

# *Persian & Jewish Tales*

IMAGINATIVE SERIES

SELECTED AUTHORS

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*Selected Authors*

Libraries of Hope

Persian and Jewish Tales

Imaginative Series

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# Tales of the Persian Genii

Retold by Frances Jenkins Olcott

# Foreword

In these stories, wonder-loving boys and girls will find Good Genii, Wicked Marids, Flying Afrites, Fairies, Witches, and Enchanters. They may wander through Oriental gardens fragrant with spices and redolent with the perfume of roses, and listen to the sweet singing of many-coloured birds and the music of a thousand fountains, or they may feast under silken pavilions and dwell in crystal palaces. They may gaze on subterranean treasures of sparkling jewels and heaps of precious metals, and pluck jewel-fruits and gold and silver branches from fairy-trees; while throughout the stories runs a delightful vein of allegory, which lends a subtle charm and ethical value to the tales.

The first two series of stories—the foundation of the book—are retold from a quaint old volume published in England in 1765, under the title *Tales of the Genii; or, The Delightful Lessons of Horam the Son of Asmar*. The book became widely popular, and went through many editions, passing through the hands of numerous editors, one of whom was Archbishop Whately. Its popularity continued into the nineteenth century, and then died out, but not before the tales had become the delight of Gladstone's boyhood, and had formed a part of the treasured library of little David Copperfield. Dickens, in his *Uncommercial Traveller*, speaks of the story of "Abudah," as having made a deep impression on his own childhood.

The third series of stories—The History of Farrukruz the Favourite of Fortune—is retold from *The Delight of Hearts*, by Barkhurdár ben Mahmúd Turkman Faráhí, surnamed Mumtáz, which may be found in its English translation in W.A. Clouston's *Eastern Romances*.

The fourth series—The History of King Azad and the Two Royal Sheykhs—is retold from the famous romance, The Bāgh o Bahār of Mīr Amman of Dilhī, from the English translation edited by Duncan Forbes.

All the stories have been recast with great freedom, and moulded into a continuous narrative; the aim being to keep them truly Oriental and at the same time to preserve all the detail that will delight the imaginative modern boy and girl.

Each story has its ethical teaching, which has been emphasized without too much moralizing, but this is not the only educational value of the book. Modern life in the West is too colourless, lacking in richness and warmth. To counteract this, and to develop and foster in children their natural love of rich colour and an appreciation of beautiful objects, there is no more effective method than to steep their imaginations in the best of Oriental literature. And in order that the stories in this volume may aid in the education of the sense of colour in children, Oriental warmth and richness of description have been infused when lacking in the originals.

And here I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to the following books from which I have drawn Oriental atmosphere—*The Arabian Nights* and *The Modern Egyptians*, of Edward William Lane, and Dr. G. Well's *Biblical Legends*.

# The Fountain of the Genii

Patna and Coulor, the young son and daughter of Guialar the Iman of Terki, were the pride of their parents and the wonder of the inhabitants of Mazanderan. Their forms were slender as a willow branch, their hair dark as night; their eyes large, black, and sparkling; their cheeks red like anemones, their lips like coral; and their teeth of pearl. And every morning their parents presented them each with a beautiful robe of silk embroidered with many colours. So the two children delighted all who beheld them.

One day their father led them into a grove of oranges and citrons, which surrounded a fountain, and seating them upon a marble bench, in the cool shade of the trees, he said:—

"O my beloved children, you have now reached an age when you should learn true wisdom. The world is vain and fleeting. Power and riches are a snare to youth. The worship of Allah—whose name be exalted!—alone satisfies the soul of man. Pure worship cannot be attained here in the habitation of corrupt men; therefore, O my children, retire ye like the pelican into the wilderness; flee into the desert, and find peace and happiness, and there worship Allah the Compassionate, the Merciful."

No sooner had the Iman Guialar uttered these words than a delicious fragrance issued from a large citron tree opposite, and in a moment the trunk of the tree changed into a bright and beautiful Fairy.

"Guialar," said the Fairy, advancing toward him, "I am pleased to hear thee instruct thy children in the wisdom of life. But why dost thou bid them flee to the desert? Know, that Patna and Coulor are destined to serve their fellow-men.

Therefore, O Guialar, permit me to convey thy children to the wonder-palace of the Good Genii, that from them they may learn the wisdom needed to guide their steps aright through the valley of life."

The Iman of Terki was transported with joy at this proposal, but before he could reply, the Fairy caught Patna and Coulor in her arms, and, leaping with them into the fountain, vanished from his sight.

The children saw to their amazement that they were descending rapidly through the water, and yet their hair and their garments remained dry. In a few minutes they found themselves standing upon the marble floor of the basin. The Fairy thereupon hastened to open a crystal door in the side wall, and through it she led Patna and Coulor. As they turned to look at the door, it closed and disappeared from their sight.

The children then saw that they were on a wide plain where grew varieties of bright flowers, and trees filled with birds of every colour, that sang with a thousand sweet voices. The gentle breeze that blew over the plain was laden with the odour of sandalwood and musk. And in the distance appeared a noble palace shining like the sun. A path, white like silver, led to it, and along this the Fairy conducted Patna and Coulor.

"My children," said she, "this palace is the abode of the Good Genii, who obeyed the will of Solomon the son of David, on both of whom be peace! They are the servants of Solomon, and the instructors of mankind. In their presence let silence seal your lips. Presume not to exchange speech with the Genii of Wisdom."

Scarcely had she spoken thus when they arrived at the palace, which the children perceived to be built of rock-crystal. Its portals were lofty, and above its entrance were inscribed mysterious characters. Its windows shone as though each were lighted by a separate sun. The door opened of itself, and a stream of light flowed from within.

The Fairy led Patna and Coulor through a passage, the walls of which were hung with rich curtains of silk embroidered with beasts and birds. At the other end of the passage they found themselves in a large saloon whose arched roof was of pure gold set with sparkling diamonds. On each side of the saloon were ranged against the wall eight and twenty thrones of massive silver, whereon sat the race of the Good Genii, clad in flowing robes. At the end of the apartment, on a throne of beaten gold, sat the King of the Genii in a white robe, and wearing a golden crown upon his head.

The Fairy took Patna and Coulor each by the hand, and approaching the royal throne, prostrated herself at its foot. Then rising she stood in silence with downcast eyes and hands folded upon her bosom.

"Good Fairy Moang," said the King of the Genii, "we bid thee welcome to these Halls of Wisdom, and we rejoice to see that thou hast brought hither the children of the Iman of Terki. Seat them before our throne, and bid them listen in silence and with all due reverence to the tales of the Good Genii."

The Fairy did as she was commanded, and placed Patna and Coulor upon the carpet spread on the crystal pavement before the throne.

Thereupon the King of the Genii called in a loud voice: "Do thou, O Barhaddon, Guardian Genie, stand forth and relate to these children one of thy deeds accomplished for the benefit of mankind."

At this command a Genie of terrible but noble countenance, clad in a flame-coloured robe, descended from his silver throne, and having prostrated himself, arose and began thus:—

"O Sage Being, I have endeavoured to act at all times in accordance with the precepts of our lord Solomon, the son of David, on both of whom be peace!—as ye may now learn from:

# The History of Abudah and the Search for the Talisman of Ormanes

## The Ebony Box

In the days of the Caliph Haroun Er Raschid, there dwelt in the City of Bagdad, the Abode of Peace, a wealthy merchant named Abudah. He possessed merchandise and riches worthy of a sultan, and palaces and slaves without number. He was famed not only for his magnificence, but also for his generosity, since he daily fed a thousand poor.

But these many gifts of fortune did not render Abudah happy. He was filled with discontent, which grew greater hourly, and he wished for more riches and power, wherefore he spent his nights in affliction and tears.

One night as he lay upon his divan and his mind was full of melancholy thoughts, a small ebony box suddenly appeared in a corner of the room, and flew as if on wings to the side of his couch. The cover of the box sprang open, and out hobbled a little yellow Witch leaning on a crutch.

"O Abudah!" said she, pointing a bony finger at him, "why dost thou delay to search for the Talisman of Oromanes, the Talisman of Perfect Happiness? Know, if thou do possess this blessing, then not only all the riches of the world shall be thine, but also joy and happiness without measure. Until thou hast procured this inestimable Talisman, I will visit thee nightly and torment thee because of thy idleness. And this mine ebony box shall remain forever in thy room."

Having said thus, she hobbled back into the box, and, with a hideous cry, shut herself in. The box immediately

returned to the corner from which it had come.

The next night Abudah had scarcely retired to his divan, before the box again flew to his side, and the lid sprang open, and the Witch descending upbraided him fiercely as before. Then she reentered the box, and, with a hideous cry, shut herself in, and the box returned to its place. So matters continued for ten nights, at the end of which time the merchant could stand the torment no more, and became filled with a burning desire to possess the Talisman of Oromanes.

He therefore prepared a banquet of the choicest viands and the most refreshing drinks. He spread rich carpets and silken cushions by the side of the fountain in his great hall, and sent out messengers to invite his friends to a feast.

The guests arrived immediately, and while they were eating and drinking, Abudah inquired of them if they knew where the magic Talisman of Oromanes might be found. His friends replied that they had heard of the Talisman and of its wonderful virtues, but they despaired of ever being able to procure it, since all who had set out in search of it had either disappeared, or their bodies had been found blackening in the desert sand.

The next day Abudah sent out a crier through the streets of the city, who proclaimed with a loud voice: "O ye people of Bagdad! Abudah the merchant will give riches, palaces, and beautiful slaves to any one who can inform him where the Talisman of Oromanes may be found."

As soon as the shades of night descended, there appeared before the palace of Abudah a venerable Sheykh, who announced that he had heard the offer of the merchant, and had come to make known the place where the Talisman was preserved. He was immediately led into the presence of the afflicted Abudah, who commanded that the apartment should be cleared of all his attendants in order that no one but himself might hear what the Sheykh had to reveal.

Left alone with the merchant, the Sheykh began as

follows:—

"O Abudah, wealthy merchant of Bagdad, know that Destiny hath singled thee out to discover the Talisman of Oromanes! Such bliss, alas! is withheld from the poor and needy outcasts like myself! Alas! the wondrous Talisman is forever shut away from our search, since, O fortunate one, it is necessary to expend great wealth and to prepare a magnificent present if one wish to procure the Talisman. Thou, O fortunate one, hast riches sufficient for the search!"

"But, my friend," said Abudah, "thou neglectest to inform me where I may find this precious Talisman."

"It is lodged," replied the Sheykh, "in the Valley of Bocchim. Treasure Genii are its guardians. And it is kept by them among the riches of the earth. Thou canst not gain admission to this valley unless thou go laden with every variety of costly silks, and rich spices, and innumerable treasures. These thou must present to the King of the Treasure Genii, whose Afrites and Marids keep watch over the earthly paradise of riches in the Valley of Bocchim. If thy treasure be not sufficiently large, all thy labour will be in vain."

Abudah, hearing these words, was transported with joy to learn that the Talisman of Oromanes might be purchased with wealth.

"I have," cried he, "nine thousand acres of rich land on the banks of the River Tigris. I have twelve thousand estates of fruit, oil, and corn. I have twenty-two mines of the finest diamonds, and six hundred ships that fish for the most costly pearls. I have, moreover, eight hundred warehouses, and four hundred storerooms filled with bales of precious brocades and fine linens, and with chests of rare spices and perfumes. Besides these, the fortunes of nine Viziers are mortgaged to me for a hundred years. And my numerous palaces are filled with gold and silver, and magnificent furniture, and with memlooks and the most beautiful of Circassian slave-girls."

"O happy, happy Abudah!" sighed the venerable Sheykh.

"Thine, then, and thine only, it is to purchase a passage into the Valley of Bocchim!"

"If so," continued Abudah with joy, "direct me instantly to the entrance of this valley!"

"Alas!" answered the Sheykh, "it is far beyond the deserts of Arabia, and many days' journey hence. Besides, thy present is not yet prepared. If them wilt permit thy servant to make the choice of gifts, thou mayest set forth shortly, and find a speedy and happy issue to thy search."

Hearing this, Abudah immediately gave orders that the Sheykh should be permitted to use as much of his wealth as he saw fit. And then, retiring to his private apartment, the merchant gave himself up to meditation on the intended journey.

The Sheykh thereupon disposed of a large portion of the riches of Abudah, and prepared a splendid caravan to accompany the merchant into the desert.

### Adventure First—The Valley of Bocchim

The appointed day being arrived, Abudah took leave of his wife Selima and of his children and friends. And attended by the Sheykh he joined the caravan which was drawn up in long order in the streets of Bagdad.

The caravan began its march. First came five hundred archers mounted on the fleetest coursers; behind whom were twelve thousand oxen, their horns wreathed with garlands of flowers, thirty thousand sheep with gilded horns, and two hundred magnificently caparisoned horses.

After these were driven two hundred camels laden with every variety of dried and preserved fruits and rich confections; a thousand more with fine wines; five hundred with pure oil; five hundred more with rare and costly spices and perfumes.

These were followed by an enormous chariot of beaten gold, drawn by four elephants, and filled with a great quantity of precious metals. Into this chariot the venerable Sheykh mounted, arrayed in purple and gold, and pointing a rod toward the Valley of Bocchim.

Then came fifty chariots laden with the richest silks and brocades, after which advanced fifty memlooks bearing strings of large pearls. They were followed at a distance by a hundred mutes, behind whom, in two hundred palanquins ornamented with jewels, came as many beautiful female slaves, each guarded by four eunuchs, and clad in garments fit for a sultana.

Next in the procession was the merchant Abudah in a chariot of pearl of the most curious workmanship, drawn by ten milk-white horses whose trappings were of gold. As for the merchant's garments, nothing could have been more magnificent. They were of the most gorgeous brocade embroidered with jewels. On either side of the chariot were a hundred musicians playing on as many musical instruments, and fifty black slaves burning the choicest perfumes.

This magnificent cavalcade wound through the streets of Bagdad amid the shouts of the populace, and began its march toward the Valley of Bocchim.

The party proceeded for many days over rivers and mountains and desert wastes, until at length it arrived at a plain bounded on two sides by lofty mountains of black stone, and ending in a forest of dark cedars and palms. Here the Sheykh descended from his chariot, and commanded Abudah to follow him.

Leaving the caravan, they advanced toward the dark forest, and after having walked many hours, entered its gloomy depths.

They proceeded until evening, when they arrived at a massive rock in the side of which was a large cavern. The Sheykh entered the cavern, and immediately disappeared

from Abudah's sight. As the merchant was about to follow him, he stooped down and looked in, and what was his horror to perceive that the cavern had no bottom. He fell back trembling, and stood waiting for the Sheykh to return.

As night drew near Abudah, seeing that the Sheykh did not return, climbed into the branches of a tree, resolved to await there the break of day. The severe fatigue of the journey had so exhausted him that, though he intended to watch, sleep soon overpowered him.

When he awoke the next morning, what was his surprise to see that everything around him glistened in a dazzling manner. He examined the tree in which he was, and saw it to be of pure gold, and its leaves to be of frosted silver and emeralds, while from its branches hung clusters of rubies like the most beautiful cherries.

Looking down he perceived that he was no longer in the forest, but in a strange country. On every side glorious palaces glittered with gold and silver and precious stones, so that the whole seemed like a fairy rather than an earthly land.

Full of wonder Abudah hastened to descend the tree, and found the ground on which he stepped to be of gold dust and the pebbles, pearls. At his feet grew flowers formed of crystals, emeralds, turquoise, and sapphires. On every side there met his eyes trees and shrubs of glistening silver and gold, whose leaves were of frosted silver, and whose boughs were laden with fruits of all kinds formed of precious stones. The apples were of carbuncles, the cherries of rubies, the plums of amethysts, and the pears of diamonds with seeds of pearl.

The merchant saw before him a vista like a long street paved with gold, at the end of which a vast dome rose to the clouds. This dome shone so brightly that Abudah could scarcely look toward it. Impelled by the desire to know what kind of beings inhabited this strange land, he advanced to the dome.

Arriving before it, he perceived that it was entirely of

burnished gold, and stood upon three hundred pillars of the same precious metal encrusted with jewels. Festoons of pearls, amethysts, jacinths, opals, and the most sparkling diamonds hung suspended from pillar to pillar.

Abudah, though the wealthiest of mankind, was struck with amazement at the profusion of riches and beauty that he saw before him. Entering one of the portals, he beheld beneath the dome a Genie of gigantic form seated upon a throne of massive gold, and surrounded by a throng of huge Afrites and Marids.

On the floor of the dome were placed, at regular intervals, great heaps of wealth such as Abudah had never seen before. And the crystal pavement on which he trod was covered with a curiously wrought carpet representing the riches of the earth in all their natural colours.

Abudah, abashed at this magnificent spectacle, and by the appearance of so many strange beings, was about to retire, when one of the Afrites, who stood nearest the throne, advanced and beckoned him forward. The merchant, trembling, obeyed, and approaching the throne bowed himself to the ground and kissed the carpet.

"O Abudah, merchant of Bagdad," said the King of the Treasure Genii—for such was he—"welcome to the Valley of Bocchim. Thy gifts have been accepted, and even now are conveyed to our treasury. As for thee, thou hast ever been a favourite of the Genii of Riches who guard this Valley. Thy search for the Talisman of Oromanes shall not go unrewarded. But do thou first accompany this Afrite who will permit thee to view the riches of the earth—a sight never before enjoyed by mortal man."

The huge Afrite, taking Abudah upon the palm of his broad hand, carried him toward a magnificent palace facing the eastern side of the dome. On entering this, the merchant perceived the windows to be of rock-crystal and the walls of white silver, while on the floor were heaped pieces of silver

shaped like boughs of trees.

"These heaps," said the Afrite, "have their bases far down in the bowels of the earth, where they feed the mountains with silver ore."

The Afrite then carried Abudah into a building, shining like the sun, and having windows like those in the first palace. And in this place the merchant saw a profusion of gold shaped like branches of trees, and lying in heaps like the silver.

"These, too," said the Afrite, "have their bases in the centre of the earth and supply the world with gold."

Having thus spoken, the Afrite carried Abudah into a palace that sparkled like a huge diamond. Here the merchant saw great wells filled to overflowing with amethysts, chrysolites, carnelians, rubies, sapphires, turquoise, jacinths, and all kinds of precious stones. And they threw out such brilliant lights that Abudah was almost blinded.

"These wells," said the Afrite, "extend far downward into the earth. The silver and gold thou hast seen are the boughs and branches that fall from the trees in this Valley of Riches; and these jewels are the fruits and flowers. All are carefully gathered by the Afrites and Marids, and placed in these depositories, the bottoms of which are covered with gratings that let their treasures out sparingly and in small pieces. These intermix with the earth, thus forming mines in all parts of the world. Each deposit of riches requires the hard labour of human beings before it can be brought to light."

Abudah was so stupefied by the sight of so many wonders that he was unable to speak. Seeing this, the Afrite conveyed him once more to the dome, and placed him upon the carpet before the throne of the King of the Treasure Genii.

"O fortunate Abudah!" said that great Genie, "to be permitted to gaze on the treasures of the Valley of Bocchim! But more wonderful yet is the favour that we are about to bestow upon thee! Go, O ye Afrites, and bring forth the iron chest that is said to contain the Talisman of Oromanes."

At this command ten gigantic Afrites hastened and brought in a huge chest of black iron, bound round with strongest bands, and fastened with fifty locks.

"Here," said the King of the Treasure Genii, "O Abudah, is thy reward. Take the chest and return to Bagdad, and live in joy and peace the remainder of thy days."

"But," said Abudah, "must I carry with me this great chest which is so heavy that ten Afrites can scarcely lift it? Surely, O generous Ruler of this Valley of Bocchim, thou wilt permit me instead to open the chest and take from it the Talisman of Perfect Happiness, so that I may convey it hidden in my bosom to Bagdad."

"Wouldst thou, then," answered the King of the Treasure Genii, "take the precious Talisman from its place of security? Know, O presumptuous man, that while the sacred symbol is locked in the chest, no human force can take it from thee. It is written in the Chronicles of Time that he who doth possess the Talisman of Oromanes shall know perfect happiness; therefore, seek not to remove the treasure from its present place of concealment. Take, however, these fifty keys, but beware lest curiosity tempt thee to open the chest. Who can tell whether the brilliancy of the Talisman may not be more than mortal can bear to behold!"

Having thus said, the King of the Treasure Genii commanded Abudah to stretch himself upon the chest, and to close his eyes. The merchant obeyed, and immediately sank into a profound slumber. Awaking at last, he found himself lying in his seraglio in Bagdad and his wife Selima asleep near him upon the divan.

