guilty, presented itself to my mind in the strongest colours. To whom had I given my goods? Could I forget, after the lessons I had received from my father, that Bagdad swarmed with adventurers, who could appear in any form, and assume any tone? Every thing, even the beautiful eyes which she had allowed me to see, then became suspicious. I believed myself cheated out of my goods, and returned to my father's house, trembling for the reproaches which I thought I had brought upon myself.

“ My mother soon perceived my distress: She well knew how to draw from me a confession of the cause, and endeavoured, as much as she could, to calm my apprehensions. ‘ The merchant who knows not how to lose,’ said she, ‘ deserves not to gain. If you are embarrassed in your accounts with your father, my purse will supply the defect.’

“ I returned next day to my shop, hurt at being duped, and at the loss which I had sustained. I had some hopes, however, that the lady would return: But the evening came, and she had not made her appearance. This unhappy day was followed by two others of the same kind; and my mother saw
my

my distress increase, without being able to give it any relief.

“In vain did she tell me that she would supply this loss out of her own purse, and that I should consider what had happened to me as a useful misfortune; for it was only by experience that man could learn wisdom.

“All her discourses were in vain; nothing could console me for having allowed myself to be cheated by a pair of fine eyes, by mere compliment and shew: my vanity, which was hurt, tormented my soul.

“On the fourth day, the unknown lady at last came to my shop, and threw a large purse upon my counter. ‘Fair young man,’ said she, ‘I bring you your money; see if the account is right.’ At this so desirable and unexpected a sight, my fears and anxieties vanished; and I felt myself suddenly recover new life.

“The unknown lady caused other stuffs be brought to her: She chose some of them, and carried from my shop goods to the value of three hundred pieces of gold. In my enthusiasm, I would have given her credit for two thousand. As soon as she was gone, I returned to my mother, and now evidenced as much joy, as formerly I had shewn sorrow and dejection. I related to her the lucky adventure of the day, and perceived the full force of the

reasoning, which, till that time, she had made use of in vain, to persuade me, that in trade, *he who never ventures can never gain.*

“ In short, respectable dervise, I continued to deal in the same manner with the unknown lady, who always carried off from my shop, stuffs worth more money than she left in it, till she was owing me about ten thousand crowns, equal to all the profit which I had been able to make in my different bargains with her.

“ One day, after opening my shop, I was scarcely seated on my sofa, when an aged woman came and accosted me. I thought she wanted some robes or stuffs, and proposed to shew them to her. ‘ No, my son,’ answered she, ‘ I am entrusted with a commission of much greater importance: I come from the young lady who owes you ten thousand crowns; I do not bring you payment, but I am charged by her to tell you, that you became her merchant in preference to every other of the same profession at Bagdad, only because her heart granted you a preference of another kind. In short, she is beautiful, young, and rich, and offers you her hand in marriage. If you find it agreeable to enter into this engagement, after you have seen and conversed with her, no other dowry is required than the ten thousand crowns in which she stands indebted

indebted to you : if you do not agree to it, the money shall instantly be paid down. But you must resolve to follow me, that you may have it in your power to know whether the affair is agreeable to your wishes.'

" During this discourse of the old woman, a flame, to which I was till then a stranger, penetrated through my veins, and the hope which was now suggested, having increased its violence, I soon felt the fire of love burning in my heart. The beautiful eyes of the lady, from the first moment I beheld them, had so dazzled and blinded me concerning my real interest, that I allowed her to carry off my goods, without knowing how I should receive payment for them. Though, in the visits which she afterwards made me, her veil had wholly concealed the features of her countenance, yet the fullness of her dress could not conceal the elegance of her stature, the gracefulness of her motions, the exquisite form of her foot, and the extraordinary beauty of her hands. Besides, she disputed with me about the price, with so much politeness and civility, and with such an angelic voice, that she never left my shop without carrying away something more than my goods ; but I did not well know what it was. Scarcely had she left my shop, when I felt myself extremely uneasy ; said to myself, this is a
X 3 charming

charming lady ! and then fell into a long state of profound thoughtfulness.

“ When the old woman had informed me that the unknown lady was in love with me, my passion increased to a desperate height. I ordered my slaves to shut up my shop ; and, having desired them to tell my father and mother that I was going to enjoy myself with some of my friends, in a garden at some distance from the city, before I returned home, I put myself under the direction of the old woman. ‘ You will never repent,’ said she, as we went along, ‘ of having put confidence in me ; but you must still give me another proof of it. If the lady is not agreeable to you, if you do not accept the proposals which she is to make, and consequently a separation takes place, it is proper that she should remain always unknown. Her delicacy requires this ; and I was ordered to put a covering over your eyes, that you may not be able to discover the house to which you are going.’

“ I readily agreed to this condition ; and we withdrew under a portico, where, being concealed by two advanced pillars, she covered my eyes with a very thick silk handkerchief. She made me turn three or four times round on my heel ; then took me by the hand, and caused me walk by her side for a full quarter

quarter of an hour. We suddenly stopt; I heard her knock at a door, which opened, and, as soon as we had entered, immediately shut.

“I was in a short time restored to the use of my eyes, and committed to the care of two female slaves of remarkable beauty and richness of dress. They conducted me through seven doors, at the end of which I was received by fourteen other slaves, whose figure was so striking, and whose dress was so magnificent, that I was dazzled with beholding them. I was now in a superb apartment, where every thing was marble, jasper, or gilding. My adventure had so much the appearance of a dream, that, though my eyes were open, I could scarcely be convinced that I was really awake. The old woman, who had still followed me, went out for an instant, and soon returned, accompanied by a slave, who brought breakfast upon a large golden plate. I sat down to refresh myself.

“While I was satisfying my hunger, the old woman counted down upon a table the ten thousand crowns which were owing to me. ‘There is your whole sum,’ said she; ‘be not uneasy that my mistress does not yet appear. The law commands, and decency requires, that you should not see one another before the contract is made.’ Before she had done

done speaking, a Cadi appeared, with ten persons in his train. I arose to salute him; when the old woman, addressing the lawyer, said to him, ‘The young lady, who is to be married to this merchant, has chosen you for her guardian: do you agree to accept the office?’ The Cadi replied, ‘that he reckoned himself highly honoured by the choice which had been made of him.’ He immediately drew up the contract, and got it signed by the witnesses whom he had brought along with him. After partaking of an ample collation which was served up to him and his attendants, and having been presented with a magnificent dress, and three hundred sequins, he retired, charging the old woman to beg her mistress to accept his thanks.

“I was so astonished at what I saw, that when the Cadi went away, I made a motion to follow him, without perceiving that I left my money behind. I was prevented by the old woman, who made me sit down again. ‘Are you mad?’ said she: ‘need I inform you that the marriage follows the contract? Come, be wiser, and remain quiet till night, when every thing will be ready for the completion of the ceremony.’

“I continued in the hall, where a great number of slaves were attentive to every motion, and ready to anticipate every wish. I was in
a very

a very extraordinary state of mind. The power of that feeling which had made me run so fast with my eyes blindfolded, was no longer felt, and love remained fixed at the bottom of my heart, astonished at the luxury with which I was surrounded, and the ceremony of this extraordinary marriage.

“Towards the evening, a magnificent repast was served up, accompanied with all kinds of confections, and exquisite wines, which I used very sparingly. As soon as I made a signal for them to remove the dishes, the old woman took me by the hand, and conducted me to the bath. I was there received by eight beautiful slaves, dressed in silk, who wrapped me in stuffs of the same materials, entered into the water along with me, and served me with all that respect and attention which could have been paid to the Caliph himself.

“Imagine, O respectable dervise, my astonishment; it almost deprived me of my senses! I was soon drawn from it, however, by the appearance of twenty other slaves, more beautiful and better dressed than those by whom I was surrounded. Some held flambeaux, and others pots full of exquisite perfumes, the sweet odour of which, mingled with that of the wood of aloes, which served to warm the bath, embalmed the air, and raised an agreeable

able vapour to the very roof of the apartment.

“ From these delights, I was carried to the enjoyment of others. Twenty slaves went before me, and conducted me into a magnificent apartment; I sat down on a sofa covered with cloth of gold. I was there attended by the most melodious music, which was at the same time so cheerful and lively, and so fitted to inspire delight, that I could not help feeling a little reanimated. The slaves at length proposed to conduct me into the apartment destined for the celebration of the nuptials.

“ I arose; a great door opened; and I beheld the person approach who had marked me out for her husband, preceded by twenty other slaves, whom she alone could surpass in beauty. At the sight of her, I remained almost senseless; but this first impression instantly gave place to love; and my passion at length assumed over me that power, which even at this day makes me, every moment of my life, endure torments worse than death.

“ The beautiful stranger, preceded by her twenty slaves, and I attended by the same number, went into the grand apartment prepared for our nuptials, and there sat down together on the same sofa. The old woman then appeared at the head of four slaves, and brought us, on golden plates, different refreshments

ments, exquisite confections, and fruit of all kinds, which we mutually presented to one another. After this, the service disappeared, and we remained alone.

“ I was almost trembling, when the lovely unknown lady took me by the hand to encourage me. ‘ Halechalbé,’ said she, ‘ since the day when curiosity first led me into your shop, I have loved you; and the same sentiment has frequently carried me back, under pretence of cheapening and purchasing goods. The little intercourse we have had together, has given me an opportunity of knowing you; and my liking for you has so much increased, as to make me ambitious of being united to you for life. Can you think of sacrificing your liberty?’

“ ‘ Madam,’ answered I, ‘ from the first moment you appeared in my sight, your charms failed not to produce their effect. I never saw you without feeling an unaccountable disorder, mixed, however, with the sweetest pleasure: you never left me, without occasioning the most lively regret; I expected you every day, and my thoughts were incessantly occupied about your image. I dared not avow my passion to myself; but since you have confessed your regard for me, I swear to you, that nothing can equal the strength of my love, and
that

that the sacrifice of liberty is nothing to one who would give his life for your sake.'

" ' Halechalbé,' said she, ' truth seems to flow from your lips : spare your life ; it is essential to my happiness ; but if we are to be united for life, attend to the conditions upon which I will yield my person and heart. My name and rank must remain unknown to you, until the steps I am now taking shall have enabled me publicly to acknowledge you for my husband. You shall make no inquiry within this place, for the purpose of getting information ; and the door of the house shall be opened only once a year.' ' O madam,' said I, ' I will keep silence ; I will remain ignorant ; I will never leave the house.'—' Stop,' said she, ' I have a still more severe condition to impose upon you ; as I give myself wholly to you, it is reasonable that you should be wholly mine. My slaves are become yours, and will obey you in every thing ; but you must not speak to them, except to require their services. If you condescend to use the smallest familiarity with any of them, farther than mere expressions of kindness, if——I must discover to you a part of my character. I am inclined to be jealous ; and if you make me the subject of this fatal passion, I know not how far my resentment may carry me against you.'

" ' Take

“ ‘Take courage,’ said I, ‘ my adorable spouse, the strength of my passion secures you from every indiscretion on my part. I should die with vexation, were I capable of displeasing you ; but I am not afraid that I will ever be so unlucky as to give you offence.’

“ The unknown lady burst into tears, when she saw the frankness and air of sincerity with which my protestations were accompanied. ‘ Halechalbé,’ said she, ‘ put your hand upon my heart, and feel how it palpitates with fear, lest you had refused my conditions. We will now be united ; but had you hesitated about accepting them, I would have sacrificed my happiness to my delicacy, and we would have separated for ever.’

“ During this discourse, I applied my hand to her heart, and I felt my own sympathise with its emotion. I tenderly embraced her, and she fainted away in my arms. A slave was called ; and she soon recovered from an accident which was not dangerous in its origin. The idol of my heart opened her beautiful eyes, and, with rapture, I beheld them turned towards me.

“ I pass over the remaining events of my marriage, because they cannot be interesting to you, and the remembrance of them is still the torment of my life.

“I was so enchanted by my passion, that I spent a fortnight in total forgetfulness of the whole world besides ; and I will confess, to my shame, that I even omitted the most essential of all duties, for I never once thought of the uneasiness of my father and mother on my account. At last, by little and little, nature resumed her rights, and I began to think seriously of the grief which I must have occasioned to my affectionate parents. I uttered some sighs, which proceeded from the bottom of my heart ; and the distress of my mind appeared in my countenance. My wife, who possessed great discernment, soon perceived the change which I underwent, got from me the secret ; took an interest in my pain, and pointed out the method of being delivered from its attacks.

“ ‘ Dear Halechalbé,’ said she, ‘ I commend you for your attachment to your father and mother ; they are dear to me on your account. We have given ourselves laws ; but as we are the judges, we must not allow them to do injury to nature. You will go to see your parents, spend a week with them, and also resume your business. There are many reasons for so doing.

“ ‘ First of all, it will serve as a cloak to hide our marriage, and will furnish you with an opportunity of being present or absent at pleasure,

pleasure, without occasioning any suspicion of our intrigue. It will likewise enable you to acquire, by your civil, frank, and generous dealings, the public esteem, which will one day be of great advantage to us : for we live under the government of a Caliph, who has ears every where, and who likewise makes very good use of his own. Go, then, and my heart will accompany you wherever you are ; if it could be rendered visible, you would see it continually fluttering around you. Besides, you will be under my hand : we have our trusty old woman, by whose means you will have the satisfaction of hearing spoken of me, and I will have that of being informed of your welfare, and communicating to you my wishes. Above all,' added she, 'as our marriage cannot be concealed from your parents, charge them to keep it a profound secret.'

"Night was beginning to come on, when this discourse was ended ; and my wife ordered the old woman to blindfold me, and conduct me out of the gates of the palace, till I was under the portico, where I had first submitted to this operation. As soon as my guide had restored to me the use of my eyes, I flew with all speed to my father's house : A neighbouring lady was just entering it : She discovered me by the light of a shop, before which I passed. 'Halechalbe !' exclaimed she, 'what !

is it you? In the name of God, do not shew yourself so unexpectedly to your mother. Retire for a few minutes into my house; and in the mean time my husband will go and inform her of your return. She is in the utmost distress and despair at your loss; and the joy occasioned by your sudden and unexpected return might be productive of fatal consequences.' 'Whence come you, wicked young man?' said she, as soon as she had sat down; 'How could you let your worthy parents continue ignorant of what had become of you?'

"Not having a story ready made for the first inquisitive person I should meet, and it being necessary to conceal my marriage from every body, I was very much at a loss what answer to give. But I made it up by presence of mind, and was obliged to have recourse to a lie. 'I am astonished, madam,' answered I, 'to hear you talk of the vexation which I have occasioned to my parents. Having met with an opportunity of going to Balfora, where I had a very urgent and important examination to take against one of my most considerable debtors, and not having a moment to lose, I set out without being able to inform my father of my departure. I dispatched an express as soon as it was in my power; but some accident must have befallen him, as no news have

have been received of me.' The lady was satisfied with the excuse. 'All Bagdad, however,' said she, 'supposed you dead, and moreover magnificently buried; for a superb funeral was given you yesterday. I will relate the whole affair to you, when once my husband has prepared our neighbours for again seeing in good health the son whom they believed dead.

"The husband having with great pleasure undertaken the commission, the woman returned to her recital.

"Your slave informed your father and mother, that you was to spend the remainder of the day and the night in a garden with your friends. This prevented them from being uneasy during that evening and next day; but on the following days, all the merchants of Bagdad were in search of you. Messengers were sent to all the gardens in the neighbourhood of the city, to the woods, and to a great distance in the country. As you was no where to be found, and nobody had observed you, it was conjectured that you had fallen into one of those snares which are too common at Bagdad, where young people without knowledge and experience, find death in the very cup of pleasure.

"Your father and mother tore their hair through grief; your family and friends went

into mourning. Some kind of consolation was supposed to be derived from the pretended funeral, which all the mourners in Bagdad were hired to attend, but where many real tears were shed. Every person was affected with the distress of your parents.'

"This recital, O virtuous dervise! made me very uneasy. I perceived the dreadful consequences of forgetting myself and my duty; and I always considered my misfortunes, and the distraction of mind which was the consequence thereof, as a punishment from Heaven, because, in the arms of love, I was unmindful of the sacred obligations of nature.

"After our neighbour had related that part of my history, which it was necessary I should know, she rose up. 'It is now time,' said she, 'to appear; my husband must already have announced you; go, and confirm the account which he has given of your return.' I then entered my father's house; and it is impossible to describe his joy, much less that of my mother, who fainted away in my arms. 'What!' said my father, 'you are returned from Balfora? Poor child! the loss you might have sustained was not nearly equal in my estimation, to the danger which you have run, and the fatigues you have undergone.'