Without saluting, or indeed looking at his wife, Abudah arose hastily, and taking in his hand the lighted lamp that was always burning in the centre of his apartment, he gazed about him.

He then perceived the iron chest standing in the corner where formerly had stood the ebony box. Feeling the bunch

of keys in his bosom, he drew them forth, and advancing toward the chest tried the first key. To his amazement it would fit none of the locks; so taking the keys one by one, he tried them all, but, lo! not one would open a single lock!

Abudah, at this discovery, was filled with despair, and flinging himself upon the divan, began to lament his miserable fortune. At that moment he heard a rushing noise, and looking up, he perceived the small ebony box which had been the cause of all his disappointment, flying through the air. In an instant it was standing by his couch. The lid sprang open, and the old Witch, hobbling from her confinement, began to upbraid him fiercely as before.

"O senseless Abudah!" cried she, pointing her bony finger at him, "O senseless one, to think that happiness could be purchased with wealth! Thou hast, indeed, the iron chest, and it will convey thee whithersoever thou may desire to go, but thou hast no key with which to open it, nor canst thou discover by force the effulgent beauty of the Talisman that lieth hidden within.

"Go then, O Abudah, search until thou find the Keys of Happiness, which will fit the fifty locks. Not in the Valley of Bocchim wilt thou discover them, but in a far distant land where pleasures reign eternal. But know, if thou hast not begun thy search ere this moon be passed, I will invent double horrors wherewith to plague thee."

Having said thus, she hobbled into the box, and, with a hideous cry, shut herself in, and the next moment Abudah beheld the ebony box mounted upon the iron chest.

And now his wife Selima awoke, and with surprise saw her husband Abudah lying drowned in tears at her side. She instantly pressed him in her arms, and, in a transport of joy, inquired by what happy fate he was returned.

"Why, knowest thou not," replied Abudah, "that having mounted the car of pearl the venerable Sheykh prepared for me, I journeyed, attended by my magnificent caravan, to the

Valley of Bocchim, and—"

"O my dear Abudah!" interrupted Selima, "with what madness hath that wicked enchanter possessed thee! What venerable Sheykh? What magnificent caravan? There, indeed, came a poor wretch hither, who stole a great part of thy wealth and often times talked with thee in private, in spite of all thy friends might say. One morning thou didst follow him from the Palace, mount with him into a small wagon, and didst ride away into the desert. From that day to this thy distressed family and friends have mourned thine absence."

At this recital Abudah turned his face to the wall, and spoke no more for several hours. At last, rising from the divan, "Fool that I was!" he said, "to trust that miserable imposter! Or to believe that the Talisman of Perfect Happiness could be purchased with riches!"

"Oh, rather," replied Selima, "may my lord find happiness in this city, surrounded by his family that adore him!"

The next morning the merchant returned to his business, and continued to conduct it each day as before, but his nights he spent in weeping and lamentation.

Nearly a month passed in this wise, when one night Abudah was roused from a light slumber into which he had fallen, by the sound of most ravishing music.

A delicious odour of rare perfumes filled the apartment, and as the merchant gazed about him, he saw a small cloud descend from the ceiling. It expanded and opened, and revealed to his wondering eyes a Fairy of exquisite beauty, decked with chaplets of ever-living flowers. She held in one hand a goblet of crystal, into which she pressed the sparkling juice from a cluster of purple grapes.

"O fortunate Abudah!" said she. "Quaff the nectar from this crystal goblet, and recline once more upon yonder iron chest. The faithful treasure will convey thee to the magic realms where the Keys of Happiness are preserved."

And as the Fairy ceased speaking, she advanced toward

the delighted merchant, who, snatching the goblet from her hand, drained from it a rich and sparkling draught. Instantly the Fairy vanished, and Abudah, hastening to the iron chest, sank in slumber upon it, and resigned himself to another adventure.

### Adventure Second—The Garden of Delight

When morning was come, the merchant Abudah was awakened by the songs of innumerable birds, and perceived himself to be lying upon a couch in the centre of a silken pavilion. The floor was strewn with fresh lilies and roses, while the couch whereon he reclined was covered with the finest damask embroidered with beasts and birds, so like life that they seemed to start out from beneath him. Cages of gold wire were suspended from the roof, in which were birds of brilliant plumage, whose songs had awakened him. He turned his eyes from side to side, only to observe new wonders. Then, arising from the couch, he approached the door of the pavilion.

He saw himself to be in the midst of a wide green plain, in which were groves of orange and citron trees. Perfumed breezes fanned his brow, and flowers of many kinds and various colours mingled with the green grass. He beheld at a distance a winding stream, and thither he directed his steps. And as he did so, flocks of bright birds flew singing from tree to tree.

Approaching the stream, he perceived a bark of ivory awaiting him, manned by ten beautiful youths. Each was clad in a robe of azure silk and wore a white turban; while two of them held lutes in their hands. They beckoned to the happy Abudah, whereupon he entered the bark. Immediately eight of the youths plied oars of sandalwood, dipping them gently in the water that sparkled at their touch. Thus they caused the bark to glide along; and as they did so, the two youths holding the lutes touched the instruments, and sang so

sweetly that they ravished the ear.

On either side of the stream were rocks formed of crystal, over which hung boughs laden with strange transparent fruits. And as the bark passed beneath, rich spices and refreshing fruits dropped into Abudah's lap, and he drank of the cool and delicious water of the stream.

They proceeded onward, thus, for some time, until the stream widened into a spacious lake. On either shore were green groves of myrtle and citron trees, above which appeared the tops of numerous gilded domes, silken pavilions and glittering palaces. All around, on the margin of the lake, grew hyacinths and narcissus, while near the bark floated snow-white swans, whose breasts were reflected in the clear blue water.

Abudah gazed about him with wonder and rapture, and beheld many other barks sailing to and fro upon the lake. Some were of mother-of-pearl, others of ivory; while over each was spread an embroidered canopy from which streamed bright banners. Beneath the canopies reclined youths and damsels; some of whom were feasting, others singing, and still others playing on lutes and harps.

The eight youths, keeping time with their oars, rowed the bark in which was Abudah to the other side of the lake. There the merchant saw a small bay, the sand of which was white like camphor. The youths motioned him to leave the bark, and he stepped out upon the white sand. Immediately the little boat shot away and joined the others sailing to and fro upon the water.

Abudah then perceived in the distance a lofty palace of transparent whiteness, rising toward the sky. Thither he directed his steps. Arriving there, he saw it to be built of alabaster, with a great door of pearl. He knocked and the door was instantly opened by ten damsels more beautiful than the full moon.

"Welcome, Abudah, fortunate one!" said they. "Welcome

to this Garden of Delight! Here only doth the Talisman of Oromanes shine forth in perfect splendour. Enter and prepare thyself for the happiness that hath long awaited thee."

On hearing these words Abudah almost swooned from excessive joy; but restraining himself, followed the damsels into the palace. They led him through innumerable saloons hung with curtains of rich stuffs embroidered with pictures of the banquet and the dance. On every side he saw skilfully wrought statues of Genii and Fairies plucking flowers or wreathing garlands.

At length they conducted him into a spacious apartment, lighted by a dome, and the floor of which was paved with costly marbles. In the centre of the apartment was a pool into which played a fountain of perfumed water, and a flight of onyx steps led down to the water.

The damsels signed to the wondering Abudah to enter and bathe, whereupon they withdrew. Instantly invisible Afrites prepared him for the bath; and, descending the steps, he plunged into the sweet-scented water.

On returning to the floor of the apartment, he saw to his amazement that his garments had been removed, and in their place lay a magnificent robe and turban. The robe was of rose-coloured satin embroidered with sprigs of myrtle and flowers of pearl, while the turban was adorned with a variety of pearls and jewels. The invisible Afrites arrayed him in these, after which he advanced toward a door at the end of the apartment, and opened it.

He found himself in a lofty saloon having four and twenty windows of gilded lattice-work. The ceiling was of azure colour and on it were inscribed mysterious characters in gold, and the floor was inlaid with ivory and ebony, and spread with saffron. Large perfuming vessels, filled with aloeswood and ambergris, made the air fragrant. Golden lamps and innumerable candles, diffusing the perfume of musk, illuminated all.

In the centre of the saloon was a fountain of bright water

playing into an alabaster basin, over which was a pavilion of crimson brocade. On all sides were hung from the ceiling golden cages, containing birds that sang in melodious chorus.

And as Abudah gazed in rapture about him, a door at the other end of the saloon opening, the ten damsels entered, each richly clothed. Five of them carried tambourines, and these advanced toward Abudah, singing and dancing, and bade him welcome.

The other five damsels spread a silken carpet and soft cushions beneath the pavilion, by the side of the fountain, and sprinkled the air with rose-water infused with musk. They next advanced and, joining the five dancing damsels, led Abudah to the fountain, and seated him upon the cushions. Then all ten damsels placed themselves near him, and clapped their hands. Immediately invisible Afrites entered the saloon, and set forth a delicious repast; and the damsels served Abudah on plates of gold and from cups of crystal. Delicate ragouts, rich pastries, confections, nuts, fruits, and cooling sherbets, followed one another in profusion.

The banquet being ended, one of the damsels arose and fetched a silver basin and ewer, and bathed Abudah's hands, wiping them with a silken napkin. Then all the damsels arose, and together conducted the happy merchant into the garden that surrounded the palace.

The sun was disappearing when Abudah and his ten guides reached the end of an extensive terrace; and he saw rising before him a great dome formed of fresh lilies and roses, and supported by four and twenty pillars of myrtle. The floor of this dome was of green moss, and in the centre were placed two thrones made of ever-living flowers. Jasmines, eglantine, narcissus, anemones, and many other blossoms filled the air with their fragrance, while above the two thrones was spread a canopy of trailing rose-vines.

And as Abudah and the ten damsels entered, the youths and maidens whom he had seen sporting in the barks upon

the lake came thronging toward the dome. Then suddenly Abudah heard the most harmonious music, and a procession of forty white-clad damsels, as beautiful as Houris, approached, scattering violets and roses as they passed. They took their places behind the two thrones, and were immediately followed by forty equally beautiful youths, likewise clad in white, and strewing the ground with myrtle. After them came ten black slave boys, dressed in yellow garments, and bearing aloft a canopy of white brocade beneath which walked a damsel of surpassing grace and loveliness. Her form was as slender as a willow branch, and she was clad in flowing robes of green embroidered with pomegranate blossoms, while from head to foot she was wrapped in a veil of gauze.

Immediately all present bowed themselves to the ground, while she took her place on one of the thrones. She then lifted her veil, and disclosed to Abudah's astonished gaze a face of perfect beauty. Her forehead was more lovely than the moon, her black eyes like stars, her skin white as milk, her lips like coral, and her long dark hair like a cloud of night. At the sight of so much beauty, Abudah stood abashed.

"Where," said she, in a voice of exquisite sweetness, "are the keepers of my Garden of Delight? Bid them present at once before my throne Abudah the merchant of Bagdad, who hath come hither to visit our flowery paradise."

Thereupon the ten damsels led the merchant forward, who, prostrating himself, kissed the ground before the throne.

"Know, O Abudah," said the beautiful one, "that I am a Daughter of the Genii, and these youths and damsels that attend me, are all Afrites and Fairies. Fortunate, indeed, art thou that the Genii of Wisdom have seen fit to convey thee hither upon the iron chest that containeth the Talisman of Oromanes. In this Garden reigneth eternal bliss, and here only may perfect happiness be found. Music and feasting, dancing and singing, while away the hours. Here alone shalt thou find, O Abudah, the keys thou art seeking. Rejoice, for

to-night thou mayest open the fifty locks, and gaze in awe and rapture upon the Talisman!"

Abudah was filled with delight, his eyes sparkled with joy, and he cast himself down once more before the throne.

"Fortunate, indeed, am I!" cried he, "to be deemed worthy to enter thy Garden of Delight! But more fortunate am I to receive from thy hand the keys that will open the iron chest! Therefore have pity on me, and give them to me at once, for I have wandered far and suffered because of them!"

"Have patience, my Abudah," said the Daughter of the Genii, smiling. "Thou shalt open the chest this night, but first must thou pledge thyself to remain forever here. Thou shalt then reign with me over these happy bowers. Mount now this empty throne beside me, and in due time thou shalt receive the fifty keys."

Abudah, his heart overcome with longing, hastened to ascend the throne beside the Daughter of the Genii. Instantly a rich banquet was prepared by the invisible Afrites, and a thousand coloured lamps were suspended beneath the dome. Thus the gay company passed the time with merriment, until the hour of midnight drew near. Then Abudah, who grew momently more impatient to possess the Talisman, besought the Daughter of the Genii to present him with the keys.

"O, my ever-beloved Abudah," replied she, "behold the chest is before thee. Take thou these keys, and enter into immediate possession of the Talisman of Perfect Happiness."

Abudah received the keys with joy; and observing that the iron chest stood before his throne, he hastened to descend and open it. As he touched the locks, one by one they flew wide, until at last not a single lock remained unopened. But no sooner did he stoop to lift the lid than a sudden and awful darkness fell on all the Garden.

He heard a noise like the breaking and rending of great rocks; while the loud thunder roared, and streams of crooked lightning encircled him with horrid blaze. He heard, also, the

shrieks and cries of the once gay Afrites and Fairies, who vanished as the dome fell with a loud crash to the ground.

The angry lightning continued, and Abudah, looking toward the Daughter of the Genii, saw—Oh, most fearful sight! —her once soft form was parching and contracting and growing bony and crooked. Her eyes had lost their lustre, and were become small and fierce. And, lo! Abudah beheld her change into the little yellow Witch leaning upon her crutch, with fury darting from her eyes.

"Wretch as well as fool!" she shrieked, pointing her bony finger at him. "How didst thou dare to seek the Talisman of Oromanes in the Garden of Selfish Delight! Wretch, to forget thy wife and children, and pledge thy soul to remain forever here where evil lurketh as doth the serpent among roses! But now I leave thee to the joy thou hast found. Let this dungeon of horrors be forevermore thy prison."

Thus saying, she struck Abudah with her crutch, and with a hideous cry vanished from his sight. The blow of the crutch filled the unhappy merchant with fearful pains in every limb. Darkness and silence fell on all, and he began to wander about what seemed to be an endless cavern.

### Adventure Third—The Iron Kingdom of Tasgi

Thus it was with the merchant Abudah. He continued to wander for some time about the cavern, groaning with despair. At every step he trod on a venomous creature. Serpents hissed at him, and toads spit malignant fire. At length, bewildered by all these horrors, he sank down upon the slimy floor, and lay there until steep overpowered him.

When he awoke, and found himself still in the darkness of that fearful place, tears ran down his cheeks until they wet his garments. Then suddenly a Voice spoke from a distant recess of the cavern.

"What wretch art thou," asked the Voice, "that remainest

alive in this abode of desolation?"

Abudah arose trembling with fear, and approached that part of the cavern from whence the Voice seemed to come. "Wretch indeed am I!" said he, "who, in his search for the Talisman of Oromanes, hath been left to perish in this place of death!"

"What!" said the Voice. "O miserable human being, didst thou think the road to that noble jewel lay through the Garden of Selfish Delight! No! Rough is the road, and precipitous the climb that leadeth to the Mount on which is preserved the Talisman of Happiness."

"Verily," replied Abudah, "I care not where the Talisman may be; since I am doomed to wander here until I die."

"Nay," said the Voice, "if thy heart be firm enough to face great dangers, and thy body strong enough to bear the fearful climb along the road that leadeth from this place, thou needest not die."

The despairing soul of Abudah was once more filled with hope. "O Genie, or whatsoever thou art," cried he, "in the name of thy master, Solomon, the son of David—on both of whom be peace!—I conjure thee, show me that road. Neither pain nor dangers shall hinder me from following whithersoever it may lead!"

"Take, then, the path before thee," answered the Voice. "At this point the cavern seemeth to descend. Fear not to stoop in order to rise. Follow the descent until thou comest to a winding way that goeth up through the bowels of the Mountain of Tasgi in which this cavern is situated."

The Voice ceased speaking, and Abudah, urged on by eager hope, began the dreadful descent. The farther he proceeded, the deeper became the slime and filth, and a foul odour arose that grew more unendurable at every step. The roof of the cavern bent downward, until Abudah could no longer stand, but was forced to crawl through the slime under arches of rock.

He arrived at length at the distant end of the cavern, and feeling with his hands, found a small opening in the wall, from which issued noisome vapours. He threw himself upon his face, and creeping through the opening, ceased not to proceed until he entered a precipitous passage leading up through the interior of the mountain. The floor of the passage was formed of broken rocks, and the roof rose to a great height.

Abudah was consumed with terror by reason of the thick darkness that filled the place. But remembering the words of the Voice, he continued to advance along the winding ascent. The jagged rocks tore his limbs, so that they bled, and he was forced to remove masses of stone that obstructed his way.

At last he arrived at a flight of stairs hewn in the rock, and as he mounted these, he perceived in the distance a glimmer of light. And he heard, as if from afar, a murmuring noise, that increased as he approached the light, until it sounded like the roaring sea.

When Abudah reached the upper step, he came to another opening through which daylight entered the mountain. At the same moment the noise without became so terrifying that he hesitated to pass through. Then, remembering the words of the Voice, he encouraged his heart, and stooping down began to creep through to the light.

No sooner did the merchant reach the other side than he heard ten thousand voices crying:—

"Peace be to our Sultan Abudah, who cometh forth from the Mountain of Tasgi!"

And as he arose to his feet, and gazed about him, he perceived that he stood at the base of a high black mountain. He beheld before him a multitude of armed men, while beyond them he saw a wide plain filled with black rocks, whereon were built many fortified cities and towers.

At the sight of Abudah, the whole multitude again broke into a shout:—

"Peace and prosperity be to our Sultan!"

Immediately a Grand Vizier, accompanied by a number of grandees and eunuchs, stepped forward and bowed himself to the ground; while a black slave threw a royal robe over Abudah's shoulders, and placed a costly turban upon his head.

The Grand Vizier then commanded silence, and prostrating himself before Abudah, said:—

"O Sultan, live forever! O wonder of mankind! O son of the sacred Mountain of Tasgi! Thou most glorious of all Sultans of earth! Behold thy slaves, whose one desire is to be trodden under thy feet as is the dust of the plain! Thine only is perfect happiness, since thou alone dost possess the chest that containeth the Talisman of Oromanes! Rule, therefore, thine iron Kingdom of Tasgi, according to thy pleasure!"

And as the Grand Vizier ceased speaking, the whole multitude shouted:—

"Peace be to our Sultan! Rule thy slaves according to thy pleasure!"

On hearing these words, Abudah's heart was swelled with conceit and pride. In a haughty manner he set his foot upon the neck of the Grand Vizier commanding that he should escort him at once to the royal palace. Immediately ten black slaves brought forward a throne of ebony, over which was a canopy of gold embroidery. Into this Abudah ascended, and was borne upon the shoulders of grandees of the Kingdom of Tasgi.

He soon saw that he was approaching a vast encampment, composed of pavilions of various colours. One division was of blue; another, of red; another, of green; and still another, of silver. In the centre of this splendid armament stood the royal pavilion, which shone with the lustre of red, gold, and blue velvet, so that it looked more like a palace than a pavilion of war.

Into this Abudah was carried, and placed upon another

throne. He commanded that all should go out from before him, except the Grand Vizier. The rest being gone, the Grand Vizier threw himself before the throne crying:—

"May my lord the Sultan Abudah rule forever over his servant Harran!"

"O Harran," said Abudah, "arise, and declare unto me what is the cause of this great armament; and why the armies of Tasgi are assembled for battle."

At these words the Grand Vizier Harran arose, and stood humbly before the throne.

"Know, O Sultan," said he, "that it is a custom with us yearly to assemble for war. But a few hours since, the Genii, who preside over the Destiny of this valley, removed from us our Sultan Rammasin, and the same Genii bade us await here the coming of our true Sultan, Abudah of Bagdad, the possessor of the Talisman of Oromanes. Hence it is that thy slaves abide thy commands."

"And who," asked Abudah, "are our neighbours on the other side of the mountain?"

"They are the Shakarahs," said the Grand Vizier, "a gentle race, without soldiers, and utterly unable to resist the army of Tasgi, or to defend themselves against the valour of our Sultan. Their territories are upon the seashore, and their cities are great and full of treasure."

"Poor in spirit should I be," said Abudah, "if I continued to permit this weak people to possess that which should belong to the iron Kingdom of Tasgi! Therefore, O Harran, bid the trumpets to sound, and the drums to beat, and let it be proclaimed throughout the camp that the Sultan Abudah will at once revenge the insults which the inhabitants of Tasgi have received from their perfidious enemies."