" 'Father,'

“ ‘Father,’ said I, still keeping up before the neighbours the story which I had thought it convenient to adopt, ‘I know not whether our correspondent is to fail, but I will deliver to you securities sufficient to remove every fear. There is a diamond to put in your turban; here is one for the hilt of your poniard, another for the handle of your scymitar, and a bracelet for my mother. I believe that this is a full equivalent for the sum which we may lose by him.’

“ They again embraced me, without asking any farther explanation; the weeds of mourning soon disappeared, and every one was dressed in his festival robes. The house was filled with music; a thousand tapers shed their light, and the friends of my father and mother assembled to enjoy a splendid entertainment. The evening and night was spent by the company in amusement and joy.

“ Next morning I thought it my duty to eradicate from the mind of my parents those opinions, which, in order to deceive the public, prudence had made me establish the evening before. I related to them the circumstances of my marriage, and besought them to keep it secret, as my happiness depended on its being concealed. Every thing increased their astonishment; and the rich jewels which
I had

I had brought them from my wife, were speaking proofs.

“ ‘He must have married the daughter of a genie,’ said my mother. ‘Such nuptials,’ said my father, ‘are celebrated without a Cadi.’ They knew not what to think; but they saw me happy, and they were satisfied.

“ I proposed to my parents to resume my trade. They were delighted to find that fortune had not deprived me of economy and diligence; and next day I again appeared in my shop. The quarter in which I lived expressed their happiness at seeing me again. As I was no longer directed by the hope of gain, I was perfectly easy and disinterested in my dealings, and brought to my shop all the people of Bagdad. In the evening, I returned as usual to my father’s house.

“ On the evening preceding the seventh day, I informed my father that I was again to disappear. He endeavoured to get my place filled up by an intelligent clerk, who was bound to conduct himself according to my principles. It was easy to account for my being a second time absent, by pretending that I had some business abroad.

“ On the seventh day, towards evening, the old woman came and informed me, that my spouse was waiting impatiently for my arrival. As I was equally impatient to rejoin her, I
needed

needed no intreaties to persuade me to follow my guide. The same mystery as before was still observed in conducting me to the palace, where my presence was expected, and I was received at the first door by my charming wife, who loosened the bandage with her own hands.

“ I passed another fortnight still happier than the former, in those enjoyments which mutual love bestows, and amid those delights, pleasures and amusements which the eager wishes and riches of my spouse could bring together. At the conclusion of this period, which seemed very short, I returned to my father's house, and afterwards to my business. My parents received me with the greatest affection ; but scarcely did I enjoy it, before I sighed for the return of the seventh day, when the old woman would come to blindfold me, and conduct me to an abode which I now considered as a celestial paradise.

“ My wife appeared to feel with equal force the pangs of separation. During my absence from the palace, the only method which she pursued to divert her attention, was to play upon a musical instrument, or to sing in concert with her slaves, those amorous lays which her passion dictated. She shewed them to me on my return ; and I still remember some of them, which I shall repeat to you,
were

were it merely to shew you that my violent flame met with an equal return.

“ ‘ Oh ! my lover, how cruel is absence ? Return : I sigh for thy return, as the eyes which are sunk in eternal night wish for the brightness of the day.

“ ‘ Why do you leave me ? to behold thee delights my soul. Return, dear light of my life ; without thee I die.

“ ‘ My soul is full of despair ; nothing can charm when thou art not here. I could drown myself with my tears.’

“ Hitherto I have described my happiness : nothing but a dreadful reverse of fortune remains to be unfolded. It took its rise from an unfortunate passion conceived for me by Zaliza, my wife’s favourite slave. She carefully concealed it from the observation of her mistress and companions ; but to me she opened her heart without reserve. To prevent her importunities, I was obliged to threaten her with a discovery ; and from that moment, rage, and a thirst for revenge, took possession of her mind.

“ One day, during my absence, while my mistress was singing my praises, and our loves, Zaliza joined in concert with the other slaves ; but hearing a couplet in praise of my fidelity, she affected to drop her lute, as if through impatience, and did not take it up again.

‘ Why,’

‘Why,’ said my spouse, ‘do you leave your lute upon the ground?’ ‘I cannot sing the fidelity of men,’ answered Zaliza, ‘for I do not believe it: Halechalbé,’ continued she, ‘is very amiable; he undoubtedly loves you; and who would not? But I do not believe that his affection is equal to yours, or that he is more faithful than another; of this I can give proofs whenever they are required.’

“These base and perfidious words infused the most fatal jealousy into the heart of my spouse; she gave me no opportunity, however, of perceiving that she entertained any suspicions. At the time fixed between us, I returned to my father’s house, and my ordinary business; and when I went back to the lady, I was received as kindly and affectionately as before.

“One day I was in my shop, when, about two hours before the usual time of the old woman’s arrival to conduct me to my spouse, the public crier proclaimed in the street a golden censer set with diamonds, to be sold for two thousand sequins. I ordered a slave to call the crier: ‘Who is the proprietor of that censer?’ said I to him. ‘It belongs,’ answered he, ‘to a young lady, whom you behold there:’ at the same time he pointed out a handsome and well dressed woman, and I desired him to bid her speak with me.

“The

“The woman took the censer from the crier, gave him a reward, and advanced towards me. ‘Madam,’ said I, ‘since this censer belongs to you, I know where to place it; will you allow me to have it?’—‘Since it pleases you, Halechalbé,’ said the lady, ‘it is yours, and I demand nothing in return.’ ‘I am not accustomed,’ answered I, ‘to make such bargains.’ ‘Nor I,’ said the lady, ‘to enjoy the happiness of making a present to the most amiable and best beloved of his sex. I have,’ continued she, ‘for a long time past frequented your shop, unobserved, alas! by you; but your figure and your manners enchanted me, and still enchant me more and more. Since the censer pleases you, I reckon myself very fortunate in having it in my power to present you with it.’

“‘I will receive your present, madam,’ said I, ‘if you will accept from me its value.’

“‘Silver and gold,’ said she, ‘are of no account in my estimation. The love which I bear you, has deprived me of repose; and do not treat me with cruel disdain. A liking for me would do you no dishonour, for, thank God! I may be proud of my descent. But if, despised by you, I cannot aspire to the highest marks of your affection, let me have a single kiss, and the censer shall be yours.’

“ ‘I cannot agree,’ replied I, ‘that you should make so bad a bargain. Take your money, or keep your censer; a kiss is no trading price.’ ‘It is beyond price,’ answered the lady, ‘to one who dies of love. I brought not this censer here to sell, but to give it to you; accept it at the price mentioned, and you will save my life.’

“ Venerable dervise, I will confess my weakness, and declare that I was gained over by these flattering praises, and this language of love. I had no suspicions, and was unable to discover the features of the lady through her veil. Overcome by self-love, more than by her intreaties, I retired into a dark part of the shop, and presented my cheek: but instead of kissing it, she bit it with such force, as made me cry out; and I was left alone with the censer in my hand, my cheek bathed in blood, and my countenance totally disfigured. The blood was at length stopped, but I was unable to allay the swelling, or remove the marks of her cruel teeth.

“ At this moment the old woman came for me, and appeared surprised at the situation in which she beheld me. I intended to tell her that I had fallen upon a piece of broken glass, and I was ready to give the same account to my spouse. But the treacherous Zaliza had previously informed her of the whole matter:

It was she who had played me that base trick; and she had no doubt reported it to my spouse, in such a manner as to make me appear much more guilty than I really was. When I arrived at the palace, instead of being received as formerly, by an eager and affectionate wife, I fell into the power of an enraged and implacable judge.

“ ‘What has hurt your cheek?’ was the first question proposed by my wife, as soon as I was before her. I was about to tell her of the pieces of glass; but she interrupted me with asking, ‘whence I got the censer which I held in my hand.’ ‘It cost me two thousand sequins,’ said I stammering. ‘Liar,’ replied my spouse, her eyes inflamed with rage; ‘it cost you much more: the account of it is on your cheek. Vile and base man! you have made a trade of your favours, but you shall pay dear for your infamous conduct. Morigen,’ said she, addressing her first eunuch, ‘let him be beheaded.’

“ Morigen had already seized me, when the old woman, our confidant, threw herself at the feet of her mistress. ‘O madam!’ said she, ‘do not commit such a crime; do not expose yourself to that remorse which you will be unable to support.’

“ The behaviour of the old slave brought my wife to reflection: She appeared to meditate a little; and then, changing her opinion, ordered

ordered me to receive the bastinado. While Morigen was executing her rigorous orders, which I endeavoured to bear without complaining, she seized a musical instrument, and made the chords resound with an air, which expressed a mixture of jealous rage, and malignant satisfaction.

"The pain I suffered totally deprived me of feeling; and I did not recover till I was in my father's house, placed upon a bed, surrounded by the whole family, and attended by physicians, who were employed in procuring me relief. I had been carried away after the fatal execution of my wife's orders, and left on the threshold of my father's door.

"It was six weeks before I recovered from the consequences of the severe treatment I had undergone. At the end of this time, when I was able to be out of bed, my father tried to gain my confidence, and I concealed not the smallest circumstance of my last adventure.

"'O Heaven!' said he, 'you are united, my son, to a monster of cruelty and injustice.' 'Do not say so, father!' exclaimed I; 'my wife, I must confess, was cruel, but she thought she had reason to complain, and I was wanting in my duty to her, even when she loaded me with kindness and affection. I find that I still adore her, and that my love

is increased by the consciousness of my fault, and by the fear of a final separation. Ah! would to God I were admitted to be the lowest of her slaves !’

“ ‘ You have not the feelings of a man,’ said my father ; ‘ know the dignity of your sex. I cannot determine to what kind of a being you have been united by the ceremony of a contract : I should suppose it entirely whimsical, if so strong proofs, and particularly the last, had not been given us of its reality. Be ashamed, that a man like you, who was well descended, and who might have aspired to a connection with the best families in Bagdad, has been hurried away by a foolish passion, to so extraordinary and unequal a connection, as that which you have now formed : Forget your disgraceful passion.’ ”

“ Every word which my father uttered, by way of invective against my marriage and my wife, was a dagger to my heart. ‘ I shall one day discover this abominable creature,’ added he ; ‘ I will bring an information against her before the Caliph, who will put it out of her power to make farther victims.’ Instead of seconding my father’s resentment, my heart revolted against his plans of revenge, and placed itself betwixt him and my cruel, but charming spouse.

“ This

“ This disposition of mind, in spite of the assistance of medicine, soon injured my health, and deranged my understanding. I became thoughtful and melancholy; refused every means of consolation, grieved my too affectionate parents, and was a torment to all the domestics. Nothing could be prepared to my taste; and I constantly blamed the unskilfulness of the cooks.

“ One of them came one day to justify his conduct. ‘ See,’ said I, overturning the table, and treading the dishes under my feet, ‘ there is the estimation in which I hold your skill and diligence.’ As he wanted to make a reply, I threw myself upon him to give him a hearty beating. His cries and screams soon brought my mother, who wished to tear from me the person at whom I was offended. She even ventured to add blows to her reproofs; and, in the blindness of my fury, I unfortunately struck her. When my father arrived, he was not more prudent, and I was at length put in chains. I recollect, that, having put my hand across my mouth, it was covered with foam: In short, I lost my recollection, and only recovered it to behold myself an inhabitant of this mournful abode. I then learned that I was kept here by order of Giafar, the Grand Vicer.

“ Many months have now elapsed since I groaned a miserable captive in this place; I

have now recovered soundness of mind, in consequence of the solitude, but more especially the opportunity of indulging my unfortunate passion, which I here enjoy, without hearing the person whom I will ever love, loaded with imprecations.

“ Here, O respectable dervise ! I am sway-
ed by sadness, and not by passion, and can
discover in myself nothing, for which I ought
to be detained in this hospital. My friends,
it would appear, have forgotten me ; but it
is the duty of the Grand Visier, whose orders
are here followed, to inspect this place, and
endeavour to bring back to me my parents,
since I only offended by one fit of madness,
and have now sufficiently recovered my rea-
son to regulate my conduct. This, venerable
dervise, is the whole of my history. All my
consolation is the Alcoran, and the hope,
that some time or other the Commander of
the Faithful, who wishes to see every thing
himself, will direct his steps towards this
mournful abode. I ask this from God an
hundred times a-day ; but, alas ! my suppli-
cations have never reached his throne.”

“ Cease not to pray, my dear son,” re-
plied the Caliph ; “ you will soon know the
efficacy thereof, and your request will be
heard.” After these words of consolation,
Haroun returned, with Giafar and Mesrour,

to the palace. "What think you," said the prince, to the companions of his adventures, of the story which has now been related? You were at hand, and must have heard every thing which was spoken." "I think," said Giafar, "that this young man, of whom I never heard before, though he accuses me of being the cause of his misfortunes, has been employing his invention to relate to you a collection of dreams or falsehoods." "It is impossible that every thing can be false in his relation," replied the Caliph; "and I command you to think on the means of ascertaining the truth. To-morrow, I expect to hear from you."

Next day the Grand Visier gave an account of the plan which he had devised for discovering what trust was to be placed in the history and complaints of Halechalbé. "Those people," said the minister, "who are deranged in their mind, are never consistent in their accounts. Let your highness therefore order the young man to be brought before you; and if he repeats his long story in the same connection he did yesterday, and without varying its circumstances, it will then be proper to make the necessary inquiries for ascertaining the truth of the facts." The Visier's opinion was highly approved of, and orders were instantly given to go for Halechalbé.

When

When the young man was at the foot of the throne, the Caliph thus addressed him: "Halechalbé, I have been informed that you have been confined in bedlam, by a series of the most extraordinary adventures; recover your spirits, and be assured that I am anxious to do justice to all my subjects. But in the relation I demand from you, omit no circumstance, and consider the respect which is due to truth, and to my presence." Halechalbé, seeing the prediction of the dervise fulfilled, being inspired with confidence, and affected with his subject, again began his history, and made not the smallest variations, even in the expressions.

Giafar was obliged to own that the recital which he had twice heard, bore very striking marks of veracity. His sole object now was to discover Halechalbé's beloved, but cruel enemy, in order to procure justice from her towards her injured husband; and his sagacity soon suggested the steps which were proper to be taken.

By calling together all the Cadis in Bagdad, in order to learn by whom the contract had been drawn up, the affair would be in danger of being divulged, without resolving the difficulty: For, if any of them had, contrary to law, drawn up a contract of so extraordinary a nature, he would not readily confess it;

it; and besides, a man might have been suborned to act the part.

If Halechalbé's father was reconciled to him, and persuaded again to entrust his son with the management of his trade, it was probable, that the old woman would be going about him, were it only from curiosity; and spies, properly placed, might apprehend her, and force her to disclose the name of her mistress.

The Caliph approved the scheme, and the syndick was immediately sent for. This unfortunate father, still supposing that his son was totally deranged in his mind, was greatly astonished to find himself in his company at the foot of the Caliph's throne, and, still more, to see Halechalbé treated by Haroun with the kindest attention.

Upon the first proposal of a reconciliation made by the Grand Visier, the father stretched out his arms to receive his son. Measures were then agreed upon for unravelling the adventure, and Halechalbé's father promised to execute with fidelity the orders which he received. The father and son returned to their house, after having received two rich robes from the munificent Caliph; and next day Halechalbè was re-established in his shop, which was as richly furnished as before.

The young man endeavoured, by submission, kindness, and attention, to make his parents forget the causes of complaint which he had given them. Though still inflamed by love, he strove to conceal from them its effects, and to get the better of his melancholy. He yielded to it only when free from every other business, and when left to himself in solitude and retirement.

Halechalbè's wife did not long enjoy the satisfaction of her revenge. Having come to serious reflection on her conduct, she blamed herself for the excess of her cruelty, and at length became uneasy about the fate of the lover whom she had treated with too much severity, though she still supposed him criminal and ungrateful. Love soon regained the empire of her heart; and though she struggled for some days against a feeling which she durst not avow, silence at length became burdensome to her, and she ordered the old woman, as if solely through compassion, to make inquiry about the situation of her unfortunate husband.

"Alas, madam!" answered she, "my pity for him led me to his father's house, and I there learned from the inhabitants of that quarter, that the poor young man's life was in danger."—"His life in danger!" replied the lady: "Ah! unfortunate that I am! I have

have killed the only man in the world I ever loved, or can love ! Can I not inform him that my life depends upon his ? but every thing prevents me from doing so. Go, however, and speedily get information concerning him, as far as you can, consistently with the safety of my honour." The old woman received the order with great pleasure, and for some time was able to give her mistress good hopes of the recovery of her husband's health. But her inquiries soon became fruitless ; for the neighbours were altogether silent concerning Halechalbè, from the moment when he was privately taken to bedlam in a state of insanity.

Her mistress now yielded to despair, and shut herself up with her confidant, that she might indulge her sorrow, and shed her tears without restraint. The musical instrument, which had formerly been employed to insult over the misfortune of Halechalbè, now served to express her own complaints. The lady, quite inconsolable, could no longer make verses, as she was wont to do, when inspired by love or revenge ; but only uttered a few broken words, intermingled with sighs and tears.

" Alas !" said she, " he flies from me ; he has banished himself from his native land on my account. Go, my lover, join with
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the beasts of the forest; your wife is more terrible than they. Yes, thou dost forget me: It is a consolation which I shall never enjoy."

The good old woman was one day traversing the city, little thinking that she would have any agreeable news to carry to her mistress, when, as she passed through the quarter where Halechalbé's shop was, she observed it open. Stopping to look at it, she discovered the master himself seated on a sofa, and lost in deep thought, and she determined to enter. As soon as she saw him, she wished to throw herself into his arms, and Halechalbé was running to meet her, whenever he perceived her approaching; but the Grand Visier's spies, who had not lost sight of the slave, interposed, carried off the woman, and conducted her to Giafar.

Great was the astonishment of Giafar to find, that the woman now brought before him was Nemana, the old governess of his beloved daughter Zeraïde. "Is it possible," said he, "that you whom my daughter loads with her kindness, should be engaged in the intrigue of Halechalbé's marriage? Who is the woman you have given him for a wife?"—"O my prince and master," answered Nemana, in great astonishment; "whom could

I serve but your daughter, the princess Zeraïde?

Giafar was thunderstruck when he learned that his daughter had married without his knowledge and consent: but knowing that the Caliph was very anxious to get this affair unravelled, instead of returning to his own palace to get an explanation from Zeraïde, he instantly repaired to the Commander of the Faithful, followed by Nemana, and the spies whom he had sent in pursuit of her.

"Wise prince!" said he, "the old woman who was concerned in Halechalbé's marriage has been found: She is at the door, and I have put some questions to her. Halechalbé's wife," continued the Visier, "has only availed herself of the law delivered in the Alcoran, by chastising her husband, who was surprised in a fault worthy of punishment. The duties of husband and wife are reciprocal; and Halechalbé had received the caresses of a strange woman."

"I think," said Haroun, "you strain the expressions of the law; you make it too sanguinary, and you would expose a great many in Bagdad to danger, if the right of doing themselves justice was granted to all who really are, or think themselves injured in this respect."

“Marriages of every kind,” replied the Visier, “will not admit of the rigorous application of the law; but, when the lady who is married, while she subjects herself to the law in all its rigour, has it likewise in her power to demand the same subjection from the man whom she is to marry, and this condition is freely accepted, the injured person, in avenging herself, only makes use of her legal right.”

“Notwithstanding all your fine arguments,” said Haroun, “I am still inclined to favour the unfortunate Halechalbé: it yet remains that I be informed of the name of the woman in whose cause you are so eloquent.” “She is my daughter,” answered the Visier in great confusion. “You have now,” replied the Caliph, “let me into the secret; I see that the multiplicity of my affairs makes you neglect your own, and renders you perfectly ignorant of what passes in your own house. Marriages are contracted, and men’s lives disposed of, without your knowing any thing of the matter. Imagine the consequences which would result from allowing an arm directed by passion to execute a rigorous law. I know the rights which are assumed by women in cases of unequal marriages. If conveniency and prudence, those powerful directors of human conduct, sometimes oblige them to give their
hand

hand to one of an inferior station, then they may avail themselves of these rights to a certain extent; they are a sort of compensation for the sacrifice which they make. But this is not the case with your daughter, who has made no sacrifice but to her own taste; and the son of the chief of trade is in every respect become her equal. He loves and adores her, notwithstanding all the cruelty which she has exercised against him, and she would certainly be too happy in having him again for her husband. You well know, that with one word I can make my meanest subject a prince. I will raise Halechalbé's father to that dignity, from a principle of justice; and I will take care of the son, from regard to himself, and to you; find out the name of the Cadi who drew up the contract, and why he ventured to do so without your consent, since without that the deed would be void; take care that nothing be wanting in the form."

After this discourse with his Visier, the Caliph ordered Halechalbé to approach: "Young man," said he, "your wife shall be restored to you, and you shall have it in your power either to pardon or punish her. She is my Grand Visier's daughter; but nothing ought to have any influence in preventing you from following the inclinations of your heart, and the dictates of your mind.

“ O Commander of the Faithful ! ” exclaimed the young Halechalbé, “ can I retain any resentment against the person who is dearer to me than life ? I aspire after nothing but the happiness of seeing her again, and if I can once more gain her heart, and the consent of her father, I vow to both, love and affection, which will terminate only with my existence.”

“ Giafar,” replied the Caliph, “ I recommend the interests of your daughter and son-in-law to your care ; henceforth consider him as a man connected with my service, and for whom I mean to provide.”

The Grand Visier returned to his palace, holding Halechalbé by the hand, and followed by the old woman, who perceiving herself at liberty, soon made her escape to go and inform her mistress of the visit which she might expect to receive. The Visier, whom she had outrun, at length arrived at his house. Zeraïde arose to meet him, and to give the usual marks of her attachment and respect ; but a signal with his hand, and a look of severity, forced her to desist.

“ Suppress these demonstrations of attachment,” said Giafar ; “ there can be no love without confidence, and no respect without obedience. You first married without my consent ; and then, in a fit of delirium, abusing
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the authority which I gave you over my servants, you went to the most criminal excess against your husband, and committed a crime which exposed us to the wrath of the Caliph. When you gave your hand to the son of the chief of trade at Bagdad, a man esteemed and respected by every body, and valued even by the Caliph himself, did you think that you was entering into a connection with the meanest slave? And if the life even of these is to be spared, how could you imagine that you might dispose of your husband's according to your pleasure and caprice? I have brought him to you; he is your master, and in his turn has your life in his power. Fall at his feet; and be assured that you can never regain my esteem, unless you obliterate from his mind, by submission and obedience, the undeserved and cruel treatment which he has received."

While the Visier was speaking, the trembling Zeraïde would have fallen dead at his feet, if she had not perceived in the eyes of Halechalbé, something more than compassion for the confusion to which she was reduced. With pleasure did she throw herself at his feet, and kissed them with transport. The young husband, happy beyond expression, having raised Zeraïde, embraced her; and for some moments their tears were mingled together.

This affecting scene made an impression on Giafar, who was passionately fond of his daughter: the father and the minister were at once disarmed. But the Cadi must be called to correct the irregularity in the contract of marriage. He learned that his name was Yaleddin, and ordered him to be instantly sent for.

Yaleddin arrived, and did not allow Giafar time to ask why he agreed to marry Zeraïde in private, and without the concurrence of any one but the young lady. "Your daughter," said the judge, "sent for me, and discovered the excess of her passion. I thought it my duty to fulfil her wishes, that I might prevent, though by an irregular proceeding on my part, a conduct still more irregular in her. She proposed that I should be her guardian; and having undertaken this character, and not condemning her choice, I believed I was doing an important service to this fond couple; and I plainly foresaw, that one day it would not meet your disapprobation.

Giafar, instead of shewing dissatisfaction, generously expressed his gratitude to the Cadi; but ordered the slave Zaliza to be delivered to him, that she might be punished, after a confession should be extorted from her, of the odious stratagem which she had employed for separating her mistress and her husband.

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The happy pair were then left to themselves, after the Visier had assured Halechalbé that he would be as dear to him as his own son. Magnificent feasts were afterwards given, that all possible splendour might accompany an union authorised and approved by the Caliph, and which diffused joy among all the inhabitants of Bagdad.

Thus did Halechalbé pass almost unexpectedly from bedlam to that honourable elevation to which he was raised by the Caliph Haroun, and from the most mournful of all situations to the highest degree of happiness.

Schahriar, perceiving that the story of Halechalbé was finished, expressed the pleasure which it had given him, and praised the excellent conduct of the Caliph. He inveighed bitterly against the abuse which women make of the little authority they are allowed to enjoy. Scheherazade was too prudent to dispute this opinion openly, but indirectly tried to weaken its force, and to prove that it was too general. "Sire," replied she, "I have still many memorable adventures to relate of the Great Caliph Haroun and his family; I know some which happened to him at a very advanced age, and which will give you a fine idea of this miracle of justice and prudence: but they are long, and I have need to recal
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the facts to my memory, for they are equally interesting and extraordinary. In the mean time, if your Majesty will condescend, like the great Haroun himself, to amuse yourself for a moment with a popular story, which was formerly thought very entertaining, I will relate to you that of *Xailoun, surnamed the simpleton*. It is still proverbial at Damas, where it is every day recited by the vulgar.

The Sultan, who was convinced that a story related by his beautiful spouse, could not but be amusing, however low the subject, requested her to begin immediately; and Scheherazade thus resumed her discourse.

The Simpleton: or, the Story of Xailoun.

THERE lived at Bagdad a young man of the name of Xailoun, born of genteel parents, but left an orphan, with little or no fortune, at a very early period of life. His short thick make indicated a robust constitution; and the features of his face would have been sufficiently agreeable, if they had not been totally destitute of expression. Being void of understanding, and moreover of a very soft disposition, he served, from his infancy, as a laughing stock to his companions. As soon as he had

had passed the age of puberty, his friends, presuming that a woman of sense would be able to govern him, and make him at least an honest man, determined to marry him, and caused him take to wife a girl two years older than himself, but wise, prudent, and of a station equal to his own.

Oitbha, Xailoun's wife, soon perceived the defects of her husband's character. This lazy idle fellow fell asleep as soon as he had filled his belly, and awoke for no other purpose but again to satisfy his hunger. If he ever bestirred himself at all, it was only to ramble through the city, and thrust himself into the crowd, looking at every thing, but seeing nothing. This stupid imprudence was the cause of his being often roughly treated; and he frequently returned home with a bloody mouth or a black eye. This grieved Oitbha; for she really loved her husband, as, notwithstanding his gluttony, sloth, and extreme simplicity, he was harmless and good-natured.

While Xailoun led this manner of life, his affairs went to ruin: he spent his little patrimony in inactivity and sloth; and he insensibly fell into a state of the greatest imbecility. Oitbha had tried persuasion, remonstrance, and reproof, to make him alter his conduct:

conduct: She wished to subject him at least to a little labour, that she might begin by degrees to put him on the way of gaining his livelihood: but all her attempts were vain; and it was impossible to get him to do a single thing.

One day, he was at length prevailed on by the force of intreaties to go and spread out some linen to dry in the sun. Oitbha, upon going soon after to see if he had performed his task, found him lying stretched on the ground in close conversation with a kardouon*, which was sitting on a heap of stones. Xailoun was speaking, and the little animal seemed to answer him by the usual signal with its head. In the mean time, the linen had fallen to the ground.

“What are you about there?” said Oitbha.——“I am talking with my cousin.”——“Is the kardouon your cousin?”——“Yes it is;” and then addressing himself to the animal, “are not you my cousin, kardouon?” The animal replied by its usual inclination of the head. Oitbha, who was naturally of a very hasty temper, lost all patience, snatched up a branch of turpentine tree, which was at hand,

* The Kardouon is a little animal of about 14 inches long, resembling in shape the crocodile of the Nile. When it is looked at, it moves its head up and down, as when we express our assent to any thing. It is quite harmless.

hand, and bestowed three or four blows on Xailoun, who looked at her with a stupid air, and then hastened to take up, and spread out the linen.

Oitbha thus reflected with herself: "We will soon have a young family: My own labour is insufficient to maintain myself, my children, and this fat sluggard. Since I can make myself dreaded by him, I must cure him of this fault of laziness: He is strong, and I will oblige him to work for his subsistence."

Having thus reasoned with herself; as soon as Xailoun returned, she took up the rod of turpentine tree, made him derange the little furniture which was in the house, and then put it in order again. If he stopped one moment, a shower of blows descended on his head. Xailoun obeyed; but whenever the work was finished, he made his escape, went to saunter through Bagdad, and did not return till very late, and after having been very ill treated. He had foolishly engaged in a squabble, and had come off with some blows.

Oitbha, when she saw that the turpentine switch was not sufficient to establish all the authority which it was necessary for her to possess, took a stick.

"Whence

“ Whence come you ? ” said she ; “ I will teach you to go out without my permission, and to get yourself lamed in this manner.” At the same time applying twenty strokes of the stick to his shoulders, she made him sit down, and dressed the wounds which he had received on his hands and face.

When this was done, she put him to bed. “ Take repose now,” said she ; “ and to-morrow we shall see things in quite a different light. You must absolutely change your way of living, slothful and simple as you are, or else we will die with hunger and vexation. You must labour in order to live : You are fat and strong ; you must go and seek work in Bagdad ; and if you do not bring home the profits thereof, the stick shall go its usual round.”

Xailoun went to sleep, very much dejected, saying to himself ; “ I shall have a beating, if I don’t change my way of living ; and how shall I alter myself, so as to be Xailoun no longer ? ” Next day Oitbha saw that her husband was still much bruised with the strokes he had received the night before. She dressed his wounds, and said to him, “ Consider well, booby, and lay your account with making a total alteration in your conduct.”

Every mark of the ill treatment which this sluggard had met with, being at length gone,
his

his wife made him rise. "Get out of the house," said she; "go and hire yourself as a day-labourer to some master in Bagdad; there is no bread for you here; and if you return without bringing any, this stick which you see here, shall welcome you home every day, till you are entirely changed."

Xailoun's memory was so weak, that he could only retain the last words he heard. He must bring home bread, and return quite changed, otherwise the smart, which he still felt on his shoulders, told him that he would be again saluted with a beating.

As he passed before the house of a baker, the bread, which they had taken out of the oven, happened to be placed in the tent. Its colour, shape, and fine flavour, whetted his appetite; besides, being winter, it was very cold, and the heat which came from the oven, farther attracted him, for he was but sparingly clothed.

The stout and ruddy baker was seated near his oven, and had a look of prosperity which was very engaging: The lads who worked at the trough, and who were dressed with great neatness, presented a picture of cheerfulness, health, and happiness.

"Oh!" said Xailoun, "if I could but get into this shop, my business would be done; here is the bread which I am ordered to pro-

cure for myself. If I could eat this good bread for eight days only, I would become fat and ruddy like these people; and then, how changed I would be!"

After this reflection, he went into the shop. The baker looked at him, and, from his robust appearance, supposing him to be a journeyman wanting work, thus addressed him: "What do you want, friend? Are you seeking employment? Will you assist me in my work?"

"Yes, with all my heart," said Xailoun. "Then take this pruning hook, untie this bundle of faggots, and cut branches, so as to supply me, in proportion as I put them into the oven."

Xailoun sat down, and performed the work. The hour of dinner arrived, and they gave him one of those loaves which he had so much coveted. The baker learned that his new workman had a wife and children. In the evening, when he dismissed him, he gave him three other loaves for them, and thus sent him joyful home.

Oitbha received him graciously; and when she knew what he had gained, "you see," said she, "that by undergoing a little trouble, one can gain their bread. Think seriously, therefore, of working every day for
your

your subsistence, and of wholly changing your conduct.

Next day Xailoun would have slept too long; but Oitbha awoke him with her switch. "Go," said she, "set out to the shop, or I'll take the stick."

Xailoun dressed himself very quickly: "Ah!" said he; "when shall I be changed, so as to hear no more of the stick?" and then betook himself to his work.

It was not eight days since he had taken this business in hand; and their little mansion was plentifully provided with necessaries. Every morning, reproofs were not spared, and sometimes the stick was produced, when he appeared duller than usual.

Xailoun, however, no longer found the bread so good as it was the first day. He could not possibly be changed; for his wife still scolded and beat him every morning; and it seemed hard, that he who was so fond of sauntering about the streets of Bagdad, should be confined like a prisoner at the mouth of an oven, and should not be allowed to sleep long in the morning.

He agreed in his own mind, that this sort of change was worth nothing, and that he ought to find out some other.

His wife awoke him in the morning, with her usual assistant: "Arise quickly; begone;

go and gain wherewith to live, and bring something home, or you shall receive a beating at your return. We shall never live together as husband and wife, till you alter your conduct.