"I hear and obey," replied Harran with joy, and he hastened and left the pavilion.

Then Abudah clapped his hands, and ten black slaves entered who at his command bathed him, and anointed his

wounds with healing oil. After which they clad him in rich garments, and presented him with weapons suitable for war.

Meanwhile the army assembled, the drums beat like stormy winds, the horses were caparisoned, and all was made ready for the march. The earth trembled beneath the tread of the multitude of men and beasts. And Abudah, bloated with pride, rode forth at the head of his army.

Now, when the Shakarahs beheld the approach of that vast array, and heard the shouts of the soldiers, the beating of the drums, the sounding of the trumpets, and the neighing of the horses, and saw the glitter of the spears, and the waving of the banners, they trembled with terror. Then they sent forth ambassadors to entreat the Sultan of Tasgi to withdraw in peace from their land, and return to his own country.

The ambassadors prostrated themselves before Abudah, saying:—

"Wherefore is our lord the Sultan come out armed against his friends and neighbours the Shakarahs, who, far from doing any harm, have not even thought evil of the people of Tasgi! Verily, if, without knowing it, we have offended in aught, we will make restitution a hundredfold. Let it please our lord the Sultan to renew his peace with us, and return again to his own land."

"Base slaves," answered the enraged Abudah, "it becometh not the mighty Sultan of the iron Kingdom of Tasgi to be taught by such as you! Behold, I am come against you to punish you for insolence, and to give all that ye have as spoil to my faithful servants."

Having thus said, Abudah commanded the ambassadors to be driven from his presence with blows. He then gave orders that the army should attack at once the Shakarahs, and take possession of their lands and wealth.

Thereupon the soldiers, in a fierce rage, fell upon the innocent people, slaughtering some, and expelling others from the country. After which Abudah, laden with spoil, and

driving the grandees of the Shakarahs before him as slaves, returned to the encampment upon the plain before the Mountain of Tasgi.

Scarcely was he again seated on his throne in the royal pavilion, before he summoned his Viziers, emirs, and other officers of his Kingdom.

"O Harran," said he to the Grand Vizier, "know that the iron chest that doth contain the Talisman of Oromanes lieth buried beneath the Mountain of Tasgi. Do thou, therefore, bid the Shakarah slaves dig in the mountain until they find that wondrous chest with fifty locks."

At this command the Grand Vizier turned pale and shook with indignation. He tore his garments and cried out: "Alas! O presumptuous tyrant! Wouldst thou dare to profane the sacred Mountain of Tasgi, that is the abode of the powerful Genii who protect this valley? Know that such an insult will not pass unpunished!"

Abudah boiled with rage at these words. "Take," shouted he, "that rebel Harran, and let his head be severed from his body, and his tongue devoured by dogs!"

Whereupon the other Viziers, emirs, and officers present dragged the Grand Vizier from the royal pavilion, and executed their Sultan's order.

This being done, Abudah arose from his throne, and arming himself, hastened to the mountain. He caused the fainting Shakarahs to dig night and day until they unearthed the iron chest, and conveyed it into the royal pavilion.

Then Abudah inquired throughout the Kingdom of Tasgi for the fifty keys, but found them not. He commanded that every engine of power should be applied to break the locks. But in vain; the chest resisted all endeavours, and would not yield to the utmost force.

Thereupon Abudah sent forth a crier through the cities of Tasgi, who proclaimed, "O ye inhabitants of Tasgi! the Sultan your master will reward with palaces, and untold wealth,

the man who maketh keys that will open the fifty locks of the iron chest that containeth the Talisman of Oromanes."

On that day all the locksmiths of the Kingdom set to work to contrive keys that would fit the locks, but they were unable to do so. But when the shades of night began to fall upon the encampment, there came to the pavilion of Abudah an aged man, who presented the Sultan with a bunch of fifty keys, after which he departed without speaking.

Then Abudah called all his Viziers, emirs, and officers together, and bade one of them open the chest. He endeavoured to do so; and lo! the first lock flew open at a touch. But while the second was being opened, the first closed again firmer than before.

Abudah, puffed with pride and enraged by disappointment, ordered fifty of his soldiers to take each a key, and to open all the locks at the same moment. They did so, and as they were about to lift the lid, a flash of lightning issued from the chest, and reduced them all to ashes.

Abudah, raging with hotter anger, commanded another fifty to take their places, and to open the chest. This they attempted to do, but were immediately reduced to ashes like the first.

Then the rest of the soldiers, perceiving that Abudah was about to command another fifty to open the fearful chest, fled in terror from his presence. And when the officers of his army saw that their Sultan had no power over the Talisman of Oromanes, they no longer feared him, but advanced clashing their spears and shouting for his death.

The unhappy Abudah, expecting every moment to be slaughtered, sprang upon the chest, which soared with him through the air. Stupefied and giddy he sank into a deep slumber, and was wafted far away from the iron Kingdom of Tasgi.

## Adventure Fourth—The Grove of Wisdom

The merchant Abudah awoke, and found himself lying upon the iron chest beneath an overhanging rock, shaded by palm trees. As he gazed before him, he beheld a small rivulet that flowed through a narrow vale, on either side of which were verdant hills. He saw a venerable Sheykh approaching. His white beard descended over his breast, and he leaned upon a staff, while he slowly moved along the vale, directing his steps toward the rock beneath which the merchant reclined.

Abudah arose, and, still wearing the royal turban and magnificent vestments of the Sultan of Tasgi, advanced to meet the Sheykh. And on seeing him the old man bowed himself to the ground.

"O Abudah of Bagdad!" he said, "O Sultan of Tasgi! Thou who deignest to visit this Grove of Wisdom in quest of science, permit Abraharad, the humblest of the sons of knowledge, to conduct thee to the Palace of Learning which our lord Solomon, the son of David—on both of whom be peace!—erected for the investigation of truth. The vale thou perceivest before thee doth lead to the palace, where the fountains of knowledge are unsealed and happiness attained."

Having thus said, the venerable Sheykh led the way, and Abudah, somewhat recovered from his confusion, followed.

"Alas!" thought he, "verily I have wandered blindly seeking happiness in greatness and power! Surely in this Grove of Wisdom shall I discover the true keys that will unlock forever the iron chest, and yield me the possession of the Talisman."

Scarcely had he thought thus than they arrived at the end of the vale, and entered a grove where Abudah beheld before him the Palace of Learning. Its walls were of ebony, with an arched doorway of steel, over which were inscribed, in letters of brass, these words:—

*"O Thou that seekest Wisdom,*
*Leave mankind and hide within these walls;*
*In Knowledge only may Happiness be found!"*

The Sheykh Abraharad knocked upon the door, and immediately it was opened by a black slave boy. They entered, and the Sheykh, taking Abudah by the hand, conducted him through a vaulted passage, the walls and roof of which were of ebony. They ceased not to go on, until they came into a great saloon of black marble, in which were four porticoes, one on each side.

In every portico was a fountain of black stone, having at its four corners lions of brass. And there was placed by each fountain a chair of ebony curiously wrought, whereon was seated an old man, before whom were many books; and on the floor at his feet sat students who read aloud from the books. So it was in each portico.

"Behold, O Sultan," said Abraharad, "the Hall of Learning, where even the mightiest kings of the earth seek earnestly for the wisdom that made our lord Solomon—on whom be peace!—the wisest of human beings. Here may man learn the properties of herbs and roots, and of all kinds of minerals. Here, also, may he contemplate the sun, moon, and stars, and inquire into the laws that guide their courses. But above all, by those processes that are the secrets of the alchemist, he may discover the universal solvent that dissolves all Nature. Therefore, O Sultan, choose thou the science thou desirest to investigate, and I will deliver thee into the hand of the Sheykh who is best skilled in that science, for in knowledge only mayest thou find true happiness!"

"Know, O Abraharad," said Abudah, "that, though I, the Sultan of Tasgi, am desirous of seeking true wisdom in this Grove, yet always my search is for the Talisman of Oromanes. Therefore, do thou, O Abraharad, guide my choice, and declare unto me in what science I may find that treasure."

"The Talisman is the ultimate end of all the researches in this Palace of Learning," replied the Sheykh. "Well it is for the Sultan of Tasgi that he hath met with the Alchemist Abraharad, who alone can unfold to him the secrets of Nature. For who was this Oromanes but the great Magician of Fire, the first alchemist of that powerful element? Descend with me, therefore, O Sultan, into my laboratory, and I will at once show thee the mysteries of my science." Abraharad, having thus said, conducted Abudah through many passages, until they arrived at a door of brass. The Sheykh opening this, Abudah found himself in a small apartment in which were numerous strange instruments, and vials filled with liquids of various colours. And while he gazed about him, the Sheykh set in order his materials. He threw charcoal upon the fire in a furnace, and with bellows blew up the flame. Then he compounded salts, earths, and spirits, mixing them in a crucible; after which he set the vessel on the fire.

"Patience and experiment, O Sultan, are the strength of the alchemist," said Abraharad. "The secret I am now preparing gave to the great Magician Sharmardal the power to dissolve the earth, and reveal hidden treasures. Other secrets I have; one of which I am about to show thee, O fortunate one! Behold!" So saying, the Sheykh Abraharad darkened the laboratory, and immediately Abudah perceived in vivid writing of fire on the wall; these words:—

*"The Sultan of Tasgi shall be satisfied!"*

At this sight Abudah was transported with joy; whereupon the Sheykh said: "Let not this appearance too rashly inspire thy hopes! This luminous writing is but the natural result of my science. Enough! I now see the colours arising in the furnace. Behold the mixture in the crucible! What flashes of red, green, purple, yellow, and white arise from the solvent! Brighter, O Sultan, than the rubies and emeralds of thine empire!"

And Abudah, gazing into the furnace, perceived the most

glorious colours moving in the crucible of Abraharad.

"These elements thou seest," continued the Sheykh, "are fused together by the fierce heat, and thus form my universal solvent. And now all the secrets of Nature will be laid bare before me!"

"Then," cried Abudah joyfully, "the Talisman of Oromanes is mine!"

"That may be possible," replied the Sheykh, "but it will take some time for us to discover where Oromanes, the mighty Alchemist of Fire, hath hidden the treasure."

"Verily," said Abudah, "it is enclosed in the iron chest, whereon thou didst see me seated beneath the rock. With this solvent thou mayest open the fifty locks!"

"Hast thou, then, O Sultan!" cried Abraharad with delight, "the chest of adamant, said to contain the philosophic Talisman, which giveth immortality, riches, honour, and therefore happiness, to the possessor? Let us go at once and with this solvent release the treasure."

"Rather," said Abudah, "will I go and bring it hither, for by its virtue I may be transported whithersoever I desire."

Having thus said, Abudah, hastening forth from the palace, returned through the vale to the rock. And having seated himself upon the chest, at a wish he was conveyed into the laboratory of Abraharad.

The Sheykh, after having viewed the chest with rapture, took forth the crucible from the furnace. He poured the glowing liquid upon the fifty locks, and immediately red flashes issued from the chest. And a bolt of lightning drove violently through the temples of Abraharad and reduced him to ashes.

At this dreadful sight Abudah ran forth from the laboratory in madness, and filled the great saloon with sighs and groans. And even as he wandered about, he beheld another Sheykh of imposing mien advancing toward him from one of the porticoes.

"O miserable Abudah," said the Sheykh, "why wilt thou

neglect to possess the Talisman of Happiness when it is in thy power to enjoy it?"

"And canst thou assure me of this?" asked Abudah once more transported by hope.

"Must not true happiness be seated in the mind?" said the Sheykh. "Cool and moderate thy grief, and follow me. Verily I, Gherar the Philosopher, will heal thy mind which at present is agitated by worldly unrest."

The Sheykh then led Abudah forth to a river that flowed through the grove surrounding the Palace of Learning.

"How delightful," said Gherar, "are the sweet dews that are again arising at the call of the morning sun! The Grove of Wisdom stands refreshed by the cool of night. The day is glorious! Yet all this is vanity! The true philosopher doth not contemplate the outward charms of Nature, but looketh within the mind, and there alone he findeth repose. In short, O Abudah, the philosopher is serene of spirit. Nothing can move or disquiet his calm. He neither feareth nor hopeth. He neither loveth nor hateth. And always he doth bear within his bosom a contentment that is unshaken, because he desireth but to contemplate the wonders of his own mind."

And as the Sheykh Gherar was thus speaking, a fierce tiger burst from a thicket, with eyes sending forth dreadful fires, and mouth red with gore. At this sight, Abudah, crying out with fear, leaped into the river, and swam to the other side. Having mounted the bank, he looked toward the philosopher Gherar, and beheld him running with speed before the tiger, and uttering lamentable cries.

Abudah, terrified lest the tiger should cross the river, hastened to follow a path that led between two hills. And he ceased not to proceed until he reached a wide green plain, whereon he beheld many flocks of sheep feeding. And near the sheep, at the entrance of a cave, he perceived a handsome shepherd reposing on the grass. Seeing Abudah, the shepherd arose., and bowed himself to the ground.

"Welcome, O Abudah," said he. "I bow not to the tyrant of Tasgi, but to the man who hath been taught to search no more for happiness in wealth, or selfish delight, or power, or vain knowledge. Rather I bow to him who searcheth for the wisdom that cometh from Allah, whose name be exalted! Haste, then, to return to the chest and seat thyself upon it, and it will convey thee at last to that place where the Talisman of Oromanes may be found."

"O good and pious shepherd," replied Abudah, "verily I have abused the gifts of Allah, whose name be exalted! Direct me, then, how to reach the chest in safety so that I may at last find true wisdom. I fear to return to the grove, lest the tiger devour me."

"Thou art safe," replied the shepherd, "for the tiger still pursueth Gherar the Philosopher. Yonder is, however, a path that leadeth from hence to a bridge, that will carry thee over the river. Go, and peace be with thee."

Abudah, having thanked the shepherd, departed and soon found himself beneath the rock where stood the iron chest. He cast himself upon it, and immediately the earth rumbled and opened, and the chest sank downward into darkness, and the earth closed again above Abudah's head.

## Adventure Fifth—The Talisman

The merchant remained silent for some time, unable to cry out through fear. Then he perceived that a light, brighter and whiter than day, began to shine about him. He saw that he was still sitting upon the chest, in the centre of a lofty saloon, the walls and floor of which were of crystal, and the roof of pure gold set with sparkling diamonds. On either side were eight and twenty thrones of massive silver arranged against the wall, while at the end of the saloon was a throne of beaten gold.

And as Abudah looked about him in amazement, he saw

lying near him the same small ebony box that had been the cause of all his misfortunes.

Then he heard a sound like thunder, and instantly there stood before him a Genie of terrible but noble countenance, clad in a flame-coloured garment.

"O Abudah, merchant of Bagdad," said the Genie, "behold me, Barhaddon, one of the Guardian Genii, and a servant of Solomon, on whom be peace! Receive at last the fifty keys, and arise and open the iron chest."

At this Abudah hastened, and descending from the chest, took the keys from the hand of the Genie. At his touch the fifty locks opened wide. He lifted the lid, and there flew forth a thousand bright feathers, which covered the crystal floor of the saloon.

"O Abudah," said the Genie Barhaddon, "dost thou understand these things? The feathers are the thousand bright hopes that lie on the top of every man's heart, beneath which are the evil and grasping desires for power, riches, and fame. Not in this black chest wilt thou find the Talisman of Happiness. Do thou now attend in silence on what I am about to do."

Having said thus, the Genie Barhaddon struck with his staff upon the little ebony box, saying, "Thou evil Afrite of Ambition, who loveth to torment mankind, come forth to thy doom."

And at these words the box fell to pieces, and from its fragments came forth the little yellow Witch, leaning upon her crutch, and trembling in every joint.

"Know, O Afrite of Ambition," said Barhaddon, "thou false and evil creature, that thy punishment is terrible! Enter yonder iron chest, and be cast into the roaring sea, and remain under the foaming waves until the Judgment Day."

The witch obeyed, and uttering hideous cries, she entered the chest. Whereupon the lid closed violently of itself, and the fifty locks fastened themselves on. And scarcely had they

done so, when a fierce whirlwind arose, and the chest was taken up with a rushing noise, and disappeared.

Abudah then turned to address the Genie, but he had vanished; and the merchant saw to his amazement that he was no longer in the crystal saloon, but was lying on the divan in his own seraglio in Bagdad.

Thereupon he sat up, and his wife Selima and his children, beholding him, rushed to his side with cries of delight, and embraced him.

"O my beloved husband," exclaimed Selima, shedding tears of joy, "whence hast thou come so suddenly into the midst of thy mourning family? But yesterday at this hour, thou didst disappear mysteriously, and now in the same manner thou art returned! Observe, O my beloved, what but now I found in the hands of our youngest child, who was tossing it as a ball!"

With these words his wife Selima pressed into Abudah's hand a jewel most wonderful to behold. Its colour was red like blood, it shone like the sun, and on its eight sides were inscribed mysterious characters. And while Abudah was contemplating the jewel in silence and admiration, he heard again the sound like thunder and the Genie Barhaddon stood before him.

"Behold, O Abudah," said he, "the Talisman of Happiness! Not in strange and wonderful realms didst thou discover its beauty, but here in thine own home, as a plaything in the hand of thy child! Lay it, therefore, in thy bosom, and never let it leave thy heart. Serve Allah the Compassionate, the Merciful, and remain content in the place where He hath seen fit to put thee. Then always will shine forth the effulgent beauty of the Talisman of Oromanes."

Having thus said, the Genie Barhaddon vanished and left the happy merchant Abudah with the Talisman in his bosom, rejoicing in the midst of his family and friends.

## Continuation of the Fountain of the Genii

So ceased the story of the Genie Barhaddon. Having prostrated himself before the King of the Genii, he arose and once more mounted his silver throne.

"Good Fairy Moang," said the King of the Genii, the children of Guialar, the Iman of Terki, have heard the words of instruction that have fallen from the lips of the servant of Solomon, on whom be peace! Take now Patna and Coulor, and conduct them to the apartment of entertainment; and let them come hither again at this same hour to-morrow in order to listen to the deeds of the Genie Mamlouk."

The Fairy Moang bowed before the throne, and led the children through a golden door into a magnificent apartment hung with curtains of azure silk. Here she placed them upon cushions by the side of a leaping fountain, and set before them a delicious repast. After they had eaten, she conducted them into a garden full of flowers, and trees in which were many birds singing the praises of Allah, the High, the Great.

The children then saw at the end of the garden a grove of beautiful trees laden with fruits of every colour, and beneath which played many boys and girls dressed in blue, violet, pink, and white robes. These beckoned to Patna and Coulor, who, hastening toward the grove, found themselves against a transparent wall through which they could not pass. Tears of disappointment rose to their eyes, but the Fairy Moang approached them and said:—

"Patna and Coulor must possess their souls in patience. After they have been sufficiently instructed by the Good Genii, then may they enter the Garden of Fruits, and play with the Sons and Daughters of the Fairies. But come now,"

added she kindly, "let us spend the night in refreshing slumber, while we await the delightful hour when the Genie Mamlouk will relate his adventures."

So saying, the Fairy led the children to their couches, where they laid themselves down and slept gently until morning dawned. After another delicious repast, she led them once more to the crystal saloon, where the race of the Good Genii were seated upon their silver thrones. And there she placed Patna and Coulor upon the carpet before the golden throne, on which was the King of the Genii, clad in his white robe, and wearing his golden crown.

"Welcome, O good Fairy Moang," said that great Genii, "and peace be upon the children of the Iman of Terki!" Then he cried aloud, "Do thou, O Mamlouk, Guardian Genie, stand forth and relate to these human beings one of thy good deeds."

Hearing this, the children's eyes sparkled, and there arose from his silver throne a Genie of majestic form wearing a crimson garment. Having made his obeisance before the throne of the King of the Genii, he began thus:—

"Attend to my words, O ye race of the Good Genii, and ye human beings. Listen to one of my deeds that hath been in accordance with the precepts of our lord Solomon, the son of David—on both of whom be peace! I will now relate.

# The History of the Sultan Misnar and the Four Enchanters

## The Enchanters

There was in ancient times, in the country of the Persians, a mighty Sultan named Dabulcombar, the lord of all the East. He was possessed of great wealth, and numerous troops and guards. He had no son to succeed him, and the heir to his throne was Prince Ahubal, the son of his brother. The Prince was misshapen of body, and malicious and intriguing in heart. This caused the Sultan much grief, and he often mourned apart.