“That is well,” said Xailoun in a low voice; “but behold me already changed into a prisoner; and the alteration does not agree with me at all: I will go in search of some other.” At the same time, he began to run through all Bagdad, without so much as knowing what he sought for.

Constantly wandering about, he came at last to the shop of Seydi Hassan, a native of Damas, the most famous cook in all Bagdad. It was beautifully situated on the banks of the Daggiala.

Under the tent*, before the house, was a large plate covered with a pyramid of rice, seasoned with the most costly spices, and surrounded with minced meats, all dressed in a manner equally neat and delicate. The exquisite odour of this dish roused Xailoun.

He saw in this same shop six young men busy at work, admirably well dressed, charmingly beautiful; and they all appeared to him to be cheerful, and in good health. He did not think it at all extraordinary, that people,
who

* There is a tent before every shop.

who had such excellent pilau at their command†, should enjoy so many advantages; and he persuaded himself, that, by living like them, he would very soon have the same appearance. But it was first necessary to speak to the cook, that he might obtain permission to work in his shop. Hunger, and the desire of changing, conspired to make Xailoun eloquent. “Have you,” said he to Seydi Hassan, “any employment for me?”—— “That is never wanting here,” said the cook. “Go to my lads; they will find employment for you.”

Xailoun was instantly set to work. They gave him for dinner fragments of every kind in great abundance. He filled and stuffed himself, not doubting but he had at last fallen upon the only method of bringing about the alteration to which he aspired.

After dinner, he resumed his work, which was not at all burdensome to him. He was employed in covering the tables for those who came to eat at the cook’s shop, in setting and removing the dishes, and in clearing the tables.

In the evening, he returned home with a whole pyramid of fragments on a large plate. It was pretty late before he arrived, and Oitbha was uneasy about him; but when she

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saw

† *Pilau*, or *pelau*, is a name which the Arabians give to rice dressed in this manner.

saw him return loaded with so much provision, and not bringing any bread from his master the baker, she doubted not but that he had been traversing the city, as usual, and had stolen, some where or other, the plate and its contents.

“Whence come you, vagabond?” said she: “Where did you get this plate, you robber?” Some pretty severe blows with the stick, accompanied these pleasing addresses with which he was received. Xailoun informed her that not finding himself disposed to live a prisoner by the side of an oven, he wished to change for the better; and for this reason had gone to work with Seydi Hassan.

“They could never have given you all that,” replied Oitbha; “come along with me; I would not have us taken for robbers.” So saying, she threw her veil about her, caused Xailoun follow her with the plate, and hastened to the cook’s shop.

Seydi was struck with such singular fidelity. He added some farther presents of the same kind, and sent the good people home,

Xailoun was now happy for some time, going every day to Seydi’s shop, eating whenever his appetite urged him, and always bringing home abundance for his family. He never received blows or reproofs, provided he rose early in the morning; but if he failed to

do so, he found himself continually exposed to them. He had taken it into his head that he must be altered to such a degree, as to be altogether unknown to his wife. In hopes of this, he eat as much as he could, in order to become fat and ruddy, like the other lads belonging to the cook; and he went very often to view himself in the mirror which was in the shop, and observe if he was not grown a little fatter.

One day Seydi Hassan having observed him, asked, What he was doing there? I am looking to know whether I am changed, replied Xailoun. At the same time he felt first his face, and then his clothes, alternately; and then shrugged up his shoulders as a mark of discontent.

"You would wish to change, then?" said Seydi; "Yes," replied Xailoun. "This, then, is the proper time for doing so, if you have a mind; I can change your post; my scullion is dead, and you may take his place."

"Shall I have his clothes also?" said Xailoun. "Undoubtedly," replied Seydi; "that is understood." "Come then, let me change quickly, for it is now a long time since I have prayed every day to God that I might be changed."

It was an excellent amusement for the people in the shop, to dress the new kitchen-boy in his livery

livery clothes ; but Xailoun could not express the joy he felt in thinking that he was soon going to be changed, and to resemble the other servants of Seydi Hassan.

The disagreeable smell alone might have warned him of the disadvantage of his new dress ; but he was incapable of attending to more than one idea at a time. He was now dressed in a greasy frock, from head to foot, and covered with a dirty apron ; he was conducted to the sink in the kitchen, where they gave him the dishes and kettles to scour ; but from want of dexterity and practice, he bedaubed his own face and hands with almost as much dirt and nastiness as came from the kettles.

Something was brought to him to eat, and he acquitted himself to admiration. New work was given him ; and he was eager to finish it, that he might go and examine in the glass the happy effect of the change which had been produced. As he looked, he was terrified at himself, ran out of the shop, and made his escape, saying, " My God ! my God ! I asked to be changed, but it was neither into a prisoner, nor a kitchen-boy : however," said he to himself, " this change may perhaps conceal me from my wife, and prevent me from being beaten. I'll away to the house."

He came to the door, running all the way, and with nothing in his hands. When Oitbha saw

saw such a horrid figure enter her house, she took up the stick, in order to defend herself, and drive out the monster. At length she discovered by the voice and beard, that it was Xailoun: but this only led her to ply her blows the harder, and with so much more reason, that she had nothing for supper, and he had brought nothing to eat. Oitbha put him to bed, carried back the kitchen-boy's livery to Seydi's house; and having there got the account of her husband's metamorphosis, returned in very bad humour. Unless Xailoun returned to the cook, he must to-morrow find another master, otherwise he might expect the severest treatment; he would not even be allowed straw to sleep upon.

Xailoun was again traversing the streets of Bagdad in search of employment and of a change. Near one of the largest mosques, he observed a pastry shop, wherein much greater neatness prevailed, than in that of the cook. The workmen who made the paste, had their arms naked up to the elbow, and displayed a fresh, plump, white skin, such as Xailoun was ambitious to possess. The nourishing pastries to which they were indebted for this freshness, were set out under the tent before the door, and diffused an agreeable smell sufficient to rouse appetites less keen than that of Xailoun. He thought, that if he could but fill his belly
with

with them for a short time, and thrust his hand into that fine paste, he would infallibly undergo a total change in his appearance.

He entered the shop, therefore, and with great simplicity offered his services to its master. The pastry cook looked at him more than he listened to him : his strong constitution, indicated by his external make, shewed him to be a man from whom much work might be derived ; and his services were instantly accepted. The new maker of pastry was quite overjoyed. He was employed in very easy labour ; he stuffed himself with excellent pastry, and in the evening carried home good bits of it to his wife. Oitbha was astonished when she saw him return with this new reward of his labour. He told her he had changed, and informed her that he had assumed another profession.

Oitbha was happy to find him in the train of working ; but her husband's wishes were not yet wholly fulfilled. He had not yet put his hands to the paste, but, as it was the month of the Ramazan, he was intrusted with selling the pastry in the avenues and market places. He had been taught to reckon small money ; he knew that he must receive as many pieces of that money, as he delivered pieces of pastry, and he gave a faithful account. This was all his genius could accomplish ; and hitherto his

his master had required no more of him : but there came a time when he supposed he would obtain from him labour of much greater importance.

During the time of the feast, there was a great deal of work performed in the shop ; and the flour was about to fail, for the ass who went in the mill had died. This animal's labours had not been much attended to by Xailoun : " Our flour," said his master to him, " is about to run short, and consequently we will have no pastry ; I have lost my labourer, and cannot for some days procure another to supply his place. You must change your employment, and make flour for me ; I will take excellent care of you during your labour."

" I desire nothing so much as to change," said he ; " it was for that purpose I came here ; but I must also change my dress." " Well thought of," answered the pastry-cook, " since you perform the dead labourer's work, you must have his dress." Xailoun could not be happier : " I shall be truly changed at last," said he. He was taken to the place where the mill was, his eyes were blindfolded, the harness was put on, and he was then fixed to the handle. " Come, go on," said the pastry-cook, go on ; make an effort with your neck, and that will follow." Xailoun obeyed

obeyed, and the mill advanced; the labour became somewhat less heavy, but it was still very severe. "Is it over?" cried Xailoun, quite a stranger to this kind of business—"No, no," answered the pastry-cook, "go on, go on; you do very well; the flour is beautiful, and you shall have it to sift."

"To sift!" said Xailoun, "that's probably another change; but so much the better, for this is a very bad one." All the while he puffed and blowed, and was in a great sweat. The pastry-cook still encouraged him with his voice, but gave him not the smallest respite till the hour of dinner, when he was at length permitted to stop. He was unyoked, and after being taken out of the mill, freed from the bandage on his eyes. He must now get something to eat; but it was no longer pastry which was set before him, but a dish of large beans and onions dressed with lintseed oil. It was necessary that he should have strong nourishment proportioned to the labour which was required of him. Changing in general was not disagreeable to him, for he always hoped to find his account in it; but the beans were very tough, and the oil so thick that it stuck in his throat. He was dying with hunger however, and he must eat. Scarcely had he finished, when the means of digesting this wretched repast were proposed. "Come,

Xailoun,"

Xailoun," said the pastry-cook, "there is no drawing back; you must finish the grinding; without that, the shop would want work to-morrow." They then fell upon him; one put on the covering, and another the harness; and he was again set to turning the mill.

Behold him now with a full stomach, his body puffed up with wind, in consequence of the nourishment he had taken, fatigued with the morning's labour, all in a sweat, out of breath, and stopping from time to time. "Come," cried the pastry-cook, "go on; if your courage fails you, I will give you some, as I gave your predecessor." "Courage," said Xailoun to himself, "what is courage? it is certainly a good thing." He stopped, and deranged the covering upon his eyes, to see what was to be given him. He perceived his master holding in his hand a whip, which he smacked in the air. He pulled down the covering, continued to fulfil his task without being required to do so, and conceived a total dislike to courage, before ever he had felt its effects. Night came on, and Xailoun was freed from his work. He eagerly pulled the bandage from his eyes, returned to the shop, and finding the door open, fled with the swiftness of an arrow to his own house. He was as white as a ghost, and still had the harness upon him; but he dreaded being sent back to

the mill, and receiving the discipline which was termed courage.

Imagine a man with a long beard, covered with flour from head to foot, so that even the girths which constituted part of his harness, appeared to be of one piece with his clothes, and you will have an idea of Xailoun's figure. When Oitbha first saw this spectre come and boldly sit down in her house, she began to be afraid; but she soon discovered who it was. "What," said she, "is it you, you fat simpleton? where have you been getting yourself harnessed in this manner, instead of going and working with your master, that you might bring back provisions for our subsistence?" The flick soon came into play, and drove the dust from his doublet. Xailoun endeavoured to allay the storm; "You bid me pray to God to change me, and I do pray to him; I have been a prisoner, a kitchen boy, and now I am an ass for making meal."

"O the monstrous beast!" said Oitbha; but compassion restrained her from carrying her corrections any farther. She freed him from his girths, shut him up, carried back the harness to the pastry cook's house; and after reproaching him for abusing the simplicity of a poor man, and causing him restore Xailoun's robe, and pay the wages of his day's labour, she

she returned to her own house. Xailoun was confined to bed all next day by the fatigue he had undergone, the blows of the stick, and the indigestion occasioned by the ragout dressed with oil. His wife did not even urge him to rise; but on the third day, compelled by necessity, she was again obliged to send her booby of a husband to work. "Come," said she, "mind your business; go to any of your masters who will employ you; but if you return without any reward for your labour, you may go and sleep in the street; change your way, for I am determined never to change mine." "Change my way!" said Xailoun to himself; "I should be glad to know how that's to be done? For example, when I take the way through the streets to the river, I may go one way, or I may go another; but it is all one, it only leads me to the river. Let me see——if I took the way to the country, instead of taking the way to the city, I suppose it would be better. Every day I beg of God to change me; but there is so much noise in Bagdad, that he cannot hear my request; but were I in the open country, if he is not deaf, he will certainly hear me."

Upon this reflection, Xailoun hastened to leave the city, that he might go and offer up his prayers in the country, where he would

have full liberty to turn his face towards the south *, without being disturbed by houses.

At a little distance from the city, he found a large open door, which invited him to enter an extensive garden. There he saw pear-trees, apple-trees, pomegranate-trees, trees in short of every kind, bending under their load of fruit. This place was in his eyes a terrestrial paradise : he was exceedingly fond of fruit, but had never eat of it according to his pleasure : he was in perfect ecstacy at the sight. " Here," said he, " is excellent feeding for a man ; I recollect when my wife bought our ass, it was lean, thin-flanked, and scabbed ; but she put it to good pasturage, and in a fortnight, the beast was so changed, that I could hardly know it again. I am flesh and blood as well as the ass, and the same change will happen to me, if I can but stay in this place. The owner of these fruits has so great a quantity, that he cannot eat them all ; he will give me as many as I have a mind for, and I shall certainly undergo a change like our little ass. I will not know myself again ; for I suppose if it could have looked at itself in the glass, it would not have known itself."

As

* The Mahometans turn their faces towards the south when they pray.

As soon as he had made these reflections, he advanced forward, and came to the place where the owner, mounted on a pomegranate-tree, was gathering fruit, which his wife received, and put into a basket. He very deliberately offered them his services. The gardener looked at his wife, and, upon a sign given by her, accepted them. Xailoun ascended an apple-tree, which was very well loaded; and though he took care at first to eat as many as he gathered, he met with no opposition from the owner.

It was agreed that he should receive a small salary every month, for the work he was to perform. With respect to the sum, he knew nothing about the matter; he thought that the labour would consist in gathering pears, prunes, apricots, and other fruits, which he might eat at his pleasure; and he agreed to every thing which was proposed. He was sometimes employed to work in the house; for he had acquired a knowledge of this kind of work with the cook, and maker of pastry. At dinner and supper, he eat pilau with his master, gormandised on fruit the whole day, and had not the smallest doubt but that he would soon undergo as happy a change as his ass.

From time to time, he was sent to Bagdad with two asses laden with fruit: but as these animals, from long experience, were well acquainted

quainted with the road, Xailoun had not the trouble of directing them. Oitbha was then lying in, and consequently was unable to go in search of her husband. Xailoun had not forgotten her; but he waited till the excellent feeding which he enjoyed should have produced its happy effects, that he might return to his house completely changed. Unluckily there was no mirror in his master's house, wherein he could observe the progress of his transformation.

But Xailoun's hopes and happiness were to have an end. There were in the stable two bullocks, which were employed in the labours of husbandry. Xailoun, who led them every day to watering, soon became intimate with them, and called them his dear companions. One day, by accident, or perhaps by the fault of the guide, one of the bullocks fell into a bog, and broke his leg. The gardener was in a great rage; the ploughing pressed on, and he could not get another before the next fair. "Well," said he to Xailoun, "you have rendered useless one of the bullocks which I employed in tillage, and I cannot replace him for some time: that the work may go on, you must change your employment with me." "Change!" replied Xailoun, "I ask this from God every day, and I believe I am come hither for that very purpose." In that case,
since

since you are so willing, you must assist the remaining bullock to finish the ploughing of a piece of ground which is begun." Xailoun had not been out of the garden, and knew nothing about the ploughing which was proposed to him: his worn out suit by no means pleased him; and he asked his master if he should have the dress of the labourer whose place he was to supply. That you may be quite at your ease, my friend, you shall have the whole of it from head to foot. "In that case," said Xailoun, "I will put off this immediately." "There is no occasion for that," replied his master; "the one I am to give you will go above it very well." Two dresses at once, Xailoun thought would effectually disguise him, and straightway he proposed to go and shew himself to his wife in that situation. The sun at that time was very scorching, and the cattle were cruelly tormented by insects, and particularly gadflies. The gardener took up half a dozen of goat's skins; that he might cover Xailoun with them from top to toe, and left no part of his body uncovered, except passages for the light, and for breathing.

The simpleton looked at him; and being always eager for a change, allowed him to proceed: he was immediately put to the yoke, and the gardener, loudly cracking his whip
in

in the air, began the work. When Xailoun heard the cracks of the whip, though he had not been so strong as a bullock, he would have found means to exert the vigour of one. He carried away his companion; but during the labour, the flies made terrible attacks on both; the least space that was uncovered on Xailoun's back was fatal to him, for these troublesome insects found out every defect. He must be unyoked to dine; and Xailoun would have made his escape, if he durst have ventured; but he was deterred by the lash, which the gardener had by his side. He was desired to eat, and the hunger which he felt, impelled him to do so; but, before he had time to breathe, he was immediately put again to the yoke.

The evening came; the labour ceased; and the gardener led back his bullock to the stable. Xailoun took advantage of his being left alone for a moment, gained the house door, and ran towards Bagdad, covered with the skins, which were sewed upon him, or kept together by the harness. He never once dared to look behind him, so much was he afraid of being pursued, and of experiencing the lash of the whip.

As night had come on, and the gates were shut, the unhappy fugitive had no other refuge but the sepulchres without the city.

He

He placed himself in the first which offered a shelter; and, sinking under the fatigue which he endured through the day, fell into a profound sleep. About six o'clock in the morning, he was suddenly awaked by a great noise : The grave-makers had come to dig a grave at the very place where he was. The earth had been lately removed by some savage and carnivorous animals, who had dug up a dead body, and there were still some bones scattered around the mouth of the grave, and half devoured.

While the workmen were discoursing together concerning the attempts of these animals, one of them maintained that beasts could never dig three feet into the earth, and that the devastations must have been made by some evil genies, who took great pleasure in devouring the cold remains of the dead. Xailoun was at this moment perceived by one of them, lying in the place which the unfortunate wretch had chosen for a shelter. The goat's skins, with which he was covered, gave him so frightful and hideous an appearance, that the gravedigger exclaimed, " Here is the evil genie."

Xailoun, being awaked by this exclamation, sat up : Luckily for him, his enemies were seized with terror, and he had time to arise. If his adversaries could have read in
his

his looks the terror with which he was inspired, by the sight of three iron shovels lifted up to kill him, it would have been all over with him; but the covering of goat's skins concealed the emotions of his soul; and while their strokes hung suspended in the air, fear gave him new vigour: He darted forward like an arrow, passed through the middle of them, and took to flight. Xailoun's enemies resumed courage, whenever they saw him give indications of fear. They discharged their shovels at him, ran after him, and exclaimed with all their might, "Here is the evil genie who devours the dead bodies in the sepulchres; fall upon him, kill, murder him!"

The people began to assemble, ran to meet the monster, but fled as soon as they saw him; crying as loud as fear would allow them, "Here is the evil genie who devours the dead bodies!" The dogs joined the party; but such an animal, totally unknown to them, kept them at defiance: They followed him barking, but at a considerable distance.

The gravediggers, finding themselves much entangled by the crowd, which increased at every step, kept back the dogs, and called out, "Throw stones and sticks at him;" but the idea of the power and evil dispositions of the genies deprived every person of courage.

The

The children were afraid of being swallowed up alive by the evil spirit who devoured the dead. Xailoun, protected by this horrible disguise, reached his own dwelling, through a tumult, of which the report had spread throughout all Bagdad. He entered the house; and the crowd pressed up to the door.

Here a shower of blows inevitably awaited him. Oitbha, being now a mother and nurse, and consequently the more intrepid, saw the terrible animal arrive, took up the stick, which she well knew how to make use of; and before her poor husband, who was quite out of breath with running, could even articulate his name, forced him to leave the house. He now fell into the hands of the gravediggers, who seized him by the goat's skins, and dragged him to prison, amid the shouts of the triumphant mob, among whom it was spread abroad, that they were carrying to prison the evil genie, who was the terror of the sepulchres, and who had entered Oitbha's house to devour her child.

The jailor, who had already been informed of it, was full of consternation to hear of the prisoner who was brought to him, and of whom thirty descriptions had been given, every one more horrible than another. The object at length appeared: A gravedigger had torn away one of the pieces of his dress,
and

and discovered, that what they had pursued so obstinately, was a man covered with goat's skins. But he only appeared more culpable for having dressed himself like a beast, that he might come and devour dead bodies, and little children. "Infamous wretch!" said an officer of the prison, who addressed Xailoun; "are you possessed of a devil, to come to take your repast in the sepulchre of faithful Musfulmen, and feed upon their flesh?"—"I," said Xailoun, who was now stripped of his mask, "I did not go there to eat; I went there to sleep. I trode upon bones as I passed along, but I never touched them."

The simplicity of Xailoun's behaviour and speech, disconcerted and softened all the bystanders. They only put one question more to the monster they had stripped; "Did you not go to Oitbha's house," said they, "with a design to eat her child?"—"Who? I! I would not eat my child: I was going to my own house." Among the people who were anxious to know the fate of the monster, there were at the door three or four of Oitbha's neighbours. The declaration of the supposed evil genie was repeated to them. Having asked admission, and recognized Xailoun, they bore so unequivocal testimony to his innocence and stupidity, that the judge who had come to inquire into the fact, ordered Xai-

loun to be carried back to Oitbha, and all his skins along with him.

His wife was informed of his return some minutes before he appeared. She was then very sorry that she had given him so bad a reception without knowing him, and had occasioned his meeting still farther with hard treatment. The adventure would inevitably be accompanied with disgrace; for to-morrow it would be known throughout Bagdad, that Xailoun was the supposed evil genie, who was devouring the dead bodies. She also lamented the blows of the stick, which had been given somewhat too freely; for she had at that time considered him as a real enemy.

When she saw Xailoun, she felt an emotion of compassion arise in her mind. She thanked her neighbours for bringing him back, and endeavoured to get information from him of the place he came from, after so long an absence, and of the person who could have transformed him in so ridiculous a manner. Xailoun, who had only one way of explaining himself, told her the motives which led him to depart from the city, in search of a more advantageous change, and informed her how he had been so unlucky as to be changed into an ox, and then, he knew not by what means, into an evil genie. Oitbha knew that he was not capable of telling a lie. She put

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him to bed, and, with great kindness and attention, dressed the bruises which he had received, and the inflammation occasioned by the stings of the gadflies. This done, she gave him something to eat, and determined on the part she was to act the following day.

As soon as it was day, she put her child, whom she could not leave behind, upon her little ass, in one basket, and the skins and harness in another. She besought her neighbours, who had brought home her husband the evening before, to accompany her to the house without the city, where Xailoun had been employed, and, taking her veil, set out along with them. When she arrived at the gardener's house, she reproved him very severely for having so far abused the simplicity of a Mussulman, as to reduce him to the condition of a beast. She related to him the insults to which he had exposed her husband; restored to him the goat's skins and the harness, and boldly demanded the salary which Xailoun had earned. "If it were not for the sake of my husband," said she, "I would bring you before the Cadi; and you may be very happy that I do not intend to add to the noise which this affair has already made."

The gardener was confounded; pulled out two sequins, which was four times more than the salary he had promised Xailoun, and presented

sented them to his wife. Oitbha would have refused them; for she well supposed that the large sum offered her was a great deal too much; but there were two of her neighbours along with her, and she was not sorry that they should believe her husband capable of gaining two sequins a-month. Her business being finished, she took up Xailoun's robe, and returned to her house.

Five days having passed without any new adventures, the wounded man was perfectly recovered. Oitbha again assumed the language of remonstrance, and shewed him the necessity, not of being changed into a scullion, an ox, an ass, or an evil genie, but of being changed in such a manner, as to lead a laborious and useful life to his family. Since Xailoun could sell pastry through the city, she inferred that she might make him a merchant of earth for children *. She made him dig some of the earth, and fill the two paniers of the ass with it; he was charged to sell this commodity by measure through Bagdad, and he must make himself known to customers by

D d 2

loudly

* This is a kind of red earth which may be reduced to powder; it is very dry, and has an agreeable smell. It is employed in Arabia to be put under children in the cradle, from the loins to the knees. This earth is only covered with a rag; it drinks up the moisture, and preserves the skin from cracks, and from a bad smell.

loudly and repeatedly proclaiming "Earth for children, earth for children!"

The cry was not long; the afs, warned by a blow which it received from Oitbha, passed through one street; and Xailoun, sitting astride upon the paniers, advanced, bawling aloud, "earth for children." This business went on pretty well for some time; but the sound of the crier's voice soon began to fail; sleep weighed down his eye-lids, and the afs traversed the streets as she had a mind. She came to the brink of the river Euphrates, where she drank at her leisure as much as she pleased; after which, having left her colt in the stable, she was led thither by instinct, and wished to enter the house with her load. The door was too low, and Xailoun's head got a severe stroke on the lintel. He was waked by the blow, which was heard in the house, and had almost overturned him, and fell a crying "earth for children," with his nose bleeding, and his forehead sorely bruised.

Oitbha saw her husband return, and guessed what he had been about. While she washed his nose with salt and water, she could not help giving him some blows. "Idle rascal, you ought to be driven forward by the lash like an afs. You shall certainly change, or I will give you as many blows as will make you forget all that are past. Go to the baker,

the

the maker of pastry, the cook, or even the gardener; go and ask work from some of your former masters: any of them will take you back, blockhead that you are; but do not think of returning unless you bring some provisions with you; I will give no reception to an idle fellow like you."

Xailoun was again put to the door to go in search of fortune. He thought, that last time he had not been at a sufficient distance from the city to be heard by God, from whom he every day requested a change. At a venture, and without following the road, he went a little into the country, and there met with a heap of ruins. The place appeared to have been once the abode of a very powerful man.

While he was amusing himself with looking at its decayed remains, he perceived a kardouon sitting upon a heap of stones thrown together at random; and the animal seemed to fix its attention on him. "Ah! good cousin, are you there? I thought you had stayed in the city." The little animal appeared to answer with the usual inclination of its head. "You recollect me," continued Xailoun; "do you understand me? what prevents you from speaking?"

The kardouon could make nothing but its ordinary sign. "You exhaust my patience," said Xailoun; "speak, or I will throw a stone.

at you." The kardouon seemed to provoke the booby by its natural inclination of the head; he threw a stone at it, and forced it to take refuge under the heap.

Xailoun was offended at the jest; he thought that the kardouon was silent only through malice; and he supposed that he could catch it in the place where it had crept, and force it to converse with him. In a quarter of an hour the stones were carried away, and the ground cleared. The kardouon had made its retreat by the back part of its strong hold, and Xailoun was diverted from the pursuit by another object of curiosity which presented itself to his view. When searching for the kardouon, he discovered a square stone of black marble, to which a ring was fixed. He laid hold of it, and by an effort raised the stone, and discovered a stair leading to a subterraneous cave. "Ah!" said he, "here's my cousin's house; I must descend and see whether he is at home."

The light which the opening admitted into the subterraneous abode, discovered to him some urns which were placed near the entrance. "Here," said he, "are probably the pots into which my cousin puts his provisions." He uncovered one of them, and drew out a handful of gold pieces. He came to the opening of the subterraneous abode, to examine
the

the object which he held in his hand; and paying no attention to the hardness or weight, and having never seen any of that coin before, he supposed that it was carrots cut into slices, as he had seen his wife do in order to dry them in the sun, and imagined they belonged to his cousin, who having retired into the bottom of the cave, could not be discovered on account of the darkness. "Well, cousin," said he, "come and speak to me, or I will carry off your carrots to be food to our asfs."

The kardouon not having thought proper to make any reply, or to appear, Xailoun began to consider how he should be able to carry away the carrots. He remembered, that being with his wife at a neighbour's house, they had received some prunes, and that his wife had filled the bottom of his turban with them, having previously put leaves in it. He had perceived some burdock leaves at the entrance to the subterraneous cave: He went to gather them, lined the inside of his cap with them, as he had observed his wife do, and filled it with the supposed carrots.

After this step, which appeared to him very wise, he took farewell of his cousin, and returned to Bagdad. As he walked along, he wished to try to diminish the repast of the asfs, were it only by one slice: but it seemed

seemed to him very hard. His cousin, he thought, must have very good teeth, if he could eat such food without boiling it; and he threw away the piece which he had gnawed. Having at length arrived at his own house, Oitbha was surprized at his sudden return. "Whence come you?" said she; "what do you bring in these leaves?"—"I have been visiting my cousin at his country house," said Xailoun; "he would not speak to me; I opened his door, entered his apartment, put my hand into his pot of provisions, and brought away these carrots, which will make very good feeding for our ass: but they must be boiled, for they are very hard." During this discourse, Oitbha took the turban, and perceived that its contents were gold. Her husband, she was certain, could not have stolen it designedly, for he did not know what it was; but it was of importance to her to know where he had met with such a treasure. "This is very well," said she, as she locked up the gold, which was in the turban, lest any one should come in upon her by surprise. She then, without giving Xailoun any trouble, got him to relate his history, and discovered that he had found a great treasure.

The place, which Xailoun pointed out, could only be about half a league distant from Bagdad.

Bagdad. The day was not so far advanced, but the remainder of it might be profitably employed; and the cave being left open, might draw thither, from a motive of curiosity, people much better informed than her husband. Having instantly taken her resolution, she saddled her asfs, put two wallets into the paniers, mounted Xailoun upon them, bought two loaves for him to eat by the way, and caused him conduct her to his cousin's house. She found, as Xailoun had told her, the entrance of the subterraneous cave open, and the urn, from which Xailoun had taken the gold, still uncovered. The two wallets were brought, and, having filled them so as to be a complete load for the asfs, she caused Xailoun, who found them very heavy, carry them out of the cave.

While Oitbha was employed in this business, Xailoun was calling aloud upon his cousin. This noise very much distressed his wife; but perceiving that there was no time to be lost, she at length came out of the cave, and loaded her asfs. She then caused Xailoun replace the stone which covered the opening, and put back all the rubbish which he had removed. After this, she set out on foot to her house, leading by the bridle the asfs, who, as she carried a great load, advanced very slowly.

Oitbha

Oitbha carefully locked up the bags of gold; and as she was very prudent, she only employed the money, which she had taken out of the turban, to procure her, by little and little, an affluence which could excite nobody's attention. Instead of compelling her husband to go abroad as formerly, she persuaded and even ordered him to remain in the house. She fed him well, and gave him new clothes; but as they were always of the same stuff, he did not yet think himself changed; an object after which he eagerly aspired, that he might no longer be beaten nor scolded.

In the mean time, his wife wishing to give him good entertainment, and having, as yet, got no slave, sent him to buy meat, rice, and chickpease. He had the value of each object in a separate parcel. His commission, concerning the meat and the rice, was punctually fulfilled; but he forgot the chickpease, and brought back the money for them, along with the other provisions he had purchased.

"I told you to buy some chickpease," said Oitbha; "go back quickly, and do not forget."—"Chickpease!" replied Xailoun, and quickly promised, for the moment, not to forget them. But one of his comrades meeting him, and observing that he was better dressed, and had a better appearance than formerly, wished to enjoy some diversion

sion at his expence. "Oh, ho! Xailoun," said he; "you are much better dressed now than when you were taken for an evil genie; and you have become very plump and fat, since you have given over living in sepulchres."

Xailoun was greatly distressed, by being thus put in mind of the cruellest of all his misfortunes.

"Although my wife did not tell me every day that I must be changed," said he to himself; "yet I would pray to be so, that I might no longer be told that I was an ass, an ox, and an evil genie: but what am I going for? It is——it is ——it is——. He rummaged his memory, but chickpease were not there to be found.

He once intended not to return home, that he might save himself the shame of again asking his wife those words which were so difficult to be remembered: but he wished to eat of the meat and rice, and he must consequently venture. When Oitbha saw him once more return with nothing in his hands, she had almost lost her patience; but though she had made a crime of his idleness, as far as was necessary for keeping him active, she could not make one of his imbecillity. "I want chickpease; dost thou understand me? chickpease! continually repeat chickpease, till

you are at the market place; and if you don't do as I desire you, you shall have a dreadful beating when you return."

Xailoun was terrified at the threatening, and went away, continually repeating *chickpease*,—*chickpease*. He passed by the corner of a street, where a merchant was selling pearls, and proclaiming his wares, by crying aloud, *pearls in the name of God* *. The pearls were placed in a box; and the virtuosi, who had drawn near, were handling them. This was a new object to Xailoun, and attracted his attention; but he was at the same time occupied in retaining his lesson; and, as he put his hand into the box, pronounced aloud, *Chickpease, chickpease* †.

The merchant, who believed that Xailoun played upon him, and depreciated his pearls, by wishing to make them pass for false ones, struck him a very severe blow. "Why do you strike me?" said Xailoun. "Because you insult me," answered the merchant; "Do you think me capable of deceiving the public?" "No," said Xailoun, "but I said,—
And

* In Arabic, *Bessim Alla lunos*. All goods for sale are proclaimed by this cry, *Bessim Alla*, in the name of God.

† Chickpease are called in Arabic, *chummo*, and pearls, *lunos*. The similarity of sound in these two words, might easily lead Xailoun, who was not attentive to the nice distinctions of sounds, into a mistake.