At length, when Dabulcombar was well advanced in years, there was born to him a son, whom he named Misnar. The Sultan was filled with happiness at this event, and commanded the city to be decorated, the drums to be beaten, and the people to rejoice for forty days. He prepared a magnificent feast to which he invited all the grandees of his Empire. Every one came, except Prince Ahubal, who retired to his palace in disappointment and rage.

Prince Misnar grew to be a youth of surpassing beauty. He was tall and finely formed; his eyes were of brilliant blackness; his eyebrows were arched; his hair was glossy like the raven's wing; and his cheeks were as red as roses. He was learned in all the arts and sciences, and was also skilled in the use of weapons of war. But, what was of more importance to the people of Persia, he was just and generous of mind, and wise beyond his years.

When the Prince reached the age of eighteen, the Sultan

Dabulcombar died, and Misnar succeeded him upon the throne. After the days of mourning were passed, the new Sultan sent forth a decree that all the emirs, officers, and wise men of the Empire should assemble themselves together on a certain day in the Royal Judgment Hall.

The day arrived, and in the hall were present grandees and wise men from all parts of Persia. They were arrayed in state garments of magnificent silks and brocades richly embroidered in many colours, so that the hall resembled a flower garden. The Sultan Misnar was seated upon a throne of ivory overlaid with plates of red gold, and he was clad in splendid robes of cloth-of-gold; while his turban was decorated with large pearls and jewels. Near him stood his Vizier Horam, likewise wearing a rich turban and costly garments.

The grandees and all present prostrated themselves before the throne, and Misnar bade them arise, saying:—

"O ye emirs, officers, and wise men of my Empire, know that I have called you together because more precious to me are your counsels than the mines of Raalconda or the great emerald of Gani! The sages say that 'the reign of the Sultan is established by the experience and knowledge of his faithful subjects.' Therefore, O ye sources of light, and ye fountains of wisdom, advise this day your Sultan how he may best secure himself upon the throne of his father."

The emirs, officers, and all present, hearing these words, were struck dumb with astonishment at the condescension of their lord, and fell prostrate once more before the throne.

"Arise, my counsellors," said Misnar, "listen further to my words. Know that Prince Ahubal, the son of my uncle, is about to rebel against the sovereign power of Persia; for he seeketh to mount the throne through treachery. Guide, then, the steps of your Sultan so that he may establish his just rule in this land."

Thereupon, the Emir Garab, a silver-haired sage whom all men honoured, arose. He bowed himself, and said:—

"I perceive, O mighty Sultan, the dark clouds of evil gathering about the throne of Persia! The wicked Genii are leaguing together to attack our true lord, the Sultan Misnar!"

All present were dismayed at these words, but Misnar alone was unmoved.

"Be not afraid, O my friends," said he. "Know that no rose is without its thorn, nor is life made perfect without trials. Grieve not, then, since prudence and virtue flourish best amid dangers. The security of our Empire will be greater and more lasting, after all lurking evils are driven from it."

At this the grandees and wise men gazed in wonder upon the youthful face of their Sultan, which glowed as if with an inward light. Silence and amazement for a time prevailed. Then arose a venerable Sheykh, whom no man knew, and, advancing to the foot of the throne, he said:—

"Hear, O Misnar, the words of one who knoweth the foul heart of man. Ahubal, the son of thy uncle, hath royal blood in his veins, and his heart is filled with envy of thy power. Never while he liveth shall the throne of Persia be truly thine. Therefore, cut him off in the flower of his youth. Destroy him as one doth crush the deadly adder."

"What!" exclaimed the Sultan Misnar, "old man, dost thou counsel me to shed the blood of my cousin! Verily, Allah —whose name be exalted!—hath not placed me here to establish my rule with cruelty and oppression! Rather doth He require justice and judgment at the hand of his Sultan. As for thee, O thou wicked man, thy bad counsel shall fall upon thine own head!"

As the Sultan Misnar uttered these words, he made a sign with his hand, and the guards advanced with sabres drawn. They seized the Sheykh, and were about to lead him forth to the place of execution, when a sound like thunder shook the hall.

Immediately fire issued from the mouth of the Sheykh, and his whole form changed, and in his place stood a dragon

enveloped in flames. All fled in terror before it, but the Sultan Misnar sat unmoved by fear. He aimed a blow with his sabre at the dragon, and as he did so, he perceived through the flames a hoary Magician seated upon the back of the monster.

"Know, O vain child," said the Magician, "who callest thyself Sultan, that I am the Enchanter Ollomand, thy deadly foe. And ere twice twenty days shall pass, thy cousin Ahubal shall reign upon the throne of Persia."

As the Enchanter uttered these words, the dragon began to hiss, and, rising from the floor, the monster clove the dome of the hall, and disappeared.

Thereupon the Vizier Horam approached the foot of the throne, and addressed the Sultan.

"May the glory of our Sultan be increased!" said he, "and may all workers against his power be destroyed! Verily in this assembly are present other evil spirits. Know, that if our lord the Sultan will call upon the name of Solomon, the son of David—on both of whom be peace!—neither disobedient Marid nor wicked Afrite may remain in this Judgment Hall."

"Then, in the name of Solomon—on whom be peace!"—exclaimed the Sultan Misnar, "I bid all bad spirits depart from this assembly!"

Instantly sulphurous smoke broke forth from the floor, and three hideous forms rose into the air. First on the back of a tiger the fell Enchanter Tasnar soared aloft, his long black locks resembling snakes. Next, on an enormous serpent whose fangs dropped deadly poison, Ahaback the Marid appeared. Him followed, on the back of a horny toad, the malicious Ullin, her eyes darting deadly sparks, and her lean bones wrapped in yellow skin.

Clouds of thick smoke ascended from the floor, and the Enchanters with one shriek rose to the roof of the hall, and, passing through the dome, disappeared.

As soon as they were departed, and order restored, the Sultan Misnar once more addressed the assembly.

"Know, O my counsellors," said he, "that happy is your Sultan, for your number is now tried and cleansed. Therefore let your lord partake of the sweetness of your advice. Say, then, how shall peace and security establish the throne of Persia, and in what manner shall the evil designs of Prince Ahubal be overturned?"

"Far be it from me," said the Vizier Horam, "to utter presumptuous words before the lord of all the East! But the security of the Empire doth require that Ahubal the traitor be not left at large. Let him be removed to a place from whence he may no longer give pain or uneasiness to our Sultan.

"At the springs of the River Ava, on a craggy rock, standeth the strong fortress of Aboul. Thither let the Prince be conveyed by a guard. And there he may lead a most comfortable life, but without power to disturb the glorious and just reign of the Sultan Misnar."

The counsel of the Vizier Horam seemed wise to the Sultan and all present. Thereupon Misnar gave command that Prince Ahubal should be immediately seized and conducted to the Castle of Aboul.

## The Magic Castle of Ollomand

The Sultan Misnar dismissed the assembly, and the guard hastened to carry out his commands. They seized the misshapen Ahubal, and, placing him upon a horse, led him forth from the city, toward the springs of the River Ava.

They journeyed over mountain and valley and desert waste, until at length they arrived at a pass between two high mountains. As they were about to enter it, a party of five thousand horsemen suddenly appeared, brandishing their spears. They attacked the guard, and, after much slaughter, took Ahubal from them, and disappeared through the pass. The guard that remained fell trembling to the ground, and at the same moment the earth clove asunder with an awful

noise, and the Enchanter Ollomand, riding upon his fiery dragon, appeared before them. "Go, O ye cowards," said he, "return to Misnar who calleth himself Sultan, and inform him that ruin and death await him. Tell him, also, that Prince Ahubal hath friends who will shortly place him upon the throne of Persia!" So saying, the Enchanter waved his wand, and disappeared. The guard, arising, made haste to return to the city. So fared it with them.

As for Prince Ahubal the traitor, he found himself being conveyed like lightning through the pass. Soon he saw before him a precipitous rock reaching to the clouds, and on the top of which was built a magnificent castle. Its spires and domes shone like burnished gold, reflecting the rays of the sun. The horsemen placed the Prince at the foot of this rock, and, turning about, rode swiftly back by the way they had come.

Prince Ahubal then perceived a small door to open in the castle wall. Immediately a dwarf came forth, and descended the rock by means of an invisible stairway. He soon reached the side of Ahubal, and placed in his hand a ball of blue silk.

"O Prince, beloved of the Enchanters," said he, "throw this before thee, and follow wheresoever it may lead. So shalt thou discover the secret way that goeth up to the Magic Castle of Ollomand."

Ahubal, filled with eagerness, took the ball, and cast it down before him. It began to roll swiftly up the side of the rock, and the Prince saw before him a winding ascent that appeared as the ball passed along. He followed after, and soon found himself upon the summit of the rock, before the great entrance of the castle. Thereupon the massive door opened groaning on its hinges, and the Enchanter Ollomand came forth.

"O favourite of our powerful Race," said he, "true Sultan of all the East, in whose heart sweet intrigue and craft have ever an abiding-place, enter and behold all my enchantments which are at thy disposal!"

So saying the Enchanter led Prince Ahubal into the castle. They proceeded through a passage guarded on either side by four dragons, and they ceased not to go on until they arrived at a vast court, the dome of which was black and lofty. The floor of the court was of iron, and the great walls of black marble. And there were set roundabout in the walls four hundred gates of brass, a hundred on each side of the court. They were supported by huge brazen hinges. In the centre of the court was a deep and dark pit.

The Enchanter then lifted up his voice and shouted like thunder.

"Appear, O my slaves," cried he, "and expose to the eyes of this human being a part of the riches and wonders of the Castle of Ollomand."

Immediately a gigantic Afrite, as black as jet, rose from the pit in the centre of the court. His head was like a dome; his eyes were like wheels; his teeth like hooks; his ears like shields; and his red lips thick and hanging down. He carried in his hand an enormous club of ebony, which he shook in the air.

The Prince then perceived a long line of Afrites, as horrible as the first, and carrying clubs of ebony, ascending out of the pit. When four hundred Afrites had come forth, each took his place before one of the brazen gates. The Enchanter bade them all strike with their clubs. They instantly did so, and as the heavy clubs fell, fearful sounds arose as though worlds were being rent in pieces. Hearing this, Ahubal, stunned and terrified, fell to the ground.

"Arise!" said Ollomand, "and encourage thy fainting heart by gazing upon the riches and power of thy friend."

The Prince, still stupefied by the fearful sounds, lifted his head and looked about him. He saw that the four hundred brazen gates stood open, and the Afrites were resting on their clubs beside them.

Through the hundred gates at the right of the court he

perceived vaulted chambers filled with bars of red gold and white silver. Through the gates on the left, he beheld bags of money and jewels, piled high beneath rugged arches of unhewn stone. While the open gates before and behind him disclosed rooms filled with instruments of war sufficient to equip a thousand armies. Every weapon of death was there; lances, daggers, knotted clubs, swords, and bows and arrows, lay heaped together in profusion.

At this sight Ahubal shouted with fierce delight, and, arising from the floor, forgot his fears. "Know," said Ollomand, "that with this gold and silver thou mayest corrupt the officers and soldiers of Misnar's army; while with the weapons thou mayest arm them for battle. All that thou seest is due to enchantment; therefore, no human force can prevail against these weapons.

"I behold, by means of my magic art, Misnar's troops flying before thee! I see thee mounted on the throne of Persia! I foresee the triumph of the Race of the Enchanters, who through thee will be enabled to rule the empire of all the East!"

"But," said Ahubal, "what need is there of these treasures and weapons, when thou hast an army of such gigantic slaves, ten of whom would suffice to destroy a million enemies?"

"Alas!" said Ollomand, "know that these Afrites are of the Disobedient Genii who rebelled against their lord Solomon. They serve the Race of the Enchanters, but they have no power to harm or destroy human beings who follow the precepts of Solomon, the son of David, and who are protected by the Genii of Wisdom.

"However, with this gold and silver we may corrupt mankind, and whenever human beings leave following the precepts of virtue, they become our servants. So hence! Let us, in disguise, seek the officers and soldiers of Misnar, and persuade them to abandon their tame Sultan!"

And even as he spoke, the Enchanter Ollomand stamped

with his foot, and a chariot, drawn by four dragons, ascended out of the pit. Into this Ahubal and the Enchanter entered, and a dark cloud covered them. In a minute they were transported to the edge of the royal encampment of Misnar.

Ollomand then touched the dragons with his wand, and they became four camels, laden with merchandise and gold, while the chariot was converted into an elephant. Ahubal became a merchant seated upon the back of the elephant; and Ollomand changed his own form to that of a black slave. Thus they entered the royal encampment, and showed their goods for sale.

Soon the officers and soldiers surrounded them, and sought to buy their wares. Then Ollomand and Ahubal, with honeyed words and secret gifts of gold and jewels, won many to their evil cause. Thus fared it with Ahubal the traitor.

## The Feast of Tigers

As for the guard of the Sultan Misnar, after Prince Ahubal had been taken from them, they made haste to return to the city. They cast themselves down before the royal throne, and related to the Sultan all that had happened from first to last. He then summoned his Vizier, emirs, and other officers of his empire, and when they were assembled, said:—

"Know, O my counsellors, human prudence is too weak to fight against the wiles of the Enchanters. How may we then repel the wicked Ollomand's attacks?"

Thereupon the silver-haired sage, the Emir Garab, arose and bowed himself.

"There is," said he, "in the City of Brass, at the base of the Mountains of Kaf, a palace in which are preserved the Girdle of Opakka, and the Signet Ring of Solomon, the son of David, on both of whom be peace! The girdle giveth strength against the foe, and the ring preserveth from enchantments. Let our lord the Sultan send and secure these treasures, and so save

himself and the Empire of Persia."

"Go at once," said Misnar to his Vizier, "and prepare a great armament to accompany me on my journey to the Mountains of Kaf."

The Vizier Horam answered, "I hear and obey!" and was about to depart and execute this command, when a messenger entered the hall. He cast himself down before the throne, crying: "The troops of my lord the Sultan are deserting to Ahubal the traitor! Many of the chief officers are likewise departed! Unless the Sultan proceed at once to the encampment, the army will melt away as doth the dew of the field before the violent rays of the sun!"

At these words all save Misnar turned pale with apprehension. He, however, gave orders that every one except the Vizier Horam should go out from before him, and they did so.

"O Horam," said he, "I know thy faithful heart. Never may I triumph over the Enchanters unless I possess the Girdle of Opakka, and the Signet Ring of Solomon, on whom be peace! Therefore it is expedient for me to go at once to the Mountains of Kaf, and procure these treasures. In the meantime, do thou, O Horam, place thyself at the head of my troops, and go forth with them into the field, until I return to thee again."

"May all the desires of the Sultan be fulfilled!" answered Horam, "but will not my lord take with him a guard, for the journey is great, over mountains and deserts, and across roaring seas?"

"Nay," replied Misnar, "those who are my slaves here may, when at a distance, become my masters. The diamond in the security of the treasure-house may be safe from thieves, but when it shineth abroad, it draweth envious eyes. Unaccompanied will I go forth. None shall know that I am Sultan."

The Vizier Horam was struck with these prudent words, and bowing in assent, he drew from his bosom an ivory tablet.

"Let, then, my lord receive," said he, "this tablet. If he

glance at it daily, he will see written on its surface all that Horam doeth."

"What!" exclaimed Misnar, taking the tablet from Horam's hand, "is this indeed endowed with such rare virtue!"

"Know," answered Horam, "that my father, when he, through the malice of his enemies, was banished from the presence of the Sultan Dabulcombar, gave unto me this tablet, saying, 'O my son, take this, and whatsoever befalleth thine unhappy parent shall at all times be made known unto thee on this ivory page. And to whomsoever thou givest it, after my death, that friend shall read thereon what Horam my son shall wish to make known.'"

"Good Horam!" said Misnar, much moved, "this gift is of such rare value that thy lord upon his return shall reward thee fittingly. Meanwhile, prepare for me a disguise, as to-night I would depart for the Mountains of Kaf."

The Vizier Horam then made haste to get ready the disguise, and when midnight was come, he led the Sultan forth to the borders of the great Forest of Tarapajan. Misnar immediately plunged into its gloomy depths, and went on his way.

Darkness was all about him, and as he proceeded, he heard in the distance the roaring of beasts, and the cries of night birds. Thus he walked on for some time, until at length he saw through the darkness the shining of a red light; while the sky glowed as if with reflected fire.

He hastened his steps, and soon arrived at a glade, in the centre of which burned a great fire, its flames mounting to the sky. Numerous creatures formed like men, but having feet of goats, and clad in tigers' skins, leaped and danced about.

As soon as these beheld the Sultan Misnar, they advanced, and encircling him, drew him toward the fire. There he beheld a large and stately damsel, likewise clothed in a tiger's skin, and holding in her hand a pronged fork.

"Approach, O stranger," said she, "and join the Feast of

Tigers, in celebration of which this nightly fire is kindled. For eleven days more must it burn, and the Feast be held. On the eleventh night there will come forth from the flames a magic spear, which will give all power to him who doth possess it. Stay thou here, and rule the Feast with me, and the spear shall be thine. With it thou mayest conquer all thy foes."

"Then," exclaimed the Sultan with delight, "here will I abide until the magic spear is mine!"

"Happy man!" said the damsel, smiling, "to end thy search with so little labour! But, O my followers," added she, "bring hither the skin of the tiger, the paw of the lion, and the iron lance, together with the bow that twangeth nightly in the mighty Forest of Tarapajan."

Immediately one of the creatures brought a tiger's skin and threw it over the Sultan's shoulders; a second hung the lion's paw upon his breast; while a third put an iron lance in his right hand, and slung the bow and quiver at his side. Then all the creatures joined hands, and leaped in a circle around Misnar and the damsel.

"Now," said she, when the dance was over, "sound, O my followers, the instruments of brass, and announce to the Moon, and the Stars, and the Sacred Fire, that this stranger is about to swear by the Oath of Tigers, that he will never reveal our rites to mortal man."

"But," said Misnar, "I know not what those rites may be!"

"It needeth not that thou shouldst know," replied the damsel. "Lay thy hand upon thy head, and thy finger on thy lips, and say, 'As the starless night is dark, and as the cave of death is dark, so shall my words continue in darkness concerning the rites of the Feast of Tigers.'"

"And wherefore," asked Misnar, "is this silence imposed? What shall be done to him who sweareth not?"

"To him who sweareth," said the damsel, "the magic spear is given. But him who sweareth not, the Fire and the Tiger devour."

"Then," answered Misnar, "if the punishment of him who sweareth not is so great, surely fearful and evil must be thy rites! Therefore, O ye wicked creatures, in the name of Solomon the son of David—on both of whom be peace!—I command ye to be gone!"

Scarcely had Misnar pronounced these words than all the creatures vanished, and in the place of the damsel appeared the fell Enchanter Tasnar riding on a tiger, and his snaky locks writhing about his head.

"Base and senseless wretch!" cried he, "thy frozen virtue may have kept thee now, but all thy prudence shall not suffice to save thy tottering throne! Know that thou shalt yet feel my scourge! Proceed, then, miserable human being, on thy vain pilgrimage to the Mountains of Kaf." So saying the Enchanter vanished, and the great fire went out.

The Sultan Misnar, filled with joy at his escape, continued his course in darkness through the widely extended Forest of Tarapajan. When the morning dawned, he examined the ivory tablet of Horam, but nothing appeared written thereon.

"Alas!" thought he, "I have placed too much confidence in this man! Perhaps even now, in my absence, he is making himself Sultan of Persia! There needed not the powers of the evil Genii to overthrow my throne!"

And as Misnar thought thus, he perceived an inscription to grow upon the tablet. In lines of red the words appeared:—

*"Horam, the faithful slave of the Sultan of all the East, to Misnar the lord of my heart:—*

*"Know, that after I left my Sultan, while my heart was yet heavy and my eyelids full of tears, I went at once to the royal encampment, and called together the remainder of the army, purposing to lead them against the foe.*

*"But, alas! the presence of my lord the Sultan was not with his troops! They refused to go forth to battle. Even now the officers accuse me, the Vizier Horam, of evil devices against the Sultan. All is confusion. Therefore, may my lord see fit to return at once,*

*and encourage the fainting hearts of his troops, and lead them against Ahubal and the Enchanters."*

When the Sultan Misnar had read the tablet, his heart failed him. He fell upon the ground in despair. "O Misnar! Misnar!" cried he, "the wicked Genii prevail! The Good Genii no longer exist! Wherefore didst thou not swear by the Oath of Tigers, and gain possession of the magic spear!"

And even as he spoke these words, he heard a strange hissing, and the malicious Ullin, riding on the horny toad, appeared before him. "Verily the powers of enchantment do prevail," said she, "since the Sultan Misnar hath abandoned the precepts of Solomon! Henceforth must thou serve me. Quit this form, and assume that of a yellow toad."