And what must I say then?" "If you will say properly," replied the merchant, "cry as I do, *pearls in the name of God*." "Yes," said Xailoun, "I believe that is just what my wife bade me say;" and he went on his way, repeating in a low tone of voice, *pearls, in the name of God*. He passed by the shop of one from whom some pearls had lately been stolen. This manner of crying them, which was not nearly so loud as usual, appeared to the merchant very suspicious. "The man who stole my pearls," said he, "has probably recognised me, and when he passed by me, has lowered his voice in proclaiming the goods, of which he wished to get quit." Upon this slight suspicion, he run after Xailoun, and stopped him, saying, "shew me your pearls."

Xailoun was in great confusion, and the merchant supposed he had got the thief: He seized him very roughly by the collar, and forcibly pulled him back. The supposed seller of pearls was surrounded, and the merchant at last discovered that it was a perfect simpleton whom he had stopped and abused. "Why," said he, "do you cry that you sell pearls?" "What should I say then?" answered Xailoun. "It is not true," said the merchant, not wishing to listen to him, "it is not true." "It is not true," said Xailoun, "let me repeat then, *it is not true*, that I may

not forget it ;” and as he went on, he continued to repeat, as loud as he could, *it is not true*.

His way led him towards a place where a man was selling *machs* *, who cried *machs in the name of God*. Xailoun, induced by curiosity, went with his mouth full of the last words he remembered, and put his hand like the rest into the sack, saying, *it is not true*. The sturdy villager gave Xailoun a blow which made him stagger ; “ It suits you well to come and give me the lie about my goods, when I sowed and reaped them myself.” “ Me !” said Xailoun ; “ I did not give you the lie ; I only endeavoured to say what I ought to say.” “ Very well,” answered the countryman, “ you ought to say as I do, *machs, in the name of God*.”

That Xailoun might get back to his own house, and avoid any other troublesome adventure, he began to repeat this new cry. He came by chance to the banks of the Euphrates, where a fisherman had been throwing his net for two hours, and at every interval changed his place without getting a single fish. Xailoun, who was amused with every thing, began to follow him ; and, that he might not forget it, continued to repeat, *in the name of God, machs*.

All

* *Machs* are a kind of lentils, which are carried to market only on certain days of the year.

All of a sudden, before Xailoun had the smallest suspicion of any thing, the fisherman made a pretence of spreading out his net, in order to wring and dry it; and having folded in his hand the rope to which it was fixed, took hold of the simpleton, and struck him with redoubled blows, saying, "Abominable forcerer! won't you give over cursing my fishing, in the name of God?" Xailoun made a struggle, and disengaged himself. "I a forcerer!" said he weeping; "here is certainly another." "If you are not," said the fisherman, looking at him, "why do you bring bad luck by your words to every throw of my net?" "I bring no bad luck: I was desired to say what I said." The fisherman then supposed that some of his enemies, who wished to injure him without exposing themselves, had prevailed upon the idiot he had now beaten, to come and curse his fishing. "I am sorry, brother," said he to Xailoun, "for having beaten you; but you was wrong to pronounce the words you uttered, for you thereby brought bad luck to one who never did you any harm." "I did not intend to bring you bad luck," said Xailoun; "I only aimed at the words which my wife bid me pronounce." "Do you know them?" "Yes, I know them." "Place yourself by my side; and

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when I throw the net, say, *in the name of God, instead of one, seven of the greatest and most powerful.*”—“ I believe it was not so long as that.”—“ Yes, it was as long ; but you must not want a single word of it, and I will give you some of them to take home : but remember you must not want a single word.” The fisherman again repeated, say *in the name of God, instead of one, seven of the greatest and most powerful.*

That he might not forget, Xailoun repeated it very loud ; but as he was afraid of the cord, whenever he saw the fisherman busy in drawing his net, he run away as fast as he could, and continued to repeat, *in the name of God, instead of one, seven of the greatest and most powerful.* These words he pronounced in the middle of a crowd of people ; for there was something, he knew not what, in a crowd, by which Xailoun was always irresistibly attracted. He was not far from a hearse, wherein a Cadi was carried to the grave ; and the Mollahs who accompanied the body were offended at the horrible imprecation which they heard. “ Wretch !” said they, “ how darest thou disturb this awful ceremony, by coming here to devote aloud to death the greatest people in Bagdad ? Is it not enough that the grim tyrant has aimed his
dart

dart at the unfortunate man whom we are now carrying to the grave?"

Xailoun was a good mussulman, and brought up in great respect for the Mollahs. The air and tone of voice with which this reproach was delivered, made a deeper impresson upon him than the blows of the cord. He went away, trembling and exclaiming, "O my God! what then ought I to say?" An old slave who followed in the train of the funeral, pulled him by the sleeve, and said to him, you ought to say, "*May God preserve his body, and save his soul!*" "Alas! why was not I told this?" said Xailoun, and went on repeating it, till he came into a street, where the passage was interrupted by a dead ass carried upon a cart. He followed it, crying aloud, "*May God preserve his body, and save his soul.*" Upon hearing this, the people who were collected around the cart, exclaimed, "Ah! how the wretch blasphemes! Ah! the infidel dog!" and every one endeavoured to strike him with their fists or sticks. Xailoun leaped over one of the cart-wheels, and escaped as fast as he could. "Unfortunate Xailoun!" said he to himself, all in tears, "thou hast now undergone a worse change, than when thou wast transformed into an ass, a scullion, an ox, or an evil genie: thou art now a forcerer, and what is worse, an infidel!"

He continued to weep, not daring to return home for fear of a beating ; for he had entirely forgotten the words which his wife had desired him to say, and having nothing to carry home, he was perfectly at a loss what course to pursue.

In this state of perplexity, he came accidentally to Oitbha's mother's house, where a great concourse of people were assembled round one of his wife's sisters, who lay sick. Except in the streets, Xailoun made his appearance every where, with the greatest timidity ; and when he saw a numerous company, had not courage to go into the house, but remained without the door, allowing his face to be seen.

" It is Xailoun," said his mother-in-law ; and then addressed him. " What want you, Xailoun ? a piece of goat's flesh ?" " No."—" Some rice ?" " No,"—" Something to drink ?" " No." All the company in their turns asked him if he wanted this or that, and went over the whole catalogue of what is eaten or drunk : the simpleton's answer was always, no. " Ah !" said the sick person, " I know what he asks ; it is chickpease." At hearing these words, Xailoun was transported with joy, hurried into the apartment, and, advancing towards the sofa on which his sister-in-law was half sitting up, to testify his gratitude

rude, seized her by both the arms with such force, that partly through surprise, and partly through pain, she fainted.

While they were employed in bringing assistance to the sick person, Xailoun's mother-in-law thus addressed him: "Blockhead of a fellow! Horse that you are! what brought you here, to come and kill my daughter? Chickpease? Do I sell chickpease?" "Chickpease," said Xailoun, quite astonished to hear himself called a horse: he had been an ass, but he had never yet been a horse. "What mean you by chickpease?" "Chickpease! my wife told me chickpease." He still had in his hand the small parcel of money which was designed for paying them, and which he had carefully kept amid all the troublesome adventures in which he had been engaged.

Xailoun's mother-in-law understood from this, that her daughter had sent her ideot of a husband to make this purchase. She shewed Xailoun a merchant's shop opposite to her door, and bade him go into it, and ask for chickpease. The merchant took the money, and delivered the chickpease to Xailoun, who run home in triumph, still repeating chickpease, till he had laid upon the table the provision he had brought. His having forgotten these two words had cost him so dear, that he was
resolved

resolved to have them on his tongue for the remainder of his life.

Oitbha did not think of boiling the chick-pease, but endeavoured to learn from Xailoun what had become of him the whole day. He gave a confused account of his adventures, and in particular complained bitterly of having been taken for a forcerer, and an infidel, while he was only seeking for chickpease. The only thing plain in his account was, that one of his wife's sisters was sick, and that he had been at her mother's house. Oitbha lamented that it was not in her power immediately to put her husband out of the reach of so many ridiculous adventures; but in hopes that she would be able to employ the riches she had obtained, to bring about the accomplishment of this object, she determined to bear them for some time, and to preserve him as much as possible from new accidents.

Next day Oitbha prepared to go to see her sick sister. She gave suck to her child, and desired Xailoun to rock it, if it awaked and cried: if the ass was thirsty, he was to give it drink; and he was to take care to feed a hen which was hatching. "Shut yourself closely up in the house," said she: "you may fall asleep, and we would be robbed." Having thus instructed him in the best manner she could,

could, and left him a plentiful breakfast, she set out.

Xailoun fulfilled this first part of his duty, in such a manner as would admit of no censure; after which he fell asleep. The child awaked, and cried; Xailoun rocked him, and thus far every thing went on to admiration. As he had nothing better to do, he began to employ his attention on the objects around him. He observed the hen very uneasy, and continually scratching her head with her claw. "This poor animal must be plagued with vermin," said Xailoun. "I have a great number of them myself; and as my wife combs me every day, it would certainly be right in me to comb the hen."

He arose, took up the hen and comb, and attempted to catch the little insects which he saw; but the hen struggled, and her head slipped away from under the comb. He then thought that it would be much easier for him to kill these troublesome guests with a large pin; and as he did not go very lightly to work, he plunged it into the brain, and killed the hen. Xailoun was in the greatest consternation to behold the murder which he had committed; but he was still more grieved to find that the eggs were beginning to grow cold. To complete his distress, the ass fell abraying. "I have no time at present," said he

he, to draw water; when I am on your back you can carry me straight to the river; you must therefore go now without me." He opened the door, shut it when she had gone out; and the ass and her colt were trotting in the streets of Bagdad.

After this step, our hero brought near to the child's cradle the large earthen vessel whereon the hen's eggs were placed, and sat down upon them. It was possible to do so without crushing them; but an equilibrium must be preserved. The child awoke, and Xailoun continued to rock him without altering his position. He again awoke, and the same remedy was employed; but every effort to lull him asleep was in vain, for hunger made him cry, and it could not be appeased. Xailoun, who was a good man at bottom, knew no torment equal to that of hunger. "Poor child," said he, "you shall certainly die if you receive no milk: your mother has not returned; but I ought to have milk; I have breasts as well as she." He then put aside his garment, took the child, and still covering the eggs, laid him on his bosom as a nurse would have done, but so as wholly to cover him with his beard.

The child was deceived, gave over crying, and applied his lips to the sterile breast which was offered him. Xailoun, greatly delighted

lighted, rocked him in his arms as he had seen his wife do : he attempted also to sing ; and then said to himself : “ My wife wishes to see me changed ; she will be greatly astonished to find me changed into a hen and a nurse.”

In the mean time, the child not finding what instinct prompted him to seek, became fretful, and cried without intermission. Xailoun's distress increased, and soon came to a height. His wife knocked at the door, and was already in very bad humour. She had there found the ass and her colt, and supposed that Xailoun had been guilty of something worse than negligence in the execution of his commission. She commanded him to open the door. “ I cannot,” answered her husband. Oitbha heard the cries of her infant, and exclaimed, “ Will you open you stupid booby ? ” “ I cannot,” answered Xailoun ; “ I am hatching eggs, and I am nursing.” Oitbha, who had a sufficient share of vigour, took up a stone, burst the lock with a single blow, and beheld her husband in his ridiculous posture. But however much exasperated, the duty of a mother took place of every thing else ; she took the child from him, and put it to her own breast ; then cast an enraged look at Xailoun, and the objects around him. “ Who
killed

killed that hen ?"—“ It was I, when I was combing her.”—“ Where are the eggs ?”—“ They are under me.”

At these new marks of his stupidity, Oitbha lost all patience, and gave him a blow with the hand which was disengaged. “ Rise from that place, you simpleton,” said she ; “ if any of our neighbours had come in along with me, what would they have said ? you are already a subject of conversation to the whole town.”

Although the blow was not very heavy, it made Xailoun lose his balance, and crush the eggs which were beneath him. As soon as he perceived it, fearing lest he should receive another blow, he leaned to one side, and rested his elbow on the ground, ready to burst into tears like a child. “ Arise, you beast,” said the wife with a threatening tone. Xailoun obeyed, and turned about in such a manner, that Oitbha could not avoid seeing this new achievement of her husband.

Oitbha regretted neither the hen nor the eggs ; but she was very anxious to know how she could make her husband less stupid, or at least make him appear so. The first great object was to keep him in the house. He was her husband, and the father of her children ; by his means she had acquired a for-

tune,

tune, which without his assistance she could never have gained : there were, in short, many reasons why she should take care of him, and endeavour to save him from those affronts to which he was continually exposed by his curiosity and simplicity. She did every thing in her power to keep him near herself, gave him excellent nourishment, and employed flattery and threatening by turns, to prevent him from indulging his sauntering disposition: but she struggled against an inclination which was not to be subdued.

When Xailoun ceased to be watched, being wholly occupied with the thoughts of his change, he went out in quest of the means of its accomplishment. He must accustom himself to hear the same discourse repeated. " I have besought God to change me, but he has not heard me, either within Bagdad or without it. Perhaps it is my fault, and not his; I have been always told that a Mussulman must turn his face towards the south, when he prays to him. He is in the south then; thither I must go to seek him, and I will certainly be heard."

While these reflections passed in his mind, he was at a considerable distance from the city, still directing his steps towards his new mark. He soon perceived a forest at some distance, and said to himself, " I must go and

see this large garden ; I will there have it in my power to eat as much fruit as I have a mind ; it is much larger than the one I was in, and it will be much better stored : by eating a larger quantity, I will certainly be changed ; for in short, though I am not an afs, yet I am flesh and blood." Xailoun's genius could carry him no farther : upon entering the forest, he was astonished at the tallness of the trees, and his being able to perceive no fruit.

As he advanced into the wood, he heard some noise ; and according to his custom, ran up to the place whence it came. He now fell into the midst of a band of robbers, who were dividing some spoil they had lately made. These villains immediately surrounded him, and began to deliberate whether they should cut off his head and feet. " O my God," exclaimed Xailoun, " would you have me changed into a dead man ?"

Before a blow was struck, one of the robbers who was on horseback, informed his companions, that some horsemen were observed at the entrance of the wood. The robbers left Xailoun and the plunder behind, mounted their horses, and endeavoured to escape as well as they could. The terror of the simpleton was gone, and had given place to curiosity. He was amusing himself with untying the bundles,

bundles, to observe what was within, when he was surrounded by a party of the horsemen sent in pursuit of the robbers; they took him for one of the number, tied his hands, and reproaching him with abusive language, conducted him to Bagdad to be put in prison.

He now saw himself delivered to the hands of the jailor, as one of those robbers who had struck an important blow; and the horsemen declared, that he would soon have his companions along with him. "Run to the south," said Xailoun to himself, "to be changed into a robber! Most assuredly, though I have been told so, God is not there: but I was not long an ass, an ox, or an evil genie, and I hope I will not long continue a robber either."

While he uttered this reflection in the dungeon, he roused the attention and curiosity of a companion, whom guilt, rather than misfortune, had brought into the same place. Fetah was the name of this prisoner, a very famous and formidable robber, who had been apprehended the day before in committing a most daring robbery. Fetah had been tried long ago; but when seized by justice, he had always found means to escape; and when Xailoun arrived, he was devising some new expedient to extricate himself from trouble.

Fetah examined his companion in disgrace, by the glimmering of a lamp, which served

to give them light, and addressed him to ask the reasons of his imprisonment. Xailoun, who wanted nothing but an opportunity of speaking, told him, that, having been at the south to pray to God for a change, that his wife might not beat him, nor prevent him from going abroad, he had suddenly been changed into a robber.

Fetah conceived a good omen from this first explanation. He perceived that his companion was a simpleton, to whose ideas it was necessary to accommodate oneself, in order to lead him into a snare. Before they were an hour together, Fetah perfectly knew who Xailoun was; what he had done, or thought, in his whole life; and from the simpleton's rage for undergoing a total change, the villain formed the design of immediately transforming himself, so as to make his escape.

Fetah, to disguise himself, in case he should be apprehended in committing his late robbery, had blackened his beard and hair, and thickened his eyebrows, which were naturally very fair. Xailoun's were of the same complexion. In blackening his beard and hair, he had not spared his skin, and bore a greater resemblance to a negroe than an Arab. The natural complexion of his face was like that of Xailoun, ruddy and sanguine. By washing himself well, blackening Xailoun,
and

and prevailing with him to exchange dresses, the transformation would soon be completed. "Brother, said he to Xailoun, "you were wrong in going to the south to see God: his temple extends throughout all space. With respect to me, if I wished to make a change with you, and you agreed to it, by praying here to God, with very little trouble, it would instantly be accomplished: You would no longer be yourself; you would be me. See then if you would be taken for a robber, and if your wife durst beat you."