Immediately Misnar became a reptile of a hundred years of age. He found himself in a thicket of deadly nightshade, while near him on a stone reposed a large red toad.

"Art thou what thy form bespeaketh," said the Red Toad in a melancholy voice, "or, like me, the victim of enchantment?"

"I am Misnar, the Sultan of all the East," replied he, "and this form was inflicted upon me by the wicked Ullin."

"One event hath happened to us both!" returned the Red Toad. "Nevertheless, to preserve our lives, let us leave this noxious thicket, and seek the pleasant shade of the fragrant cinnamon." So saying he led the way, and Misnar followed. Soon the Sultan perceived a cinnamon tree, under which sat a bright blue toad, with gold marks upon its head. The Red Toad, approaching, bowed low, and said:—

"Where, O Princess, is the latest victim of Ullin's rage?"

"He was but now basking in the sun," replied the Blue Toad, "and I aroused him. He cometh hither."

Misnar then perceived a fourth toad, grey and aged, crawling slowly toward the tree.

"Welcome, O sage being," said the Red Toad; "come hither and rest in this fragrant spot, while I relate to this

stranger the story of my wretched destiny."

The three toads then arranged themselves respectfully before the Blue Toad, and the red one began thus:—

### Story of the Red Toad—Mahoud, the Jeweller of Delhi

Know, O my friends, that I was not born a toad, and my story is wonderful! My name is Mahoud, and I am a jeweller and the son of a jeweller. My father was the chief of the merchants of Delhi, and Allah—whose name be exalted!—blessed him with no other child besides myself.

When I reached the age of manhood, disease attacked my father, and he felt sure of death, so he summoned me to his couch, and said:—

"O my son, I leave houses, and goods, and a large stock of gold and silver ornaments. All these have I acquired by hard toil that thou mightest reap the fruits of my labours. Therefore, O my son, act prudently. Obey the precepts of Solomon, on whom be peace! Company not with wicked persons. And may Allah the Bountiful grant thee his ready relief!"

Having thus said, my father died. And after the days of mourning were past, I entered my shop with impatience to examine my goods. I opened coffer after coffer, and saw such quantities of brilliant diamonds and pure pearls, as well as glowing rubies and other jewels, that my heart was transported with joy. I saw also chests containing great numbers of necklaces, and earrings, and other ornaments of gold and silver, all set with large gems suitable for Sultanas. There, appeared to be no end to my riches.

I then returned to my house, and arrayed myself in magnificent garments, after which I made a feast for the sons of the merchants. They became my companions, and daily I placed before them delicious foods and drinks, and we made merry together. This continued for two years, during which time I neither bought nor sold, nor even opened my shop.

At last all my gold, jewels, and other wealth were gone, and I was forced to sell my houses and slaves to pay my debts; after which I repaired to my companions for help. But they only laughed at me, and drove me from their doors with blows.

Stung with despair, and reflecting on my folly, I clothed myself in rags, and wandered forth a beggar on the streets. At last I sat down before the door of a rich young man, named Benasker of Fez, who, like myself, seemed to be squandering all his fortune upon the false ones of earth.

I had not sat there long before Benasker came forth, surrounded by his boon companions, who were the same sons of the merchants who had reduced me to poverty. I cast myself down at his feet, and related to him how I had made merry with these false friends, who had proved my ruin. I begged him to save himself while there was yet time.

The sons of the merchants, when they heard me speak thus, would have struck me with their sabres, but Benasker raised me tenderly from the ground, and said:—

"Verily, what thou sayest I know to be true! I am seeking for a friend. Therefore arise, and I will test thee. Enter, and my servants shall clothe thee, and thou shalt live at ease. Only thou must first pledge thyself never to reveal what thou mayest see or hear transacted in my house."

Without reflecting, I took the oath, and Benasker, seizing me by the hand, said to his companions, "Go hence, ye servile race of flatterers! I have tested you all and found you wanting! This man alone is worthy of my regards!"

The sons of the merchants were thunderstruck at hearing him speak thus, and renewed their protestations of regard. But Benasker ordered his slaves to drive them from his door. They did so, after which he led me into his house. We passed through many passages hung with rich curtains, and at last arrived at a sumptuous saloon; seeing which I cast myself again at his feet, and thanked him for all his favour. Thereat

he smiled, and raising me gently, clapped his hands, and summoned two black slaves. At his command they led me to the bath, and put silken garments upon me. They then conducted me into a garden full of sweet-scented flowers, and fragrant fruits, and trees wherein were many singing birds.

Benasker advanced to meet me, and taking me by the hand, drew me to the side of a fountain. There we reclined on soft cushions, and feasted and made merry till midnight. Then we retired to our couches, and slept till morning.

Thus matters continued for some time. Each day we entered the bath, dressed ourselves in fine raiment, and feasted and drank. But on the nineteenth day, as the sun was setting, Benasker met me with a clouded brow.

"What, O my friend," asked I, "is the cause of thy grief? Shall not Mahoud share alike with thee the smiles and frowns of Destiny? Therefore, confide to me the cause of thy sorrow."

"O Mahoud," said he, "is it not the full of the moon?"

"It is," said I, smiling.

"Then the fate of thy friend," answered he, "is tonight dependent on the favour of the stars! To-night must I put thy friendship to the test. If Mahoud prove false, then will despair rend my soul."

"O Benasker," said I, "Mahoud may be unfortunate, but he cannot be unfaithful. What is this dreadful secret that causeth thee to doubt thy friend?"

"That I may not tell thee now," answered he. "When the stars have returned with their glimmering light, then will I inform thee."

So saying he led the way to the bath, where he put on a robe of crimson brocade, and perfumed himself with rare essences; after which he presented me with a pot of black ointment and a slave's habit, saying, "Mahoud must for the moment be a black slave, therefore take this ointment and stain thy face, and put on this habit."

I did as he commanded, wondering much thereat. And

when I was dressed, Benasker, taking a lighted censer in his hand, conducted me through many apartments that I had never seen before. At last we arrived at a vault, into which we entered. From the ceiling was suspended an alabaster lamp, and in the floor I beheld a trapdoor to which was fastened an iron ring.

Benasker trimmed the lamp and lighted it, and threw incense on the fire in the censer.

"O kind Mahoud," said he, "faithful one, take hold of the iron ring and lift the door."

I attempted to do so, but my limbs trembled with such violence that I was unable to lift it. Seeing this, Benasker burst into a rage, and drawing a whip from his bosom, struck me with it, saying, "Wretch, who hath pledged thy soul to me, obey, or become my slave forever!"

Terrified and thunderstruck at the fierceness of his manner, I redoubled my efforts, and lifted the door. What was my amazement to perceive beneath the trap a beautiful damsel lying asleep upon an ivory couch.

Benasker muttered some strange words, and instantly a huge Marid, as black as coal, rose through the floor, carrying in his hand a naked sword.

"O Ahaback," said Benasker, "do thy duty."

The Marid, thereupon, descended beneath the trapdoor, and lifting the couch on which was the damsel, placed it before Benasker. Then the Marid vanished through the floor.

"O Mahoud," said Benasker, "I will retire into yonder closet. Do thou open this vial and pour its contents into the mouth of the sleeping damsel. But take care that thou do not touch so much as the hem of her robe, or thou diest."

He handed me, as he spoke, a small vial filled with a blue liquid, and entering a closet, closed the door. I drew the stopper from the vial, and poured the contents into the damsel's mouth. She immediately sat up, and seeing me, began to wring her hands and weep.

I was dumfounded by her beauty. Her hair was long and black, and enveloped her form like a veil. Her eyes were large and dark. Her skin was white like alabaster, and her mouth red like a pomegranate flower. She wore upon her head a crown of gold set with pearls and jewels, while her robe was of yellow brocade embroidered with threads of silver.

And as I gazed upon her, Benasker spoke from the closet. "O beauteous Hemjuneh, Princess of Kashmir," said he, "art thou now ready to become my bride? If so this enchantment shall be at an end, and thou shalt rule over my heart and wealth."

"Wretch!" replied the Princess, "who stole me from my palace on my wedding night! Never shall I become thy bride, nor do I fear thy power, since the good Genie Mamlouk will in due time release me from this cruel fate."

"Haughty Princess! Ungrateful creature!" exclaimed Benasker, "know that though the Genie Mamlouk will not permit me to gaze upon thee without causing thee to fall into deep slumber, yet will Ullin help me, her faithful servant. Never shalt thou be released until thou do consent to wed me."

"Infamous man!" cried the Princess, "rather would Hemjuneh die the most dreadful of deaths than become the bride of one who serveth the malicious Ullin."

At these words, Benasker rushed from the closet, his eyes rolling with rage, but no sooner did his glance fall upon the Princess than she fell back in deep slumber upon the couch. Immediately the Marid appeared, and taking up the couch, descended with it beneath the trapdoor, which closed above his head with a roaring sound.

Benasker then beckoned me to follow, and led me forth through the many apartments to the garden. "Go," said he in a hollow tone, "withdraw to the bath, and remove from thy face the black stain. But beware lest thou reveal to any man what thou hast witnessed. If so, a fearful death awaiteth thee."

I hastened to the bath, and removing the stain, put on my own garments.

"What!" thought I to myself, "shall this wicked man keep forever the beautiful Hemjuneh in confinement beneath the trapdoor? And shall she remain in the custody of that hideous Marid?"

And even while I thought thus, a scroll fell from the dome to the marble pavement of the bath. I lifted it: up, and read therein:—

*"Mahoud! Mahoud! Know that because of men's faults, the evil Genii and the Enchanters have sway! Over the servants of Solomon,—on whom be peace!—they have no power. Even now, Mahoud, thou art in the house of a vile magician, to whom thou art bound by a thoughtless vow! And unless the Genii Mamlouk aid thee, thou wilt perish. Likewise, Hemjuneh, Princess of Kashmir, hath departed from the precepts of the wise, and she may be released from enchantment only after much suffering. Yet, Mahoud, thou mayest help her. Take this scroll and return to the vault, and strike with the scroll upon the trapdoor."*

I hastened to do what the writing commanded, and, after passing through the many apartments, arrived at the vault. I entered, and struck the trapdoor with the scroll. Immediately it opened of itself, and the floor of the vault clove asunder, and the Marid Ahaback rose up.

"O Ahaback," said I, "do thy duty."

He descended beneath the trapdoor, and returned bearing the couch with the Princess upon it; after which he vanished as before. At the touch of the scroll, she awoke and sat up, and began to wring her hands and weep, while I prostrated myself before her.

"O Princess," said I, "no longer have fear, for I am sent by the Genie Mamlouk to save thee."

"Alas!" said she, "art thou what thou seemest, or art thou that wicked Benasker in another form? Rest assured, cruel man, if thou art he, that never will I become thy bride! Alas,

would that I had wedded the Prince of Georgia, then I should not have suffered such evil enchantment!"

"O most adorable Princess," said I, "know that thy slave Mahoud will gladly give his life to save thee! Arise, and let us flee from this evil mansion while there is yet time."

"Nay," replied the Princess, "thou canst not release me unless thou art indeed the Magician Benasker. But if thou art Mahoud, the servant of the Genie Mamlouk, leave this house immediately, and inform the Chief Cadi of this city of my distress."

Forgetting my oath to Benasker, never to reveal his secrets, I rose to my feet, saying, "This moment will I fly to the Cadi, and acquaint him with all that this evil man hath done unto thee; and he will come hither with his guard, and save thee!"

Scarcely had I uttered these words, when I saw Benasker enter the vault. The Princess shrieked, and I was so terrified by his appearance that I nearly sank to the floor. What was my amazement, when he advanced and fell at my feet.

"O Mahoud," said he, "friend of my bosom, and partner of my secret hopes! Pity Benasker, over whose heart love hath sway! Know, if thou wilt give me the lovely Hemjuneh, that wealth and fame shall be thine in abundance! And thou shalt dwell in a palace for the remainder of thy life!"

"O Mahoud," cried the Princess, "heed not his wicked offers, for if thou yield to his persuasion, thou wilt become subject to his magic power!"

"Behold," said Benasker, rising and baring his bosom, "strike, my friend, this already injured heart, and end my miserable existence! Yet," added he, in a softer voice, "to show thee that Benasker can be generous, take the Princess and lead her forth in safety from my mansion. But, O my friend, leave with me the magic scroll to protect me from the wrath of Ullin, for when she findeth her prisoner gone, she will slay me."

Overjoyed at this, and not heeding the warning cries of the Princess, I placed the scroll in Benasker's hand. Immediately he vanished from my sight, and in his place stood the Enchantress Ullin, her eyes sending forth malicious sparks.

"Fool," said she, striking me with her wand, "quit this form, and take that of a red toad."

Thereupon I found myself in the body of a reptile, sitting in a thicket of deadly nightshade, while near me rested the Blue Toad weeping sadly. Together we sought the protection of this fragrant cinnamon tree, and for the space of two moons we have dwelt here alone, until a few hours ago when this Grey Toad was added to our company.

Such, O friends, is the story of my wretched destiny.

Thus Mahoud, the jeweller of Delhi, ceased speaking.

"Thy adventure," said Misnar, "is fearful and wonderful! And I perceive that thy misfortune and mine were caused by our disobedience to the Good Genii.

"But, Mahoud, permit me to ask, what hath become of the lovely Hemjuneh, Princess of Kashmir. Do not wonder at my solicitude, for the mention of her name maketh my heart to throb with undue emotion. How is it possible that such a perfect being could come under the power of the wicked Enchanters?"

"O Sultan of Persia," replied Mahoud, "the Princess of Kashmir is a fellow-sufferer with us. Behold her near thee, she is the Blue Toad!"

At these words tears ran down the Blue Toad's cheeks, and Misnar bowed his head before her.

"O Princess," said he, "whom a severe enchantment hath deprived of the most exquisite of forms, permit me to request thee to relate the cause of all thy sorrows."

"O most illustrious of Sultans," replied the Princess, "I will obey thy command, though the knowledge of my fault is grievous, and the confession thereof filleth me with shame."

"I doubt not," replied Misnar, "that the delicacy of the

Princess of Kashmir causeth her to hold as a fault that which the world esteemeth her perfection! Since, however, Destiny hath placed us here to suffer the same wretched state, if the Princess will confide her story to the heart of Misnar, she shall find solace in a friend."

At this the Blue Toad bowed her head, and sighing deeply, began:—

### Story of the Blue Toad—Hemjuneh, Princess of Kashmir

Know, O men, I, likewise, was not born a toad. I am, indeed, the Princess Hemjuneh, the daughter of the mighty King of Kashmir.

My father loved me with great tenderness, and I spent my childhood in his seraglio, surrounded by every token of affection. When I reached the age of twelve years, he built for me a magnificent palace of blue stone, and in it put fine furniture, beautiful ornaments, and many black and white slaves. And in this palace I passed a most agreeable life.

Many Kings and Princes sought me in marriage, but I said: "O my father, I have no wish to marry. Let me live in happiness in my blue palace."

But the more reluctant I became to marry, the more did the Kings and Princes press their demands for my hand. One day, as I sat alone in my apartment, an old woman, leaning on a staff, suddenly appeared at my side. She placed in my hand a package wrapped in blue silk, and when I turned to speak to her she was gone.

Filled with curiosity I opened the package, and, lo, it contained a handkerchief of fine linen on which was painted the portrait of a handsome young man. His eyes were of brilliant blackness; his eyebrows were arched; his hair was glossy like the raven's wing; and his cheeks were as red as roses. As I looked on him, my heart was so overcome that I almost swooned. I then folded the handkerchief, and placing it in my

bosom, resolved never to wed any Prince except him whose portrait I now possessed.

I kept my resolve, and refused with anger every offer made me. Imagine, therefore, my despair, when one day the King my father entered my apartment, and said:—

"O my daughter, it is my duty to listen no longer to thy refusals. I am about to marry thee to a husband both noble and rich. So prepare at once to receive the Prince of Georgia."

I fell at my father's feet, weeping and entreating, but he would not hear me, and departed. Soon my mother arrived and sought to comfort me, saying:—

"The Prince of Georgia is a handsome man, tall and fine of form, and of a joyful and wise heart. He hath heard of thy beauty and goodness, and loveth thee tenderly. Receive him with kindness, or he will die of sorrow."

But I would not listen to my mother, and wept and tore my hair.

Thereupon my mother left me, and my friend and companion the damsel Eloubrou entered, and embraced me. "Confide in Eloubrou," said she, "the cause of thy dislike to the Prince of Georgia. He is a splendid man, handsome as the shining full moon, and richer than all the Sultans of earth."

So I told her what had happened, from first to last, but I did not show her the handkerchief.

"My Princess," said she, "the heart of Eloubrou is breaking because of thy sorrow! I will seek thy mother and relate to her this strange occurrence. Perhaps she may persuade the King thy father, so that he will relent, and send back the Prince of Georgia to his own land."

While she was speaking thus, I observed the same old woman, who had given me the package, approach my couch.

"Trust to me, Hemjuneh," said she, "and the Prince of Georgia shall seek in vain for his bride."

The faithful Eloubrou, hearing this, shrieked, and, clapping her hands, summoned the slaves of my seraglio. They

immediately rushed in with sabres drawn, and would have seized the old woman, but she waved her staff and Eloubrou and the slaves were rendered motionless.

"O most adorable Princess," said the old woman, "give me but thy hand, and I will deliver thee from the tyranny of the King thy father."

"What!" cried I, "shall I trust to a stranger, who cometh by stealth into my apartment!"

At this the old woman smiled maliciously. "I hear," said she, "the cymbals playing, and the drums beating, that summon the people to the marriage feast. Farewell, O bride of the Prince of Georgia, I leave thee to thy fate! But if thou hadst a brave soul and loving heart, soon shouldst thou see the youth whose portrait is painted on the handkerchief."

And even as she spoke, I heard from without the loud sound of the cymbals, trumpets, drums, and other musical instruments, and the shouts of the people as they decorated the city for the feast. I was seized with despair, and without reflection gave the old woman my hand.

She blew a vapour from her mouth, and we rose in a cloud, and I swooned. When I recovered my senses, I found myself in a well-furnished apartment, while a youth of evil countenance was standing before me.

"O charming Hemjuneh," said the youth, "may I hope that my service will soon be requited?"

"Alas!" said I, "what service hast thou rendered me? Who art thou, bold man, that presumeth to stand in the presence of the Princess of Kashmir?" Then I clapped my hands and cried: "Eloubrou! Faithful Eloubrou! Where art thou? Where is Piksag, the chief of my eunuchs? Where are my slaves? Where is the guard of my seraglio?"

"O my Princess," answered the youth, "tire not thyself by calling for them. They are in the distant Kingdom of Kashmir, and thou art in the mansion of Benasker of Fez."

"O miserable man!" said I. "Speak! Tell how I came to be

in thy mansion."

"Know," replied he, "that the fame of thy beauty reached this city, and I set forth and journeyed to the Kingdom of Kashmir, resolved to see thee or die. I sought the Enchantress Ullin, and through her magic was enabled to enter thy seraglio in the disguise of an old woman. By means of the portrait on the handkerchief I fired thy heart to rebel against the commands of the King thy father. When thou didst yield to my persuasion, thou didst come under the power of Ullin, who transported us hither. And this day hath the Enchantress fulfilled her promise, and given the lovely Hemjuneh to be the bride of Benasker."

"Wretched merchant!" I exclaimed. "Talk not so boldly. Go at once and inform the Sultan of this city that the daughter of the King of Kashmir commandeth that he return her to her father."

"Nay, haughty Princess," replied Benasker, with a sneer, "never mayest thou depart from my mansion without my consent. I go soon to call the Cadi and witnesses to our marriage, but before I do so, I must fulfill my promise to the Enchantress Ullin."

With that, in spite of my cries, he carried me through many apartments to a distant vault, where he seated me on an ivory couch. He next trimmed and lighted a lamp that hung from the roof, and sprinkled incense on the flames. Thereat the walls shook, and the malicious Ullin appeared riding on her horny toad. At the same moment a bright light filled the vault, and a Genie of majestic form, clad in crimson garments, stood before us.

"Unhappy Princess!" said the Genie, addressing me; "I am Mamlouk, thy guardian, but, alas, thy imprudence hath weakened my power to protect thee. If thou hadst not yielded to the persuasions of the false old woman, Ullin could not have brought thee here. Since thou hast come of thine own will, I cannot remove thee."

"Then," said Benasker, with fierce joy, "Hemjuneh is mine, and Ullin hath not deceived me!"

"Nay, wretch!" replied the Genie Mamlouk, "the Princess shall never be thy bride. She is reserved for the Prince of Georgia. Though I may not remove her hence, since she came with thee of her own will, I may at least protect her from thy persecution."

Then, turning to me, the Genie said, "As for thee, beloved Hemjuneh, no force shall work thy ruin without thy consent. Henceforth whenever Benasker shall gaze upon thee, thou shalt fall into deep slumber, from which thou canst awake only at the full of the moon. Do thou remain faithful and resolute, and in due time the Good Genii will release thee from enchantment."

At this Ullin gave forth hissing sounds. "Ah!" cried she, "thou enemy of our Race, behold how I will circumvent thy curse!"

And with that she stamped her foot, and a hideous Marid, as black as coal, rose through the floor, and at the same moment a trapdoor appeared in the pavement of the vault.

"O Ahaback," said Ullin, "convey this damsel beneath yon trapdoor, and guard her well until Benasker call. Serve him henceforth, as thou hast served me."

"Wait, slave," commanded the Genie Mamlouk, "the enchantments are not complete. There is yet a moment left. Therefore thus shall it be. I decree that only at the full of the moon may Benasker be able to discover this vault, and that he may not lift the trapdoor, except by the aid of a friend."

So saying the Genie Mamlouk touched me with his staff, and I immediately fell back upon the couch, and deep slumber seized on my senses. What happened afterward I know not.

When at last I resumed consciousness, I found myself awakened by a liquid of peculiar flavour which was being poured into my mouth. I opened my eyes and beheld a black slave standing by me, and at the same moment the voice of

the detested Benasker issued from the closet. I was filled with terror and began to wring my hands and weep.

What occurred thereafter, O illustrious Misnar, thou hast already heard from the lips of Mahoud, the jeweller of Delhi.

At the moment that Mahoud became the Red Toad, the Enchantress Ullin transformed me into the Blue One. In a second, I found myself seated beneath the deadly nightshade, with the Red Toad by my side.

Such, O Sultan, was my fault, and its terrible punishment. And know, that if I had obeyed my father, and married the Prince of Georgia, all this would not have happened. Therefore I have vowed that if the Good Genii will rescue me from enchantment, I will, on my return to the Kingdom of Kashmir, give my hand to the Prince of Georgia."

And as she ceased speaking, the Princess sighed and wept.

At this a breeze shook the leaves of the cinnamon tree, and music like the singing of a thousand sweet birds filled the air, and the Genie Mamlouk appeared.

"O repentant Princess!" he said, "return to thy original shape!"

And at these words, the Blue Toad vanished, leaving the other toads filled with amazement.

"As for thee, Misnar, and thy companions," continued the Good Genie, " be restored once more to thine own forms, and henceforth depart not from the precepts of our lord Solomon, the son of David, on both of whom be peace!"

Instantly Misnar found himself in human form, walking through the mighty Forest of Tarapajan. The sun was shining, and by his side was Horam, his Vizier, and a young man of handsome countenance.

## Story of the Grey Toad—The Vizier Horam

The Sultan Misnar, in a transport of joy, embraced his Vizier.

"O Horam," cried he, "how camest thou hither? And how doth the army of my empire prosper?"

"Know, O lord of my heart," replied Horam, "that but a moment since I was the Grey Toad. And the story of my enchantment is this, and it is wonderful!

"The Sultan had scarcely plunged into the Forest of Tarapajan, and the sun of Persia was thus withdrawn, when I hastened to the royal encampment. I put what remained of the host in battle array, and led it forth to meet Ahubal the traitor, but the soldiers refused to fight without command from their Sultan. The officers rushed toward me in a body demanding to see their lord, and threatening me with death. There was a great tumult, and my heart failed me through fear. Without waiting for aid from the Good Genii, I escaped into the royal tent, and put on the habit of a slave. In this disguise I passed through the encampment, and entered the Forest of Tarapajan.

"No sooner had I done so than I repented of my folly. 'What have I done,' thought I to myself; 'I have fled from my post, and proved disloyal to my lord! Far better had I died a thousand deaths, than thus to have deserted ingloriously!'

"I then endeavoured to return to the encampment, but the farther I went, the more impenetrable became the forest, until at last I could proceed no longer. Suddenly the earth shook, and my feet grew fixed to the ground, and the malicious Ullin rose before me, sitting upon the back of her horny toad.

"'What prudence!' said she. 'What discretion is Horam's! How bravely doth he lead his master's troops against the foe! How happy is Misnar in such a faithful servant! Verily, Ullin knoweth how to reward virtue! Become, therefore, a reptile like the one beneath me. Depart from the Forest of Tarapajan, and join the rest of thy kind, who have gone before thee!'

"As she spoke, the Enchantress breathed upon me with

her poisonous breath, and I fell to the ground crawling like a toad before her. She then waved her wand, and sleep overpowered me. When I awoke, I found myself sitting between the Princess of Kashmir, and Mahoud the jeweller of Delhi; both of whom were, like myself, in the form of toads. Such, O Sultan, was the cause of my enchantment."

"And who," asked Misnar, "is this young man that walketh beside me?"

"He," replied the Vizier Horam, "was the Red Toad, Mahoud the jeweller of Delhi."

At these words the young man cast himself down at Misnar's feet.

"Let my lord," said he, "command his slave Mahoud, and he will go to the ends of the earth, even to the Mountains of Kaf, to secure the treasures that will preserve the Empire of Persia."

"Arise, Mahoud," said Misnar sadly. "Know that the real treasures are not the Magic Girdle and the Signet Ring. The true girdle that overcometh all enemies is a brave, honourable, and believing soul; while stronger than the Signet Ring that preserveth from enchantment are the precepts of Solomon, on whom be peace! Let us, therefore, return to the encampment, and strengthen the failing hearts of our soldiers, and, with the aid of the Good Genii, the servants of Solomon, lead forth the army and crush the Race of the Enchanters."

## The Enchanted Pavilion

So saying, the Sultan Misnar hastened forward and led the way. Soon he and his companions reached the border of the forest, and beheld the whole encampment spread out before them. As they advanced toward it, they saw upon its edge a splendid pavilion rising toward the sky. It shot forth a thousand rays of coloured light, dazzling the eyes.

They soon arrived at the pavilion, and saw that it stood

upon a carpet of cloth-of-gold, and its canopy was of purple velvet embroidered with wreaths of silver flowers. Its pillars were of burnished gold that reflected the light of the sun, while the entire pavilion was studded with sparkling jewels that sent forth dazzling rays. Above the entrance were inscribed these words:—

*"O thou with a firm heart!*
*Mamlouk biddeth thee enter!"*

Having read this, Misnar and his companions, unperceived by the soldiers, entered the pavilion. They saw at the upper end a throne of ivory decorated with gold and pearls and jewels; and on either side of the door stood an ebony couch. On the couch to the right were displayed a magnificent royal turban and robe; while on that to the left were garments suitable for a Vizier and his attendant. The Sultan and his companions clad themselves in these, after which Misnar mounted the throne.

"Go," said he to Horam, "and proclaim throughout the camp that the Sultan of Persia is once more restored to his people. Bid all the officers assemble themselves before me."

Horam replied, "I hear and obey," and went forth from the pavilion.

Immediately the soldiers all rejoiced, and the drums of gladness were beaten, while the officers assembled, prostrating themselves before Misnar's throne.

"O my officers," said he, "whence came this splendid pavilion in which I am?"

"O Sultan of the age," replied they, "we know not whence it came. But an hour since, sweet music sounded, and the pavilion rose from the ground. Over its entrance were inscribed these words:—

*"'This is the royal tent of the Sultan Misnar.*

*Let none enter till he call.'"*

"Verily," exclaimed Misnar, "it is the gift of the good Genie Mamlouk! And with his aid we shall destroy the Race of the Enchanters. Therefore, go ye forth, O my officers, and put the host in battle array. Arm the men, caparison the horses, put on the backs of the elephants the turrets for the archers, and let the loud trumpets sound."

The officers did so, and the vast army gathered upon the plain. The drums beat, the trumpets sounded, the horses neighed, and the earth shook. The Sultan Misnar, completely armed, rode forth at the head of his troops.

The soldiers of Prince Ahubal rushed forward to meet them, and at the same moment the Enchanters Ollomand, Tasnar, Ahaback, and Ullin, on their monsters, were seen hovering in the air.

The battle raged, the soldiers shouted, the archers shot from the turrets. The cymbals played, the spears glittered, the sharp scimitars flashed, and the cries of the wounded filled the air.

The battle waxed fiercer, and the four Enchanters threw fiery darts upon Misnar's host. Dread entered the hearts of his soldiers, and they ran to the right and the left. Then, filled with fear of the Enchanters, they fled to the mountains.

Thereupon the Vizier Horam, and Mahoud the jeweller of Delhi, led the Sultan Misnar in safety to the Forest of Tarapajan. And they seated themselves beneath the trees, while all but Misnar wept.

"Weep not, my friends," said he, "the Good Genii are on our side, and will yet aid us. Soon ye shall see the tide of battle turned, and thy Sultan seated once more upon the throne of his father."

So fared it with Misnar and his host.

As for the misshapen Ahubal, and the four Enchanters, they exulted in their victory, and took possession of the royal

encampment. And as soon as the Prince saw the splendid pavilion, blazing with the light of jewels, his eyes shone with greedy joy.

"Come," said he, "let us enter here, and feast today! When the morrow cometh, we will pursue this wretched Misnar, and destroy the remainder of his army."

Thereupon they entered, and Prince Ahubal gave orders that a sumptuous banquet should be prepared. And they sat down, and ate and drank until midnight came.

Then suddenly red flames leaped from the floor of the pavilion, and consumed the feast. Thereat Prince Ahubal and the Enchanters shrieked with fear, and endeavoured to escape. But before they could do so, the flames spread, leaping higher and higher, and they were all reduced to ashes. Then the pavilion vanished, and was seen no more.

So fared it with Ahubal the traitor and the Race of the Enchanters.

As for the officers and soldiers of Ahubal's army, seeing this, they trembled and fell to the ground. At the same moment the Sultan Misnar, with his companions, issued from the forest, and entered the encampment. He called upon the soldiers to submit themselves, which they did; while the officers begged for mercy.

"Ahubal the traitor is no more," said Misnar, "and the Enchanters are destroyed. Ye are all released from their evil power, and your unfaithfulness is forgotten. Get ye quickly to the mountains, and bid the rest of my troops return in safety to the encampment."

The officers and soldiers did so, and soon all the troops came back. Straightway the fires of joy were kindled, the instruments of music sounded, and a great feast was held. After which the Sultan Misnar returned in triumph to his city. The people met him with loud acclaims. They closed their shops, and decorated the streets, and the rejoicing lasted forty days.

## Conclusion of the History of the Sultan Misnar and the Four Enchanters

When the days of rejoicing were past, the Sultan Misnar caused a large and rich cavalcade to be prepared and, together with the Vizier Horam and Mahoud, the jeweller of Delhi, he set out for the Kingdom of Kashmir.

They journeyed for many weeks, travelling with all diligence both day and night, until they approached the royal city of the King. Then the Sultan Misnar sent forward a messenger to the Princess Hemjuneh, with a letter saying:—

*"Peace from the Treasuries of Allah be upon her who doth possess my heart:—Know, beautiful Princess, that the Prince of Georgia and thy slave, Misnar, the Sultan of all the East, are one and the same. As for the handkerchief, the portrait thereon is mine. Thus hath the good Genie Mamlouk watched over our steps, and led us one to the other."*

The messenger delivered the letter, and when the Princess Hemjuneh read it, she swooned for joy. On recovering her senses, she sent for the King her father, and told him all that had come to pass. Thereupon, accompanied by a magnificent retinue, he hastened to meet the Sultan Misnar. He conducted him to the royal palace where the wedding festivities of the Sultan and the Princess were held amid great splendour. As for Mahoud, the jeweller of Delhi, they married him to the damsel Eloubrou, after which they all set out for the Empire of Persia.

The people of Persia rejoiced, and the drums were beaten for a whole month in celebration of the event.

And the Sultan Misnar sat governing on the throne of his father with the faithful Horam as his Vizier. And he and his wife continued to live together in peace and delight until they were visited by the terminator of joys and the separator of companions.

## Continuation of the Fountain of the Genii

"And thus," said the Genie Mamlouk, "hath the servant of our lord Solomon—on whom be peace!—performed his duty." So saying Mamlouk kissed the carpet before the throne of the King of the Genii, and once more took his place upon his own throne.

"Good Fairy Moang," said that great King, "the children of Guialar, the Iman of Terki, have again been refreshed from the Fountain of Wisdom. Take them to the apartment of entertainment, and bring them hither to-morrow to listen to one of the adventures of the happy Genie Abdallah."

The delighted children were reluctant to leave, but the Fairy Moang drew them from the hall into the apartment hung with azure curtains. She placed them by the side of the fountain, and they feasted on many dainties, after which they ran forth into the garden.

They hastened toward the crystal wall, through which they perceived the many boys and girls in their blue, pink, violet, and white robes. Some had climbed the trees and were plucking and throwing down the coloured fruits. Others, beneath the trees, were gathering the fruits into gold and silver baskets.

All these children beckoned to Patna and Coulor, who at the same moment beheld a gate to appear in the crystal wall. They ran to it, and endeavoured to open it, but, alas! it was locked. So they stood in silence, and tears filled their eyes.

"Patna and Coulor must still possess their souls in patience," said the Fairy Moang, drawing near. "Not yet have they sufficiently understood the precepts of the wise. When they have been perfected in knowledge, then may they enter

the Garden of Fruits, and rejoice with the Sons and Daughters of the Fairies. But now let us go to our couches, and sleep until day dawneth, when the happy Genie Abdallah will relate his delightful adventure."

So saying, the Fairy led the children to their couches, where they slept in peace until morning. After another repast, she conducted them to the crystal hall, where all the Good Genii were seated upon their thrones. The children took their places upon the carpet, and waited with impatience for the story to begin.

At last the King of the Genii spoke. "Stand forth, O Abdallah, happy Genie!" said he, "and relate to these human beings one of thy adventures."

At this, a Genie of smiling countenance and bright brow, and clad in blue vestments, arose from his silver throne, and kissed the ground before the King of the Genii.

"Listen, all ye Genii, and ye human beings," said he. "Verily the ills of life, and the sorrows thereof, have not touched Abdallah! Only the joyous affairs of men hath he guided according to the precepts of our lord Solomon, the son of David, on both of whom be peace! Therefore, O my friends, listen to:

# The History of Farrukruz the Favourite of Fortune

## The Ruby Cock

In ancient days, in the Kingdom of Kashmir, there lived a jeweller named Khoja Marjan. He was fortunate in all his dealings, and in time amassed great wealth. He had three sons, the two eldest of whom were idle and wasteful of money. But the youngest son, named Farrukruz, was brilliant of mind, with the heart of a bird, and as handsome as the shining sun. He loved his father more than did his brothers, and sought to aid him in every way.

One day Khoja Marjan called his three sons to him, and said:—

"Know, O my sons, that every man should earn his bread and salt. Ye have heard how at first I was only the servant of a jeweller; yet have I, by dint of hard toil, overcome all obstacles, so that at present there is none richer than I in the whole Kingdom of Kashmir.

"Therefore, O my sons, I would have you go forth into the world, and trade in other lands. I will give you each a mule laden with jewels, and gold and silver ornaments, so that ye may carry on a profitable business."

Having thus spoken, Khoja Marjan presented each of his sons with a mule laden with wealth, and bade them set forth at once.

To Farrukruz, however, he delivered in secret a small package wrapped in green silk.

"O my most beloved son," said he, "thou wilt find in this

package a golden casket, in which is a cock skilfully formed of a single rare ruby. At the hour of dawn each day, the cock croweth and flappeth its wings. Keep this secret from thy brothers, and if thou fall at any time into danger, present the cock to a King, and it will bring thee aid."

Farrukruz thereupon thanked his father, and, taking the package, hid it in his bosom.

The three brothers, having thus received each his portion of goods, set out on the road for Iran. The two eldest, however, were sullen and discontented, but Farrukruz was filled with delight. They proceeded on their way, until at last they reached the city of Herat, where they put up at a Khan.

The two eldest brothers then dressed themselves in their best garments, and, going forth into the streets, mingled with the sons of the merchants, with whom they drank and made merry. Thus they continued to do day after day, until all their wealth was spent.

As for Farrukruz, he hired a shop in the jewellers' quarters, and displayed his jewels and ornaments of gold and silver. Soon he began to sell and buy until he had acquired a large sum of money. He then purchased rich stuffs of Iran, and prepared to journey to the city of Shiraz.

Before he departed, however, seeing his brothers reduced to poverty, he gave them a sum of money, saying, "Take this to the market, and buy and sell there." After which he set out for Shiraz. Having reached that city, he rented a magnificent house, and going to the market, took a shop and sold and bought until he had got together great wealth.

One day, as he sat in the door of his shop, he perceived a handsome youth, with a smiling face, approaching him. The youth saluted Farrukruz, who immediately arose and invited him to enter and partake of some refreshments. The youth did so, and Farrukruz set before him delicate pastries, refreshing fruits, and cooling orange-flower water. And after they had eaten and drunk, and conversed with joy, the youth arose

to depart.

"O my friend," said he, "thou art, indeed, a Favourite of Fortune! It is, however, thy destiny to pass through many trials, all of which thou wilt endure with a brave and joyous heart. Take thou this ring, and never let it leave thy finger. If at any time thou should fall into distress, seek out the Sheykh Habib, who dwelleth in the great Cave of Mosul. Show him this ring, and he will aid thee."

So saying the youth placed a ring in Farrukruz' hand, and, smiling, departed.

Farrukruz examined the gift with attention, and found it to be of pure gold, set with a large and rare ruby. He then placed it upon his finger, and sat down once more at his door. Immediately he became filled with a burning desire to set forth and visit other countries and islands of the world. So he arose, and lading twenty camels with various kinds of costly merchandise, closed his shop, and accompanied by four hundred black slaves, departed for the city of Bagdad, the Abode of Peace. And having arrived there, he put up at a Khan for the night.

When the morning was come, Farrukruz arose, and having eaten, and dressed himself in an embroidered robe and rich turban, he went forth from the Khan, surrounded by his slaves. He passed through the streets, and all who saw him gazed upon him with delight. As he approached the market, he beheld there two porters standing idle on the street. They were ragged and dirty, and their beards and hair were wild and unkempt. Pity filled his heart, and, lo, as he drew near to relieve their necessity, he saw that they were his brothers.

He ordered one of his slaves to call them to his side, and when they were come, and he knew their wretched condition, he burst into tears. "O my brothers," said he, "sorrow breaketh my heart to see you in such need! Return with me to the Khan, and ye shall be clothed, and never suffer hunger more."

Thereupon Farrukruz conducted them with all respect to

the Khan, and bade his servants array them in fine clothes, and feed them with the most delicious of foods. After which he presented them each with a purse full of gold, saying:—

"Go ye forth to the market, and henceforth may Allah the Abundant Provider prosper you in all your ways."

But his brothers answered:—

"Why should we leave such a loving and kind brother? Nay, we will not leave thee! We wish to obey thee, and will follow wheresoever thou goest."

And they continued to urge him thus with tears, until at last he consented. So the three brothers abode together in the city of Bagdad, buying and selling, until they had amassed much gold.

After some time spent thus, Farrukruz was again seized with the desire to see other countries and islands, so he determined to journey to the land of the Franks. He bought precious goods, suitable for a sea voyage, and, with his four hundred slaves and his two brothers, departed for the city of Balsora. There he embarked with his goods, on a great and lofty vessel, and they all set sail.

Now, when the two brothers beheld the vast wealth and the numerous slaves of Farrukruz, their hearts swelled with secret envy.

"What is this?" said they one to the other. "Shall our youngest brother be arrayed like a Sultan, and be waited upon by a retinue of slaves, while we either suffer starvation or are forced like beggars to accept of his bounty? Come, let us get rid of this proud youth, who standeth between us and wealth."

So saying, they waited until the darkness of night had descended upon the sea, and then, taking up the mattress on which Farrukruz was asleep, they cast it into the foaming waves. Thus did these ungrateful men with treachery wipe from the tablets of their mind the benefits they had received.

They then proceeded on their way in the ship, until they neared a rocky coast, against which the sea roared and beat.

A great storm arose, and the ship was driven upon the rocks and broken in pieces; so that all therein miserably perished. Thus fared it with the two ungrateful brothers.

As for Farrukruz, when he awoke he found himself upon his mattress floating in the sea. He wondered much thereat, and said to himself:—

"Surely my brothers have done this cruel deed! Thanks be to Allah the Compassionate, the Merciful, who hath saved me from the fury of their envy."