"You are very black," said Xailoun; "I had a face very much resembling that, when I was changed into a scullion; and yet my wife beat me as much as before."—"That colour does not please you then?"—"No," said Xailoun.—"You shall see," said Fetah, "that it is very easy to get another: There is nothing to do but to pray earnestly. Let us turn our backs: You are to seek God in the south, and I will seek him in the north; we will find him every where. Let us both ask aloud to be changed, and I will inform you when it is done."

Xailoun obeyed very willingly. Fetah steeped a handkerchief in his water vessel, and, with great dexterity, took off all the blacking which disguised his hair, beard, and

complexion. By the smoke of the lamp, he blackened a pewter vessel, wherein his food had been brought, and bedaubed his hands. He immediately turned about, and said to Xailoun. "Look at me; don't you find me greatly changed?" Xailoun remained in the utmost astonishment; for the villain Fetah had a very fine figure. "What," said the simpleton; "shall I be changed as you have been?"—"Yes," said Fetah; "provided you will allow me to delineate my features upon your face. Xailoun agreed to this condition; and, in a very short time, Fetah made him blacker than he had been himself. "This is not all," said he; "we must also change our clothes, and, you see, mine are perfectly new."

Xailoun was now transformed; and Fetah wished to give him a proof, that in every respect he was a great gainer by the change. "You shall now see," said he, "how you will be served in this place. I hear the door open; the turnkey is coming; give him this piece of money, and say to him, with a firm tone of voice, "get me some pilau, and a shoulder of mutton for dinner."

Xailoun, who was accustomed to repeat what he was told, gave the piece, without looking at it, and delivered the order to the turnkey. The turnkey went up to the lamp,
and

and saw that the piece he had received was gold. He saluted Xailoun, from respect to his money, and went to execute the commission.

While Xailoun enjoyed the satisfaction of being changed, so as to command respect, and Fetah the hope of escaping by his cunning, both met with a fate the very reverse of what was intended for them. The Caliph, informed that the famous Fetah had been apprehended, ordered him to be conducted without the city, and there undergo, with the greatest rigour, the punishment to which he was already sentenced. A party of the robbers, among whom Xailoun had thrust himself, had been taken and examined. Being asked who that man was, they unanimously declared that he was an idiot, whom they were amusing themselves with terrifying; and it was decided that he should be set at liberty.

A judge came to the prison, and ordered the simpleton to be brought before him; the turnkey came, and striking Fetah on the shoulder, said to him, "Come, walk forward, simpleton; you are going to give your account." Fetah obeyed. "Leave this place," said the judge; "go to your own house; and, if it is in your power, be not so foolish for the time to come."

"Let Fetah be brought forth," said the judge : the turnkey came to Xailoun. "Sir, you have no time to finish your shoulder of mutton ; the judge calls for you : it is not worth while to give you back your change. If you have any other piece like the former, you may give it to me ; your business will soon be over, and in a short time you will stand in need of nothing."

Xailoun listened to the turnkey with a silly stupid air, and remained fully convinced that he had undergone a total change. He saw his companion treated as a simpleton, but he himself was spoken to in quite a different language. He was moreover assured, and he fully believed, that very soon he would want nothing : he did not, however, make the smallest motion. "Go on," said the turnkey, "you must not give us the trouble of dragging you from hence by force ; believe me, walk out with a good grace." "I don't mean to give you any trouble," replied Xailoun ; "I will go." The turnkey looked at him, and said, "Follow me." Poor Xailoun obeyed like a child, and was conducted into the chamber of justice, where the judge thus addressed him : "Fetah, this is your sentence ; listen to the reading of it." The clerk immediately read a list of crimes of which the criminal was convicted, and for which he was condemned

condemned to be hanged at the ordinary place of execution, without the city of Bagdad. "Who did all that?" said Xailoun; "is it not written on that paper that I am changed? I am changed however, look you." The judge, who knew not the robber's person, supposed that Fetah was acting the idiot, in order to screen himself from punishment; and, without any regard to his discourse, ordered them to proceed towards the place of execution.

Oitbha had been very uneasy since her husband disappeared; and she had revolved in her mind all the different kinds of accidents which might befall a man of his character. That he had gone from Bagdad, she never once suspected; but she thought that he might have been drowned in the Euphrates, or have exposed himself to some squabble, been wounded, and carried to an hospital. She had already run through the whole city to get information concerning him. She at length arrived at the prison, and was there told that a simpleton had lately been dismissed. Upon going back to her house, Xailoun was not there; and she returned to the prison still more alarmed than ever.

A villain, well known throughout Bagdad, Fetah to wit, as she had been told, was coming out to be led away to punishment. He walked with his head uncovered, but still it was impossible for her to recognise him. The
black

black colour which had been given to his hair, his face, and his beard, concealed the person who was carried away ; and his dress completed the disguise. But there was in his attitude and manner of walking, and in his silly way of stopping to look about him, something which recalled Xailoun to her mind every moment ; and she could not help following the cavalcade. A new event soon put the matter beyond all doubt.

As they were coming out of Bagdad, Xailoun observed a kardouon sitting within reach of him upon a heap of stones, and stopped short : “ Ah ! good day, cousin ! ” said he ; he was urged to go on, but he answered “ that he wished to speak with his cousin, to learn if he thought him greatly changed.” The judge and the guard were astonished at this instance of stupidity, either real or pretended ; and at that moment Oitbha having lifted up her veil fell at the judge’s feet, “ Sir,” said she, “ this is not that Fetah whom they seek for : this is an innocent creature who never did harm to any body ; he is my poor husband, the simple Xailoun, who, out of his extreme simplicity, has allowed some person, I know not whom, to disfigure him in this manner : Let me make him clean, and we will here find some by whom he will be recognised.”

“ Come,

"Come, unfortunate wretch," said Oitbha to Xailoun, with that tone of authority which she well knew how to assume, "where have you been to have got into this situation." "The man who was along with me has changed me." "Are not you ashamed, after all your ridiculous transformations, to have allowed yourself to be changed into a robber and a villain, and thus run the danger of being put to death?"

Xailoun made no reply, but allowed his wife to wipe off with a handkerchief the black which covered his face and hair. Some children who dwelt near the prison, fell a crying that it was the evil genie who eat the dead bodies; and in the mean time, one of the horsemen came up to the judge, and assured him that it was not Fetah the robber. "I arrested him, Sir, had him three days in my custody, and should certainly know him. This man is the very idiot whom we met with some days ago in the wood, and whom you ordered to be set at liberty: Fetah must have had the address to put himself in his place."

The judge was convinced, by so many concurring circumstances, but could only delay the execution of the sentence, till he had given an account to his superiors, and to the Caliph, of what had happened; and consequently recommitted Xailoun to prison. Oitbha accompanied

accompanied him, and procured for him new and suitable clothes, that he might lay aside those by which he had been exposed to so great disgrace, and to the danger of losing his head. She paid the jailor very liberally before-hand, for the care which she begged him to take of Xailoun, till the order for setting him at liberty should arrive; and the people connected with the prison observed, that he was a very fortunate simpleton.

With respect to Xailoun, a change of dress would have been agreeable to him in any other situation; but since he was discovered by his wife, and exposed to threats and blows, there was no transformation which could give him any pleasure. The order for liberating him at length arrived: Oitbha carried him away with her; and we may well suppose that she did not treat him in the gentlest manner, either by the way, or in the house. To prevent him from going in quest of new adventures, fear must be employed to overawe him; but it was impossible to change his fauntering disposition, or lead his ideas beyond the beaten tract in which they were accustomed to move. He must of necessity be changed, that he might be safe from being scolded, abused, or confined to the house. This must be the work of God; and hitherto he had sought him in vain. "God," said Xailoun

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loun, "cannot be of an inferior station to a Visier; the Visier's palace is just beside us, and people go to him and speak to him: I will go to God's palace, and speak to him."

One day he found an opportunity of escaping; and, having asked at every body for God's palace, was conducted to a mosque. "It is not this I mean," said he; "this is the place where prayers are addressed to Mahomet for mussulmen;" and he continued to ask till he was in the environs of the Caliph's palace. An usher of the court heard him, and contrived to draw from him an explanation of the favour which he wished to obtain. When he was informed of Xailoun's character and views, he thought that he might afford the Caliph some amusement. "Come," said he, "I will conduct you whither you wish to go." "And shall I speak to God?" said the poor simpleton. "Yes, you shall speak to him; you shall see him face to face." So saying, he conducted Xailoun into the palace, desired him to sit down, and ordered him to wait till he should return.

Although Xailoun was only in the outer part of the palace, and in the apartment of an inferior officer, he thought every thing very fine: but when the usher conducted him through the court and apartments which led to the Divan, he could not give over exclaiming,

“ Ah ! how fine this palace of God is ! ” When he saw the Caliph upon his throne, he was quite dazzled with his grandeur. The usher took him by the arm, and led him forward ; “ There he is,” said he ; “ prostrate yourself, and speak to his highness.” “ What shall I say ? ” replied Xailoun quite confounded. “ You may pray for a change, and explain to him your reasons.”

Xailoun’s speech shall not be related : He was in such astonishment and confusion, that he did not display even his ordinary share of understanding. His wife, his house, his street, the blows with the stick, his transformation into a scullion, an ass, an ox, an evil genie, a forcerer, a nurse, a hen, and a robber about to be hanged, were all confusedly jumbled together in his relation ; for the usher took care to lead him on from one detail to another. He concluded, with saying : “ My God, since you now hear me, change me, I beseech you, once for all : but change me, so that I shall be unknown to my wife, and even to myself ; change me better than you have changed our ass ; for she still receives blows.

Haroun Alraschid, and all the people of his court, could scarcely suppress their laughter : but the Caliph restrained himself, and ordered the usher to conduct Xailoun into another apartment, where he should instantly be

he changed. If he had not been at a distance from the Caliph, he would have thrown himself upon his feet, to kiss them, and crushed them with his weight; but luckily he was without the railing. The eunuchs conducted him into an apartment, where a plentiful repast was served up. He was a stranger to the dishes; but their novelty attracted his fancy, and made them still more agreeable. He found every thing good, and indulged his appetite, believing more firmly than ever, that man can be changed only by nourishment, since, in the palace where he now was, God himself employed no other means. Exquisite wines were added to the good entertainment: and though Xailoun knew not what they were, he yielded to the pleasure of drinking them. They were mixed with a strongly narcotic liquor, of which he immediately felt the effect; and before he was able to rise from the table, fell into a very deep sleep.

The slaves only waited for this opportunity to take possession of him. He was washed, rubbed, and cleaned from head to foot. An old slave, who was deeply skilled in the art of preparing pomatums, paint, and every thing relating to the toilet, was brought from the seraglio. By the balsams, which she composed, she could give freshness and beau-

ty even to the head of a dead person. Xailoun passed through her hands, and came from them as fair and fresh as a rose, and with a smooth down upon his skin.

Fair and beautiful locks, negligently tied with a buckle, supplied the place of his own red and bristly hair. What was left on his eyebrows formed an arch, which was immediately dyed of the same colour with the locks. He was dressed in a waistcoat of azure blue, a little sloped before, to shew his neck and bosom, the whiteness of which was set off by an artful imitation of the veins. A diamond star sparkled on his breast, and was joined by the pearls, which hung from his delicate neck. His legs were adorned with buskins of uncommon richness and grandeur. He was girt about with a magnificent scarf; and a piece of gauze spangled with silver, and gracefully raised upon his side by a clasp of rubies, flowed upon his shoulders. Wings would have been added; but this would have embarrassed his motions; and of these they wished to lose nothing.

When the fat and sluggish Xailoun was completely transformed by the old slave into an angel, he was carried into a magnificent hall, and placed upon a very rich sofa, under a grand canopy. Four glasses opposite to one another reflected and multiplied his figure.

There

There, and in such a dress, did he awake from sleep.

The same night, the festival of the flowers * was to be celebrated within the palace; and, agreeable to the whim of the Caliph, Xailoun's transformation added to the gaiety of the feast. The eunuchs were to wait till they observed the symptoms of the sleepy drugs ceasing to operate, before they should give the signal to musicians, who were placed above in a gallery, hid by a covering of gauze. The Caliph himself was there, in order to enjoy the sight of the awakening, which the music was to effectuate.

Night was come, and Xailoun was still asleep. The art employed to lull him asleep, was assisted by a very happy natural constitution. He at length began to stir, and stretch himself. The music was at first very soft; but it was soon rendered more loud and piercing, by the sound of warlike instruments; and Xailoun was at length completely awaked. The place where he was, was lighted by two hundred tapers: He looked before him, and saw an angel in the mirror: He turned about, and the glass behind the sofa presented another: He looked to one side, and then to another, still

G g 3

angels.

* At this festival, a mirror and two wax tapers are placed before every flower in the garden. It is very brilliant, and happens always at the return of Spring.

angels. He at length cast his eyes upon his hands, his feet, and his body, and was dazzled with every thing he saw. He did not speak, but uttered cries: he ran through the hall; went up to all the glasses in succession; came so near them as to touch them with his nose; and thought that angels approached, and kissed him. "Oh, Oh!" exclaimed he; for so great was his astonishment, that he could say nothing else. At length he seemed to recover the use of his senses. "I see all this very well," said he; "but where am I? what is become of Xailoun!—O Xailoun! Xailoun! are you come then to see all this, in order to tell it to my wife?" Then running to the mirror: "Tell me, I pray you, you who are so beautiful, where is this poor Xailoun? know, that however beautiful I am, I shall weep if I don't see this poor Xailoun."—"Hold there," said a soft and musical voice from the top of the gallery; "seek no longer for that Xailoun with whom thou wert acquainted, and whom his wife beat so frequently; thou art Xailoun; thou didst ask for a change, and behold it is accomplished."

"And who are these beautiful youths around the hall, who come to me when I go to them; who kiss me, and whose nose is so cold;

cold; who speak, and yet I cannot hear what they say?"

"These are pictures of thyself, appearing in the glass: did you never look at yourself in a glass?"—"O yes! but I never saw more than one picture; now I see some at the very bottom of the glass, and others, with their backs turned to me."

"They are only your pictures, however."
—"Very well, do you, who now speak to me, desire God, who is so rich, to give me all these pictures, that I may carry them home to my wife."

"Do you intend to go back to your wife since she beats you so often?"—"Yes; she will beat me no longer; I am changed."—"But, Xailoun, do not you wish to remain near God?"—"I will remain near God, and near my wife; we have a child, and my wife is again pregnant: I will come hither to say my prayers five times a-day."

The Caliph was much entertained with this conversation; but it was now time to let all the ladies of his court enjoy the pleasure of it. Servants came to inform Xailoun, that he was waited for in the gardens of the palace. He bade adieu to the pictures; and as he was accustomed always to obey, straight-way followed those from whom he received the invitation.

The festival, at which Xailoun was present, was calculated to fill him with transport. Every flower had a mirror at the foot of its stalk ; and the pictures, which he had left in the hall, seemed to accompany him wherever he went.

Four thousand tapers, placed upon the surface of the earth, illuminated this brilliant spectacle ; and ten thousand coloured lamps decorated the whole front of the palace. Xailoun at first thought that he was in paradise. “ You are not quite there,” said one of the eunuchs who accompanied him ; “ we don’t intend to deceive you ; this is only the terrestrial paradise, and you are in the palace of *God’s lieutenant*, towards whom we are about to conduct you.”

This expression of *God’s lieutenant*, was unintelligible to Xailoun ; for according to his creed, there was only one God. But he had no time to think of heresy ; for he perceived, under a magnificent pavilion, the Caliph shining in all the splendour of the throne, and surrounded with all the beauties of his Harem.

At sight of this, Xailoun exclaimed, “ O what pictures !” He was introduced into the circle, and all the women strove with one another who should most attract his attention. He wished to approach very near them : “ Kiss me now,” said he ; “ are your noses cold like those
those

those of the other pictures I saw? Ah you speak! Do you recognize me? Am not I greatly changed? Our afs and I will astonish all our neighbours; there will be nothing in the whole quarter which will have undergone such a change."

The Caliph's women laughed most immoderately; but they wished to try Xailoun's fidelity to his wife, and advised him to remain with them. "Hold," said he, "I see very well you are houris; but I am not dead, and I am married." "Can you love the woman who beats you?" said one of the Sultaneesses. "What is love?" replied Xailoun; "Oitbha is my wife, and I must live with her; does this loving mean living?"