And he continued to give thanks, while the water bare up the mattress and a gentle wind forced it along, until at length a rolling wave cast it upon a great and wide shore that belonged to the Kingdom of Yaman.

Farrukruz then arose, and walking along the shore, soon drew near to a city whose domes and spires touched the sky. He entered the gate, and the keepers took him, and, seeing his misfortune, clothed and fed him, and then led him before the King.

The King welcomed him kindly, and Farrukruz cast himself down before the throne, and, drawing from his bosom the silken package, presented it, saying:—

"O mighty King, take this package, the gift of thy slave, Farrukruz, the son of Marjan of Kashmir. Within it is a costly and rare wonder, the like of which existeth not in this world!"

At these words the King made haste to unwrap the package, and, opening the golden casket, he perceived within it the Ruby Cock of wonderful workmanship. As soon as he gazed upon it, his heart was filled with love for Farrukruz. He bade him arise, and, seating him beside the throne, commanded him to relate all that had happened to him from first to last.

Farrukruz did so, after which the King bestowed a robe of honour upon him, and presenting him with a palace and wealth, made him his Vizier.

And in this manner Farrukruz continued to live in peace

and happiness for some time.

### The Jewel Throne of the Mountains of Kaf

The King of Yaman, seeing the wisdom and the joyous heart of Farrukruz, became daily more attached to him, so that he rarely permitted him to leave his side. He presented him with greater riches, and showed him all honour. The grandees of the kingdom, perceiving this, were consumed with envy, and conspired together to destroy Farrukruz.

Now, on a certain day the King summoned his emirs, officers, and other nobles, and caused a magnificent feast to be prepared and set forth in the banquet hall of the palace. The furniture of the hall was of ivory overlaid with plates of red gold, set with jewels. The walls were hung with embroidered hangings of blue and silver; while the richest carpets were spread upon the floor. A thousand golden dishes were filled with the choicest ragouts, pastries, confections, and creams. Gold and silver ewers contained sherbets and other cooling drinks; while great platters of delicate chinaware were heaped with rare and strange fruits from all the islands of the world.

The King sat upon a throne of purple porphyry beneath a canopy of white brocade, and when the banquet was over, he commanded the Ruby Cock to be brought forth, and shown to all those present.

"O ye people," said he, "have ye ever seen anything more wonderful than this curiosity which Farrukruz hath presented to me?"

At this one of the grandees stepped forward, and kissed the ground before the throne.

"Wonderful is this cock," said he, "but if our lord doth desire to surpass all other Kings of earth, he should possess the Jewel Throne, which is composed of red diamonds, yellow emeralds, pink turquoise, and green pearls."

"Surely," exclaimed the King, "such a throne cannot exist! For never hath man seen red diamonds, yellow emeralds, pink turquoise, and green pearls! Not even one such jewel might be obtained for a ring. How, then, is it possible that a throne entirely composed of them should exist? And who would be great enough to procure such a wonder?"

Then another grandee stepped forward, and made his obeisance.

"Let the King know," said he, "that no man is fit to accomplish this matter, except the Vizier Farrukruz. For hath he not already presented the King with a curiosity the like of which doth not exist outside of Paradise?"

Hearing this, the King was much troubled. "Know, O ye people," said he, "that the presence of the Vizier cannot be dispensed with! Another man must be found to go and search for this wonder."

Thereupon Farrukruz arose from his place, and cast himself down before the throne.

"Behold," cried he, "thy willing servant Farrukruz! Verily my heart would rejoice to see thee surpass all other Kings of earth! Therefore, grant me forty days, and I will seek the Jewel Throne, and return hither when the forty days are accomplished."

"Go, then, O Farrukruz," said the King, "and in forty days return, and bring once more the sunshine of thy presence to the Kingdom of Yaman, which will abide in darkness until thou come again."

Thereat Farrukruz rejoiced, and hastened to leave the banquet hall. He clad himself in the habit of a wandering Sheykh, and set forth alone for the great Cave of Mosul, to seek the Sheykh Habib.

He journeyed on for a number of days, until at last he approached the mouth of the cave, which he saw to be closed by a door of blue stone. He knocked, and there opened to him a Sheykh of smiling countenance and bright brow, and clad

in blue vestments.

"Welcome, O Farrukruz, Favourite of Fortune," said he. "Enter and receive the gift that belongeth to him who doth possess the ruby ring."

So saying, he took Farrukruz by the hand, and led him through a passage hewn in the rock, the vaulted roof of which was of crystal veined with gold. They next entered a saloon whose pavement was of variegated stones, while from the ceiling hung lighted lamps of alabaster. Gilded couches, covered with silk of azure colour, stood within a portico, and thither the Sheykh conducted Farrukruz and seated him upon silken cushions.

He then clapped his hands, and a black slave boy brought a repast of cakes and fruits. And after they had refreshed themselves, and washed their hands, the Sheykh arose, and said:—

"Know, O Farrukruz, it is not permitted thee to rest in this place, but thou must proceed at once upon thy journey. The Jewel Throne is guarded by the Genii who inhabit the Mountains of Kaf. These mountains encircle the circumambient Ocean, and are very lofty, and of chrysolite, green like the tint of the sky above them. The distance thither from here is equal to a journey of three hundred years. The way thither lieth through the land of Gog and Magog, and across the circumambient Ocean which ringeth the whole earth, and beateth against the foot of the Mountains of Kaf.

"In that ocean are innumerable islands, inhabited by troops of the Genii. Hosts of Flying Afrites and Marids fill the air, while others dive to the bottom of the sea. All these guard the way to the Mountains of Kaf, and no human being may approach thither unless he be aided by friendly Genii. But be not discouraged, O Farrukruz, for the Good Genii will help thee.

"Know that on the border of the Ocean lieth the Rose-Garden of the Fairies. The Queen thereof is Banu, the

daughter of the King of the Fairies. She hath a tender and gentle heart, and will aid thee. Only never must thou remove from thy finger the ruby ring; nor must thou eat or drink until thou hast gained possession of the Jewel Throne. Take now this staff, made of the mystic cocoa-tree, and it will convey thee to the Rose-Garden of the Fairies. But know that the various evil Afrites that guard the way will lay snares to take from thee this staff. Yield it not, and obey me in all things, and soon the Jewel Throne shall be thine."

So saying the Sheykh placed a staff made of the cocoa-tree in Farrukruz's hand, and bade him close his eyes. He did so, and immediately he felt himself being transported swiftly through the air.

### The Rose-Garden of the Fairies

In a few minutes Farrukruz found himself set gently down upon the earth. He thereupon opened his eyes, and saw that he was in the midst of a fine and spacious park the like of which he had never seen before. Through the park walked a Fairy Queen of dazzling beauty, robed in scarlet and wearing on her head a crown of silver and pearls, while roundabout her were many lovely Fairies clad in glittering raiment.

The Queen turned her sparkling eyes upon Farrukruz and smiled, and as she did so she made a motion with her wand. Instantly one of the Fairies advanced, and, taking Farrukruz by the hand, led him toward a white palace which appeared in the distance. At the same moment the Queen, attended by her Fairies, moved toward the palace, and disappeared through its great door.

Thereupon Farrukruz sought eagerly to follow, but the Fairy who held him by the hand drew him back, saying:—

"The Law of this park forbiddeth any man who carrieth a staff from entering. Yield thy staff to me, and then go in, and feast with the Queen of the park."

Farrukruz, without reflecting, thrust the staff into her hand, and made haste to enter. He found himself in a paradise of a garden, in which were set two chairs of curiously carved wood, in one of which reclined the smiling Queen. All her Fairies were seated around her feasting, and singing, and making merry.

As soon as they perceived Farrukruz, the Fairies arose, and surrounding him, led him to the Queen, She made a sign toward the empty chair at her side, and Farrukruz seated himself upon it. She then placed a transparent goblet filled with perfumed wine in his hand. But no sooner had Farrukruz touched it to his lips than he found himself alone in the midst of a shoreless Ocean, floating on the branch of a tree. He perceived also that he was transformed into a monkey, holding four little monkeys in his arms.

He looked in all directions and could behold no land, and was filled with despair.

"Alas!" cried he, "why did I fail to obey the instructions of the Sheykh Habib! Why did I yield the magic staff to the Fairy!" And he wept with the bitterness of grief.

Thus for seven days did Farrukruz float upon the foaming waves, holding the four little monkeys in his arms. He was without food, and drink; and was now burned by the heat of the sun, and now made cold by the winds of night; and over him the salt waves dashed.

On the seventh day he perceived a bark drawing near, with masts of sandalwood and sails of silk. In it stood a beautiful queen, of fine form and gentle, tender face. She was robed in white brocade, and crowned with white roses. Around her were standing many Fairies likewise clothed in white, and all wearing crowns of red roses.

The bark drew near to Farrukruz, and the Queen said to her Fairies:—

"Verily the wickedness of my sister Nafisa hath transformed a poor wretch into this monkey!"

So saying she threw drops of water upon Farrukruz, and said, "Quit this form, and return to that of a human being." And straightway the little monkeys disappeared, and Farrukruz assumed once more his own shape.

Filled with joy, he stepped into the bark, and lo, he found himself in a vast rose-garden, filled with fragrance, and beautiful beyond compare!

"Be of good cheer, O Farrukruz," said the Queen, "for thy guardian, the happy Genie Abdallah, hath brought thee hither. I am Queen Banu, and am acquainted with thine errand and will aid thee. Know also that the wicked Fairy who enchanted thee is my sister Nafisa. We are both daughters of the King of the Fairies, but as I am the elder, I have more power. As for Nafisa she hath married an evil Marid, who hath got her into his bad ways. Therefore she doeth all the harm she can to human beings.

"Know, too," continued Queen Banu, "that my father hath an eldest son who is subject to fits of lunacy. He may be cured only by the touch of the ruby ring of the Genie Abdallah, which thou wearest upon thy finger. I will have thee immediately transported to my father's court, that thou mayest cure my brother. Then will my father in his happiness get for thee the Jewel Throne."

Thereupon Queen Banu bade Farrukruz close his eyes, and he did so. He opened them again, and found himself standing in a royal pavilion, the like of which for beauty and magnificence no human eye had ever beheld. There he saw the King of the Fairies seated upon an ivory throne, and attended by a thousand Fairies.

Farrukruz drew near to the throne, and made his obeisance, then held his peace, wondering at all he saw.

"O young man," said the King, "since human beings excel all other creatures in the science of the physician, I welcome thee. I am informed by my daughter, Queen Banu, that thou dost possess the ring whose virtue may restore my son to

health. If thou do this thing for him, thy reward shall be great. Bring forth," added the King to his Fairies, "the Prince, and show him to this human being."

Immediately the Fairies brought forward the Prince laden with golden chains, and he wept like a cloud or smiled like a fresh rose. As soon as Farrukruz cast his eyes upon him, he hastened to his side, and touched his lips with the ring.

Straightway the golden chains fell off, and the Prince sneezed twice, and was restored to perfect health. Thereupon the King in his joy descended from his throne and embraced his son, and all the Fairies rejoiced.

Then said the King to Farrukruz, "Ask what thou wishest, and it shall be given thee."

"Give me," replied Farrukruz, "the Jewel Throne composed of red diamonds, yellow emeralds, pink turquoise, and green pearls, which is preserved by the Genii in the Mountains of Kaf."

No sooner had Farrukruz spoken thus than the King commanded a hundred Fairies to fly to the Mountains of Kaf and fetch from thence the throne. Instantly they did so, and returning, placed the throne on the ground before Farrukruz.

"Behold, O fortunate young man," said the King, " the Jewel Throne! Take it, and carry it to the King of Yaman; and afterward return hither and dwell forever with the Fairies. Rub now the ruby ring which is upon thy finger, and an Afrite of the Flying Genii will at once present himself, and lifting thee up, will transport thee to the Kingdom of Yaman."

Hearing this, Farrukruz, almost overcome with joy, rubbed the ring, and immediately there appeared an Afrite of horrible aspect, as large as an elephant and as fierce as a dragon.

"What wouldst thou," asked he in an awful voice, "with Kashank the Flyer?"

"O Kashank," said the King of the Fairies, "take up this human being, together with the Jewel Throne, and carry them

safely to the Kingdom of Yaman. As for thee, O Farrukruz," added the King, "mount on the shoulders of this Flyer, but when he soareth aloft into the sky, and thou hearest the praises of the angels, utter no word for if thou do, thou wilt perish."

Thereupon Farrukruz mounted upon the shoulders of the Afrite, and the terrible creature, lifting the Jewel Throne in his hand, soared into the air. They ascended above the clouds, and proceeded for a day and a night, until they heard the praises of the angels. And when the morning came again, the Afrite, descending to the earth, cleaved the dome of the Royal Judgment Hall in which was the King of Yaman. Thereupon he set down Farrukruz and the Jewel Throne before the King and vanished.

At this wonderful sight, the King made haste and embraced Farrukruz. Then he placed him beside himself upon the Jewel Throne, and ordered the drums of gladness to be beaten, and the people to be invited to a great feast.

At this all the grandees were dismayed, and filled with greater envy, and hated Farrukruz, saying: "Surely this young man is dangerous! He hath accomplished more than we all, and the King's heart is turned from us to him. Therefore we must speedily destroy him."

## The Four Golden Date-Trees

Then the King of Yaman again summoned to a banquet all the emirs and officers and other grandees of the Kingdom. He was seated upon the Jewel Throne, which dazzled all eyes with its beauty, and in his right hand he held the Ruby Cock.

"O ye people," said he, "have ye ever seen greater wonders than this Jewel Throne and Ruby Cock, that Farrukruz hath presented to me?"

At this a grandee came forward, and made his obeisance.

"May the King's desires be all fulfilled!" said he. "Know

that greater wonders yet exist. If our lord wisheth to surpass all other Kings of earth, he must possess the four Golden Date-Trees. The trunk of each tree is of gold, the branches of silver, and its leaves of emeralds. From every branch springeth twenty twigs of ruby, and at the end of each twig is suspended a golden date, as sweet as honey, fragrant as musk, and large as an ostrich egg.

"If these four Golden Date-Trees were placed at the four corners of the Jewel Throne, no King on earth could compare with the magnificence and wealth of our lord the King of Yaman."

Thereat the King smiled disdainfully. "Verily," said he, "such a tree cannot be found, for it doth not exist in this world!"

"There is nothing," replied the grandee, "that may not be accomplished by a man like the Vizier Farrukruz, who hath already presented the King with two treasures, the equal of which doth not exist outside of Paradise."

Thereupon Farrukruz stood up in his place, and, having kissed the ground, said:—

"O mighty King, permit me to undertake this business. Grant me six months, at the expiration of which I will return to thee again." And he urged the King thus, until he consented. After which Farrukruz hastened and clad himself once more in the habit of a wandering Sheykh, and departed from the city.

Scarcely had he done so when he rubbed the ruby ring, and the Afrite Kashank stood before him.

"What wouldst thou have?" said he in a voice like thunder. "I am Kashank the Flyer, sent to serve thee by the King of the Fairies."

"I wish," replied Farrukruz, "to be instantly transported to the Rose-Garden of the Fairies."

The Afrite Kashank took him upon his shoulders, and ascended with him into the sky. They rose above the clouds,

and heard the praises of the angels; and thus they continued to fly for a day and a night. So fared it with Farrukruz.

As for Queen Banu, after Farrukruz had been transported to the Court of the King of the Fairies to seek the Jewel Throne, she sent forth ten powerful Marids.

"Go," said she, "to the park of my sister Nafisa, and bring her hither."

The Marids did so, and, seizing her, bound her with silken cords, and brought her to Queen Banu.

"Malicious Nafisa," said that good Queen, "wherefore dost thou always afflict mankind? And in what manner hath Farrukruz injured thee, that thou shouldst transform him into a monkey? From now on thou art banished from this Rose-Garden. Return to thy park, and mend thine evil ways, or a worse punishment shall befall thee."

Thereupon Nafisa foamed with rage, and the Marids, lifting her up, carried her back to her park. But scarcely was she returned before she began to conspire against Queen Banu.

"This Farrukruz," said she to her Fairies, "will endeavour to see Queen Banu again. Let us watch for him, and by guile take away the ruby ring, which he weareth upon his hand. Then will he pass from the power of Banu and again be under my enchantment."

So saying she transformed her park into a semblance of the Rose-Garden, and putting white garments and a rose garland upon one of her Fairies, she caused her to look like Queen Banu.

It happened also that Kashank the Afrite was a hater of good Queen Banu; therefore Nafisa told him all.

"Be not dismayed," said he, "at Banu's punishment of thee. I am now summoned to carry Farrukruz once more to the Rose-Garden of the Fairies, where he seeketh the four Golden Date-Trees. Make all ready, and in the spot where thou didst first see him, there will I set him down again."

With that he flew away to the Kingdom of Yaman. to fetch Farrukruz. So fared it with Queen Banu and Nafisa.

## The Afrite Kashank

Now, when the Afrite Kashank had taken up Farrukruz upon his shoulders, and soared with him into the sky, he flew for a day and a night. And on the morning of the second day, he descended into the park that resembled the Rose-Garden of the Fairies, and placed Farrukruz upon the ground, saying:—

"O happy youth! Know that to-day is thy marriage day, for Queen Banu hath chosen thee for her bridegroom! Behold she cometh yonder; make haste to meet her." And having thus said, the Afrite Kashank flew away.

Thereupon Farrukruz was confounded with wonder and joy. He then perceived the false Queen Banu advancing toward him, surrounded by her Fairies, and ran eagerly to meet her, and cast himself down at her feet.

"Arise, O my beloved," said the false Queen Banu, "and give to me the ruby ring from thy finger as a token of thy affection. Always shalt thou remain with me here in perfect bliss!"

Farrukruz then hastily drew from his finger the ring and placed it in the hand of the false Queen. Instantly he heard a roaring like a mighty wind and the raging of the sea; and he fell to the ground in a swoon. And, lo, when he opened his eyes he found himself changed into the form of an old barber. He stood in his shop in Damascus, surrounded by his utensils, and he was shaving the head of a man.

He was struck with amazement, and said to himself, "Surely this man must be Kashank the Afrite!" So he threw away his razor, and tore his clothes, and cast dust upon his head, and struck the man, exclaiming!—

"Wicked Afrite! The King of the Fairies commanded thee to serve me, and I trusted thee! By thy perfidy I have lost my

talisman, the ruby ring, which is more valuable than the Diadem of Iskandar, or the Goblet of Jamshid which doth mirror the whole world! I have been torn from the presence of my beloved, and have been transformed, and have lost my happiness! Thou art not satisfied with all this, but thou sittest here railing at me!"

Hearing these words, the man sprang up, bareheaded as he was, and ran into the street. And Farrukruz pursued him, shouting, "O all ye people! Seize Kashank the Afrite, who hath deeply wronged me, and destroyed my peace of mind."

As Farrukruz was bawling thus, and running, his girdle became loose, and he stumbled and fell to the ground. And in so doing he hit his head, and the blood flowed forth.

Now the man was the servant of the Chief Cadi of Damascus, and a wicked person; so when the people saw an old barber pursuing him, and falling down wounded, with the blood flowing from his head, they questioned Farrukruz, saying, "What hath this evil one done unto thee?"

To all of which he answered, "Seize Kashank the Afrite, who hath done me fearful damage!"

And the people said, "We know him to be the servant of the Chief Cadi, and a very great scoundrel, but his name is not Kashank the Afrite. He hath now escaped; but come thou with us to the Chief Cadi, and he will do thee justice."

So they bound up Farrukruz's head, and led him before the Chief Cadi. And he tumbled headlong into the Cadi's house, crying, "O all ye people! By the treachery of Kashank the Afrite my happiness hath been destroyed!"

Then, before the Cadi could address him, Farrukruz rushed forth again into the street, shouting, "Seize Kashank the Afrite, who hath changed the Spring of my peace into the Autumn of misery!"

The people who heard him, thought that a great thief had escaped, and many of them ran after Farrukruz, crying out, "Catch Kashank the Afrite, who hath escaped from the Chief

Cadi's house!" But no one knew who Kashank was.

Now, it happened that a man of the desert, tall and dark, with long hair and dishevelled beard, at that moment entered the gate. He was a stranger, and had crossed the desert, to see the city of Damascus, where he had never been before.

He perceived Farrukruz running toward him, and heard the shouts of the people who followed after, and was seized with fear. He began to run away like a goblin of the wilderness; and the people, thinking him to be Kashank the Afrite, pursued after, and seized and bound him.