The Caliph perceiving that almost as much had been got out of Xailoun as could be expected, gave orders to serve up an excellent supper, and to plunge him again in sleep, proposing next day to give notice to Oitbha to come for her husband. Xailoun supped with a keen appetite, not thinking in the least on the many fine objects he had seen, and was delighted with the change, as he could now venture to return home.

In the mean time, the eunuchs and slaves belonging to the women of the seraglio were preparing, without the knowledge of the Caliph,

liph, to enjoy themselves at the simpleton's expence.

As soon as he was asleep, they stripped him of his ornaments and finery, and clothed him with goat's skins. The coverings of the hands, instead of a forked horn, were terminated by vultures claws, fitted to the skin; and his head was adorned with an enormous leathern mask. Two large chrystal eyes, of a fiery appearance, glared from this frightful figure.

When the slaves had disfigured poor Xailoun in such a manner, that he could not know himself again, they laid him upon a matt, in a place under ground, where the slaves used to be put as a punishment for slight offences. But to procure him the cruel opportunity of seeing himself, they lighted the dungeon with two lamps, and fixed some mirrors upon the walls. After every thing was prepared for their observing the effect of this new transformation, the women and eunuchs went to enjoy, till Xailoun should awake, the remainder of the feast given in the garden, where the night was spent in a variety of amusements prepared for the Caliph and his ladies.

When it was day, the chief eunuch perceived that attendance was every where wanting. He went in search of those to whom it belonged, and at length found them amusing themselves

themselves with the terror, distress, and screams of poor Xailoun. An example would instantly have been made of some of them for such barbarity ; but the favourite slave of the best beloved Sultaneſs preſided over the ridiculous puniſhment to which the unfortunate creature was ſubjected.

If we reflect that Xailoun had, within the ſpace of fourteen hours, taken two narcotic draughts ; that he had paſſed ſucceſſively from the ſight of paradise, to that of the infernal regions, where the chryſtal upon his eyes repreſented every thing in flames ; and that from the delight of good entertainment, and the caſſies of the attendants, he had fallen into the hands of a fooliſh and brutal rabble, we will readily allow that ſuch a ſituation would have made even a wiſe man mad.

Xailoun, alas ! was there in as bad a ſituation as he had been at the mill, and in the plough : one conſolation, however, he enjoyed ; from his own experience, he knew that neither good nor bad changes were of long duration. But when he ſaw himſelf thus changed from an angel into a devil, he had a confuſed recollection of being told in the garden, that he was in the palace of God's *lieutenant*. From this, he concluded, that he had not come to the palace of the true God, and that this was the cauſe of ſo horrible a change

“ O my God, my God, do you yourself change poor Xailoun, since this God has changed me so ill.”

Xailoun's prayer was instantly heard. The chief eunuch sent all the slaves to attend to their duty, and freed the poor man from his horrible garb. He gave him new clothes from head to foot, suitable to his station, and covered his head, which had been shaved, with a fine turban. Xailoun was conducted into an outer apartment in the palace, and a good breakfast was served up to him, which he swallowed eagerly, reflecting in his own way.

Behold him again changed, and so placed before a mirror, that he could see himself in it. Though he had no beard, and his head was covered with a large turban, he thought that he recognised himself. “ Ha,” said he, “ I am now changed into a young Mussulman. My wife has told me already that I am worse than a child ; this will be quite another thing ; however, for my own part, I find it not amiss ; and if I could get a beard, I would not be sorry to continue in this situation.” While Xailoun was thus talking to himself before the mirror, he did not lose time, but eat and drank very heartily every thing which was set before him.

In the mean time, the Caliph having awaked, the chief eunuch had already informed him

him of the extravagancies committed by the slaves, at the head of whom was the favourite of the Sultaneſs. The ſovereign, inſtead of blaming any one, condemned himſelf. "We ſet the example of abuſe," ſaid he; "and it is not wonderful, that ſlaves ſhould improve upon our follies. I have attended to this man, and find, that though he has no underſtanding, he has a heart. I am anxious to ſee Oitbha; who, while ſhe overawes, as it appears, by fears and blows, this ſtupid bear, has been able to tame him ſo well, that he wiſhes always to return to her. I will try her character, as I have done that of her huſband; and if I am pleaſed with her, I will make amends for the fault which has been committed with regard to them." He ordered one of his eunuchs, to tell the uſher who had brought Xailoun, to go for his wife Oitbha, and inform her beforehand of every thing which had happened the preceding day. "If ſhe is worthy of eſteem," added the Caliph, "as I have ſome reaſon to think, I will not be ſlow in making reparation for the wrongs which I have done her."

The uſher received his orders; and Oitbha, who was very uneaſy about her huſband, learned from him that he was at the Caliph's palace. The events of the day and night were related to her; and laſt of all, ſhe was

informed, that the Caliph expected her attendance. The succession of her ideas was very rapid; and she perceived at once all the advantage which might be derived from the abuse which had been made of her husband's imbecillity. Hitherto, while she enjoyed an honest affluence within her own house, she had artfully concealed the fortune she had gained; though she might shew a part of it to the Caliph without exposing herself, there would have been great danger if she had been first suspected by a Cadi. She dressed herself genteelly, affixed to her girdle two purses, each containing two thousand pieces of gold; covered herself with a large new veil, and set out along with the usher to the palace.

The Caliph was seated on his throne; Oitbha was brought before him, and prostrated herself. Haroun ordered her to arise. She then uncovered her face, and said, "I obey the orders of the Sovereign Prince of the Faithful; what is his pleasure with Oitbha the humblest of his slaves?"

"Oitbha," said the Caliph, "your husband Xailoun was yesterday brought into my palace; and, as you have been already informed, his extreme simplicity served for the amusement of my court. I have learned from his own confession, and from many accounts which I have heard, that his natural restlessness

ness of disposition and defect of judgment, have even brought his life into danger. It is not reasonable that a young woman like you should continue indissolubly united to a man totally void of understanding. I promise to get your marriage dissolved, and to cause your husband be taken care of in one of those houses where we confine those whom it is necessary to secure against the consequences of their own misconduct, while at the same time they are prevented from doing any injury to society."

"O most wise Caliph!" said Oitbha, "poor Xailoun is my husband in the sight of God, and consequently cannot cease to be so by any human law. I should be quite distressed, were he confined in any place where it would be impossible for me to pay him that attention which I owe him. He is the father of my children; in the eye of heaven, he is the crown of my head; and it can only shine by the propriety of my own conduct. He does no injury or harm to any one; and, as his understanding is weak, all the resources of mine ought to be exerted in his behalf. The idleness to which he is naturally inclined has reduced him to absolute imbecillity, and would infallibly have led him into some misfortune. I have employed severity, threatening, and even blows, when I found that I could suc-

ceed only by inspiring terror. After having subjected him to my authority, I determined to alter my conduct with regard to him, and try to make him assume, as it were, another station in the world. I kept him in the house free from every labour; but to our great misfortune, he made his escape, and came hither. How has he not found an asylum in this august mansion, where every Mussulman upon earth may come and seek refuge? It is a consequence of the extraordinary nature of his lot and mine, for which I venture to demand justice from you. Restore to me Xailoun, O wife Caliph; my duty makes him dear to me. He is a man devoid of judgment; but he is a faithful Mussulman, who possesses no malice, and who is innocence itself. If he has been so unfortunate as to injure any person in Bagdad, here are four thousand pieces of gold; it is our whole fortune; I bring them for his ransom; and I would stake even my own liberty, for whatever may be wanting to procure his enlargement."

Oitbha was not beautiful, but she had great expression in her countenance; she was young, had a fresh complexion, and displayed much dignity in her motions. The Caliph was ashamed of having exposed himself with her, to procure a momentary amusement at the expence of her husband's imbecillity; but the

the means of getting out of the embarrassment were always in his power. He whispered to his chief eunuch, who returned in a few minutes, holding a casket, and conducting Xailoun, who was now covered with a beautiful robe.

“Oitbha,” said Haroun, “there is your husband; the robe which I have conferred upon him, he owes to those sentiments, with which, such as he is, he has been able to inspire you. I now see that I formed a true judgment of your character, from the extraordinary attachment to you evidenced by this man, whom one could scarcely believe capable of feeling. I take you both under my protection; and instead of demanding a ransom for the liberty of Xailoun, here are four thousand sequins which I add to those you intended to part with.

The first object which Xailoun saw upon his entrance, was his wife: after making an excuse to her for his last flight, he hastened to shew her his pelisse. “Changed! changed!” said he, “much better changed!” He then perceived the Caliph; “Ah! claws, horns, God, lieutenant!” exclaimed he, and at the same time ran to conceal himself behind his wife. The latter, after a respectful bow, took the casket which the Caliph presented to her from the eunuch’s hands, put in it the four

purfes ſhe had brought ; and having given it to Xailoun, made a profound reverence, and withdrew. The four thouſand ſequins were but a ſmall addition to the immense fortune which ſhe could call her own; but they afforded a good pretence for enjoying it. The Caliph had given her four thouſand ſequins ; and in leſs than an hour after, it was reported in Bagdad, that he had given her a whole cheſt-full of them.

As Oitbha was on her way to the palace, ſhe had remarked that there was a houſe of a genteel appearance to be ſold near the great market-place. She entered it ; and having concluded the bargain before ſhe came out, took the keys with her. Returning to her houſe, ſhe began with putting the two bags which contained her real fortune upon the aſs, and conducting it to her new houſe, accompanied by Xailoun, who was her man of labour in affairs that required ſecrecy ; but as to others, ſuch as that of transporting her effects, ſhe hired common porters, and againſt evening, ſhe was able to take poſſeſſion of the houſe which ſhe had bought. The former poſſeſſor was a rich merchant, whoſe accommodation ſhe found in it, and it was already known in the quarter which ſhe left, that the Caliph had given her a caſket full of gold.

Oitbha

Oitbha did not make a bad use of her riches ; but, next day, she bought a very good mule, and a pair of bags. The day following, she proposed to Xailoun to mount him upon the mule, and go to his cousin's house. It may easily be supposed, that Xailoun was very happy at this party of pleasure. Oitbha mounted the ass, and Xailoun followed her upon the mule. When they arrived at the ruins, the kardouon, Xailoun's adopted cousin, was sitting upon the very heap of stones, which covered the mouth of the cave. Seeing the riders approach, it hid itself ; but Xailoun had perceived it, and exclaimed, " Ah ! there's our cousin."—" We must go to his house," said Oitbha ; " we have now two beasts to support, and we must have food for them both. Come, Xailoun, throw these stones out of our way, and we shall immediately enter your cousin's abode."

Xailoun laboured very hard. The trap, and the ring, by which it was lifted up, made their appearance. The entrance to the subterraneous abode was at length cleared. Oitbha had provided herself with a light, and advanced into the cave, where she found a great quantity of precious vessels, which were perfectly useless to her. " What do you seek for then ?" said Xailoun.—" I am seeking for your cousin, but he is not here :
we

we must go and take his carrots." She went to the urns containing the pieces of gold, filled the four bags with them, and caused Xailoun carry them out, and lay them on the beasts of burden, which were tied to the entrance of the cave. "Come along," said she; "let us shut the door and set out; we will return in the afternoon, and see if our cousin will be more civil. After some stones were thrown above the trap, she returned home on foot.

In the afternoon, she made a second journey, and completely emptied the urns which contained the gold coins. Xailoun then put the trap in its place, covered it with as many stones, as he possibly could; and they both returned to Bagdad. She had left behind, in the cave, great riches, consisting in precious vessels. She might one day reveal the secret to her children, but she thought this superfluity useless at present.

When Oitbha saw herself well settled in her own house, and found, that the public opinion concerning her fortune was well established, upon the foundation of the Caliph's bounty and protection, she was anxious to bring Xailoun to the enjoyment thereof. The number of her children increased: They would one day blush, that they had an idiot for their father; and it was proper

per to prevent him from doing any public acts of imbecillity, and to colour those which could not be concealed.

She first bought slaves for the service of her children and herself; but she paid particular attention to those who were to be attached to Xailoun. It was with great difficulty she could find such as were proper for him. At length she procured two, who were of a mature age, who possessed understanding; and to whom, in short, she could give her confidence. They were to carry Xailoun out to walk, wherever it should be agreeable to him; and he frequently took delight in going to the ruins, and conversing with the first kardouon he happened to meet. His guides were ordered not to contradict him; but when he wished to remove the heap of stones, in order to get at his cousin's house, they must oppose it, and tell him, *Oitbba does not wish it*. The first days that Xailoun enjoyed this kind of liberty, he set out to the ruins, mounted on his mule. When he was there, he wished to pay a visit to his cousin, and take his carrots; but, at this single expression, *Oitbba does not wish it*, he immediately desisted.

His guides prevented him from thrusting himself into every place, as formerly: If any thing excited his curiosity, they went and procured it for him. The use of it was pointed out; and,

and, if he conceived any liking for it, it was purchased. If it was extravagant, the whole was settled by these words, *Oitbha does not wish it*. He no longer thought of sauntering through Bagdad. Oitbha had persuaded him that he was totally changed, and that there was no farther need of being so, but that he must be obedient.

In the mean time, one of the most considerable merchants in Bagdad, who was Oitbha's neighbour, experienced a reverse in trade, and suddenly saw his credit shaken by a loss which he met with at sea. Oitbha learned that he was in want of money, and went to his house. "Every time you have an opportunity of seeing the good Xailoun, my husband," said she, "you treat him with humanity and friendship, and I am greatly indebted to you for your kindness. You are a worthy man; and, as I know that you have met with misfortunes, I come to offer you ten thousand sequins: You may send for them, and I lend you them without any interest, save that which I shall derive from the pleasure of obliging a man of so much goodness."

The merchant gratefully accepted so kind an offer, paid all his debts, and re-established and increased his credit and fortune. He informed his best friends of Oitbha's generous conduct

conduct with regard to him; and that noble action very soon became public. As soon as it was known, that by careſſing Xailoun, a reſource of this kind could be found in time of need, every one ſtrove who ſhould be moſt laſhiſh in their attentions. The ſlaves, who conducted him, had great difficulty in freeing him from thoſe demonſtrations of friendſhip, which were ſhewn him on his way; and they never allowed him to accept any thing which was offered him.

Oitbha, having been repaid by the firſt merchant, to whom ſhe had given aſſiſtance, had occaſion to adventure with three others. One of them entirely failed in his engagements, and ſhe felt not the ſmalleſt regret at the loſs. She received marks of reſpect and attention in every ſtreet of Bagdad, and ſhe was ſuppoſed to have very large commercial concerns. Henceforth ſhe might, without danger, openly make uſe of her riches, and hazard meeting with ſome loſſes.

Xailoun's table was excellently furniſhed. The Caliph's officers ſometimes came to eat at it, and he made no more fooliſh ſpeeches; for the two ſlaves either answered for him, or dictated a reply. He at length became able (which may eaſily be believed of a man, who has no ſelf-conceit to overcome) to extricate
himſelf

himself from an embarrassment with as much spirit as other men.

Oitbha lived happy with Xailoun: She gave her children a good education, and settled them very richly in Bagdad. She continued, till her death, which happened soon after that of her husband, to procure, by her beneficence, the good will and admiration of the public; and her loss was a source of great affliction to all who had the pleasure of her acquaintance.

“WELL! sister,” said Dinarzade to the Sultaneſs; “we have not interrupted your narration, though it contained many very trivial things. But it has given riſe to an idea, which is more important, viz. that, if Oitbha’s husband had not been ſo weak, he could never have made a fortune, much leſs could his wife have brought him to enjoy thoſe riches which accident had procured them. This ſhews us that there is in every thing, even in ſtupidity itſelf, a certain point which is deſirable to be attained. You have moreover led us into Bagdad, till we are a little fatigued; and you ſometimes filled us with apprehenſions of being ſmothered in the crowd. I think you owe ſome ſort of compenſation to

us, as well as to our favourite Haroun Alraschid. The light in which you have now exhibited him, is rather unfavourable; and, until you have recollected some other exploit of his youth, or of his more advanced years, relate, if you please, the adventures of the princess Ilsetilsone his daughter, and Simonstapha. We will there behold this son of justice displaying, in his setting ray, those sublime qualities which his rising presaged, and which illuminated every part of his course."

"Sister," replied Sheherazade, "the story is long, and I will not try the Sultan's patience without his permission." Schahriar granted it with pleasure; and the beautiful Sultaness began her relation in the following words.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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