Thereupon Farrukruz, thinking the man of the desert was Kashank the Afrite, struck him, exclaiming, "O perfidious wretch! Why hast thou deprived me of my love, and of my ruby ring, and plunged me thus into the abyss of misery?"

The man of the desert, hearing this, was astonished, and thought to himself, "Verily it must be the custom of this city, to so treat strangers!"

The many people, seeing Farrukruz with his head bound up, and lamenting in a pitiful manner, reproached the man of the desert. "O Kashank," said they, "art thou not ashamed of having wronged this poor old barber, who is too aged to protect himself against thee?" But the man of the desert made no reply, and shook his head like a goat.

It happened that the Emir of the city was riding forth accompanied by his servants, and perceiving the crowd in the street, he sent a chamberlain to inquire the cause of the matter.

Soon the chamberlain returned, and said, "O my lord, know that a fellow, Kashank the Afrite, hath deprived a barber of his wife, together with a costly ring."

And at the same moment Farrukruz, beholding the Emir, rushed forward, shouting, "Woe is me! The whirlwind of treachery of Kashank the Afrite hath extinguished the lamp of my happiness, and the fire of his oppression hath melted my soul and life!"

Thereupon the Emir commanded the man of the desert to be brought before him. The people did so, and the Emir questioned into the matter, and several persons, who had been present in the barber's shop, told their tale. After which the Emir ordered them to loose the man of the desert, and bind Farrukruz instead, and carry him to the madhouse. And so they did. Thus fared it with Farrukruz.

As for the real Kashank the Afrite, after Nafisa had transformed Farrukruz, he had conveyed him to the barber's shop in Damascus, and cast out the owner thereof. Then he flew with great speed through the air, and presented himself before the Fairy King, with whom was Queen Banu.

"Alas!" cried he, "a great misfortune hath befallen Farrukruz! When I soared above the clouds, and he heard the praises of the angels, he uttered a prayer and fell from my shoulders into the sea. There seven evil Marids of fearful strength drew him beneath the water, and slaughtered him. And I have been compelled to return to thee in great distress!"

"O my father," said Queen Banu, "listen not to Kashank the Flyer. Verily he is evil-minded and hath been led astray by my sister Nafisa, who beareth great enmity toward me. Let this Afrite, therefore, be imprisoned until the matter be closely examined."

The King of the Fairies then summoned a thousand of his Afrites, and bade them imprison Kashank. And they did so.

When the next day dawned, there came into the presence of the King of the Fairies an Afrite holding the ruby ring in his hand. "Know, O King," said he, "that the ruby ring of the Genie Abdallah hath suddenly appeared in thy treasury; and that a Fairy hath returned from the city of Damascus, where he saw in the streets a lunatic, who ran about and shouted for Kashank the Afrite; and who is none other than Farrukruz. The Emir of that city hath thrown him into iron chains; and he is now in the madhouse."

The King of the Fairies, hearing this, at once commanded

the Afrite to fetch Farrukruz, and he did so, descending into the earth, and rising up through the floor of the madhouse. He struck the iron chains from Farrukruz's limbs, who immediately returned to his own form, and, lifting him, transported him in the twinkling of an eye to the Court of the Fairy King.

The King embraced and comforted him, and ordered his Afrites to summon Nafisa, and bring Kashank before him. And they did so.

"O wicked Kashank," said he, "thou shalt henceforth be confined in a bottle of brass, and its mouth shall be sealed with the Great Seal of our lord Solomon, on whom be peace! And thou shalt be thrown into the sea, there to abide until the Judgment Day. And as for thee, Nafisa, thou shalt be imprisoned forever in the Castle of Black Marble in the midst of the Mountains of Kaf."

So saying the King of the Fairies commanded his Afrites to remove Kashank and Nafisa. And they did so.

As for Farrukruz, the King gave him back the ruby ring, and presented him with the four Golden Date-Trees on the backs of four huge elephants. He then ordered seventy of his faithful Afrites to convey the elephants, together with Farrukruz, to the Kingdom of Yaman in safety.

## Conclusion of the History of Farrukruz, the Favourite of Fortune

Now, the grandees of Yaman thought Farrukruz destroyed, and they rejoiced greatly thereat. But on a certain day, when the King sat in his palace upon the Jewel Throne, there came a messenger who said:—

"Behold Farrukruz cometh with the four Golden Date-Trees upon the backs of four huge elephants, and he himself riding upon a fifth."

And even as the messenger spoke, Farrukruz rode through the streets of the city, amid the shouts of the people.

The King caused a throne to be placed by his, and welcoming Farrukruz with joy, seated him thereon. He then commanded that the four Golden Date-Trees should be set up at the four corners of the Jewel Throne, and the Ruby Cock brought forth. And when all the emirs, officers, and other grandees were assembled before him, the King spake:—

"O ye people, behold these marvellous objects, the gifts of Farrukruz! What King of earth doth possess their equal?"

At this all the envious grandees stepped forward, and said:—

"Wonderful are these objects, but if our lord the King doth desire to surpass all other Kings of the world, he must have one more wonder. Let the Vizier Farrukruz procure from the Garden of Paradise a crown of flames."

At these words the King's eyes flashed and he was filled with fury.

"O ye impious and envious men!" exclaimed he, "no longer shall your wicked minds desire the destruction of my faithful servant Farrukruz. Your heads shall be severed from your bodies at once, and your tongues given to the dogs!" And as the King thus spoke, the guard advanced, and, seizing all the envious grandees, led them forth to the place of execution, and fulfilled their lord's commands.

The King then showed Farrukruz every honour, and sent for his father Khoja Marjan, and appointed him chief jeweller, presenting him with a robe of honour, and a yearly sum of thirty thousand pieces of gold.

After which Farrukruz abode a year in the Kingdom of Yaman. Then he bade his father and the King farewell, and rubbed the ruby ring. In the twinkling of an eye he was transported by Afrites into the presence of the King of the Fairies and Queen Banu. They received him with joy, and he related to them all his adventures from first to last.

The Fairy King then married Farrukruz to Queen Banu, and all the Fairies rejoiced. A magnificent feast was spread,

to which came the faithful Afrites and Marids from the Mountains of Kaf, and to it came also the happy Genie Abdallah.

## Continuation of the Fountain of the Genii

And the Genie Abdallah smiled at Patna and Coulor, and ceased speaking. He then made his obeisance before the throne of the King of the Genii, and once more mounted his own silver throne.

"Good Fairy Moang," said the King of the Genii, likewise smiling, "the children of Guialar, the Iman of Terki, have now heard the joyous tale of Farrukruz, which the happy Genie Abdallah hath related. Take them to the apartment of entertainment, and bring them hither again to-morrow to listen to the remarkable deeds of Ali, the Genie of the Green Veil."

At this the Genie Abdallah once more smiled at the children, and the Fairy led their reluctant feet from the crystal hall. She conducted them, as before, to the apartment hung with azure curtains, and fed them on delicate food. But when they arose to go into the garden, she drew them toward their couches, saying:—

"Beautiful things are being prepared for you by the Sons and Daughters of the Fairies, therefore ye must not go into the garden to-night. When to-morrow cometh, and ye have heard the remarkable deeds of Ali of the Green Veil, then may Patna and Coulor visit the Garden of Fruits."

So the children, eager for the morrow, laid themselves down and slept until day dawned. And after they had eaten again, the Fairy led them to the crystal saloon, where the Good Genii were seated upon their thrones.

The children took their places upon the carpet, and as they did so they saw with sorrow that the Genie Abdallah was not present. And as they looked toward his empty throne, the King of the Genii spoke as follows:—

"Arise, O Ali of the Green Veil, and relate to these human beings some of thy deeds for mankind."

At once a Genie with bright eyes and red cheeks, and wrapped in a green veil, descended from his throne, and said:—

"Hear, O ye human beings, verily Ali seeketh always to help those in distress. Therefore listen to some of my deeds, which have been in accordance with the precepts of Solomon, on whom be peace!"

# The History of King Azad and the Two Royal Sheykhs

## The White Hair

There formerly reigned in Istambol a great King named Azad. In his Kingdom all people were happy, the treasuries were full, the army contented, and the poor lived at ease. Every one had such plenty that the day was a festival, and the night was illuminated like the feast of the full moon.

Sultans and Princes paid tribute to King Azad, and did him homage. But he remained without pride, and was generous and wise, and neglected not his prayers to Allah, whose name be exalted!

King Azad, however, had no son to succeed him upon his throne, and he was very sorrowful, often praying thus: "O Allah, the Abundant Provider, thou hast everything in thy hidden treasuries. Give me a worthy son that my name may be preserved in my Kingdom."

In this hope King Azad reached his fortieth year, and on the day of his birthday feast, he cast his eyes toward a mirror, and, lo, he perceived a white hair in his beard, that glittered like a silver wire! On seeing this the King's eyes filled with tears, and he heaved a deep sigh. "Alas!" said he, "death hath already sent me a messenger! Hence it doth appear clearly that I am not destined to have an heir to my throne and canopy!"

Having thus thought, the King dismissed his Vizier and attendants, and, descending into the lower garden, spread there a prayer-rug. And he continued to pray and weep all

that day. In the evening he broke his fast with a date and a few mouthfuls of water, and lay all night upon the prayer-rug.

Thus King Azad passed many days, and he no longer judged his people, nor attended to the affairs of state. Thieves and murderers thrived in the Kingdom, and rebels and enemies raised up their heads, and all the people mourned.

Then the emirs, officers, and other grandees assembled and spake thus: "The Vizier Kiradmand is exceeding wise, and the King loveth him well. Let us go to him, and he will tell us what to do."

Thereupon they presented themselves before the Vizier, saying: "Know that the Kingdom is in confusion. And unless the King attend to the affairs of state, all will soon be lost."

The Vizier Kiradmand, hearing this, remained silent for some time in perplexity. After which he spoke thus: "The King our lord hath strictly forbidden any one to enter his royal presence. Nevertheless will I go to him; and may the King's heart be turned so that he will hearken to my words."

So saying the Vizier went forth, and stood at the entrance of the lower garden. He then sent a messenger to the King, saying: "Behold thine old slave Kiradmand is waiting. For many days he hath not seen the light of the royal countenance, and hath been in darkness and desolation. May he now be permitted to kiss the royal feet?"

The messenger soon returned, and commanded the Vizier to enter the garden. He did so, and, making his obeisance, stood before the King with arms crossed upon his bosom. He then saw with sorrow the King's altered appearance, and that from weeping and fasting his eyes were sunk in their sockets, and his face was grown pale.

"O Kiradmand," said the King, "thou hast seen me! Be satisfied! Go now, and rule over the Kingdom in my stead."

At this the Vizier could not restrain his grief, and wept aloud. "What strange fancy," said he, "doth possess the mind of my lord? This thy slave, through thy favour, may rule many

kingdoms! But ruin and death are spread abroad because our lord doth absent himself, and no longer conducteth the affairs of state!"

"Hear, O Kiradmand," replied the King, "I have now arrived at an age when my hair is turning white. I have no son to succeed me, for which reason my heart is sorrowful, and I have abandoned everything in life. Let who will take my throne and wealth, I have no need of them. I will retire to the mountains, and there worship Allah, whose name be exalted!" And the King heaved a sigh, and ceased speaking.

"O King of the age," replied the Vizier, "banish from thy mind these fancies, or all thy subjects will be thrown into confusion and despair, and this thy Kingdom, which thy fathers established with so much labour, will be lost in a moment!

"Moreover, thou wilt have to answer to Allah the High, the Great, on the Day of Judgment, when he will say, 'I made thee King, and placed my creatures under thy care. But thou wast unfaithful, and didst afflict and abandon them.' What answer will the King make?

"Pardon thy slave's words, but it is not the part of a mighty King to wander like a beggar in the mountains. Thou hast heard the saying:—

*"'Allah is near thee, yet thou seekest for Him in the wilderness!*

*Thy child is in thine arms, yet thou searchest for him in the city!'"*

Hearing these wise words, King Azad cast down his eyes, and sat in silence for a little space of time, after which he said, "Go forth, O Kiradmand, and announce to my people that tomorrow I will sit in the Royal Judgment Hall."

"I hear and obey," said the Vizier with joy. "As long as the earth doth exist, may the throne of my lord the King continue to stand! And may an heir to his throne and canopy soon appear!" So saying, he made haste and went forth.

When the morning dawned, King Azad entered the hall, and seated himself upon his throne, and judged his subjects

till the hour of noon was come. He then retired to his palace to eat and repose, and spent the night in tears. And so he did for the space of three months.

Now, it happened one night, that King Azad was restless, and he disguised himself in the habit of a Sheykh, and went forth secretly from the palace. He entered the forest, and wandered to and fro in the cool of the night. He proceeded thus for some time, until suddenly a mighty wind arose, and he made haste to return. And as he did so he beheld the glimmer of a fire before him in the way.

He approached it in silence, and perceived a pot of fire burning upon the ground; and before it, on a mattress, were seated two strange Sheykhs. They were both young, with unkempt hair and beards, and dressed in rags. And as the King gazed upon them, they lighted their pipes, and one said to the other:—

"O my friend, we two, by the decree of Destiny have wandered for an age over the surface of the earth, and to-day we have met each other in this spot. The events of to-morrow are not known, whether we shall travel together, or separate forever. Let us then agree each to relate his adventures to-night."

"Verily," replied the other Sheykh, "it is well. Do thou begin thy tale, and I will hear. After which I will relate mine to thee."

Hearing this, King Azad, filled with curiosity, sat down beneath a tree, and prepared to listen. And the first Sheykh began thus:—

### Hatim the Giver

Now, O my friend, that my story is wonderful—extraordinary! I was not always clothed in rags. This wretch is the Prince of Persia! In the seven climes there is no Kingdom equal to that Kingdom. The atmosphere of Persia is

delightful, and the inhabitants handsome and refined in their manners.

My father was King of that country, and he caused me to be taught by wise men, so that with the favour of Allah—whose name be exalted!—when I attained my fourteenth year, I was learned in every science and art, and had acquired all knowledge requisite for Kings to know.

One day a learned companion, who had journeyed to all the great cities and regions of the earth, said to me: "Know, O Prince, that Kings rise and rule their Kingdoms, and then die and are forgotten; but the deeds of the generous cause their doers to be remembered for all times. So was it with Hatim Tai."

"Relate to me," said I, "the story of this Hatim Tai."

Thereupon my companion said:—

In ancient days, in the reign of Naufal, King of Arabia, there lived an Arab Chief named Hatim Tai. Allah,—whose name be exalted!—had endowed him with great wealth, and he was celebrated for his boundless generosity. He dispensed his wealth daily in a hall having seventy doors, each of which was open to the poor. And none entered the hall but went away satisfied.

"Now, it happened that King Naufal heard of the fame of Hatim, and his soul was filled with envy and hate. 'If this man,' thought he, 'continueth to give thus freely to all, soon the hearts of my subjects will leave me, and cleave to him. Verily I will go forth and destroy him.'

"So King Naufal assembled his troops, and armed them with weapons, and rode forth at their head.

"There came a messenger running to Hatim Tai, and said: 'Know, O my Chief, that King Naufal is advancing with numerous troops to slay thee! Therefore call together the warriors of the Tribe of Tai, and give the King battle. Though he hath a large army, still the right is on thy side, and thy people love thee; and thou shalt prosper.'

"But Hatim Tai answered: 'This King hateth me, not my people. Know that if I prepare for battle, the creatures of Allah—whose name be exalted!—will be slaughtered, and much blood will be spilt. And the punishment of Heaven will fall upon me!'

"So saying, Hatim threw off his rich garments, and clad himself in rags, then alone he fled from the hall, and hid in a cave in the mountains. So fared it with Hatim Tai.

"As for King Naufal, when he heard that Hatim had fled, he took all his wealth and lands, and appointed another man Chief of the Tribe of Tai. Then he sent forth a crier who proclaimed:—

"'O all ye people of Arabia! Whosoever shall seize Hatim Tai, and bring him before the King, shall receive five thousand pieces of gold.' And on hearing this, many people began to search eagerly for him.

"Now, there lived near the mountain in which Hatim was hidden, an old man and his wife. They were poor and hungry, and were so feeble that they could scarcely work. One day as they were gathering firewood for sale, they wandered before the cave, and Hatim heard them talking.

"'Alas!' said the old woman, 'if this day were fortunate, we should meet Hatim somewhere. Then we could seize him, and carry him before the King, who would give us five thousand pieces of gold. So might we stop toiling, and never suffer hunger again.'

"'What art thou talking about?' replied the old man. 'It is our fate to pick up firewood all our lives. Stop talking, and mind thy work. Why should Hatim fall into our hands, and the King give us all that money?'

"Hatim, hearing what they said, thought to himself: 'Verily, it is unmanly and ungenerous for me to conceal myself thus! Far better is it to afford relief to these wretched old ones, who, if they gain this sum, will never suffer hunger more. True it is that a man without compassion is like the beast of the

field!'

"So he immediately stepped forth from the cave, saying: 'O my friends, I am Hatim Tai. Lead me to Naufal, and he will give you the five thousand pieces of gold.'

"But the old man hearing this, and understanding Hatim's generosity, was deeply moved, and fell at Hatim's feet. 'O my lord,' cried he, 'if we deliver thee up to such a man, who knoweth how he will treat thee? He may put thee to death! This can I never do—deliver a man to his enemy for gold! How should I enjoy the wealth? I must die, and what shall I answer Allah the Judge?'

"'Take me with thee,' replied Hatim, 'I wish it. I have ever desired that not only my wealth, but my life also, should help the poor.'

"But the old man would not be persuaded.

"And while they were thus talking, lo, a party of rough men advanced, and when they knew Hatim, they seized him and bound his hands behind his back. Then they led him away to King Naufal. And the old man and his wife followed them in silent grief.

"And when they brought Hatim before the royal throne, the King asked, 'Who hath found and brought him hither?'

"And all the men, one after the other, answered that they had searched the woods and found him. After each had recounted his act of bravery, Hatim stepped forward and said:—

"'O King, if thou dost wish to know the truth, that old man who standeth there aloof from all, he it is that found me. Therefore give to him and his wife, and not to these liars, the five thousand pieces of gold.'

"Hearing this, the old man could not contain himself, and, drawing near, cast himself down before the throne. 'Listen, O mighty King,' said he. 'Lo, Hatim hath come hither of his own accord so that I and my poor wife need suffer hunger no more.' And he told the King all that had happened from first to last.

"Thereat King Naufal marvelled. He made a sign with his hand toward the men who had brought Hatim in. 'Take,' said he to his guard, 'these liars, and tie their arms, and, instead of five thousand pieces of gold, let them receive five hundred strokes of the whip.'

"The guard immediately seized the men, and leading them forth, carried out their lord's commands.

"As for Hatim Tai, the King took him by the hand, and caused a magnificent robe to be put upon him, and seated him by the throne. After which he returned to him all his wealth and lands, and restored him as Chief of the Tribe of Tai.

"While to the old man and his wife, the King gave ten thousand pieces of gold, and sent them away rejoicing."

So ended the story of my learned companion.

## The Princess of Basra

When I had heard the whole of this adventure of Hatim Tai's greatness, my heart was filled with shame. "What!" said I to myself, "shall this Hatim, an Arab Chief, acquire everlasting fame; while I, the son of the King of Persia, am not known outside this Kingdom! Verily, I will go and do deeds of generosity like Hatim."

So I called the chief carpenter, and bade him construct for me at once a palace having forty high and wide gates. In a short time the palace was completed, and I used to go there daily, and bestow gold pieces on the poor and helpless who came through the forty gates. So did I for some time.

It happened one day that an aged Sheykh came in at the first gate, and demanded alms. I presented him with a piece of gold, and he went out. Immediately he reentered by the second gate, and asked for two pieces of gold. I gave them to him, and he went out again, only to return by the third gate, and demand three more pieces of gold. So he continued to do, entering gate by gate, and increasing his demands, until

at length he entered the fortieth gate, and asked for forty pieces of gold. At his impudent conduct my anger rose, but I gave him what he asked. He went out, and returned immediately by the first gate.

"What kind of a Sheykh art thou?" I exclaimed. "O avaricious man! at the forty gates thou hast received from one to forty pieces of gold, and even after this, thy greed hath brought thee back again! Go hence in shame, and let me not see thy face again today."

Immediately on hearing me speak thus, the Sheykh, in anger, threw down all the gold he had received. "O unmannerly one," said he, "take back thy gift, and keep it! It is difficult to be generous, and thou dost not even know the meaning of the word! I have not seen a person who is truly generous, except the Princess of Basra. She weareth with ease the Robe of Generosity, which thou canst not even put on!"

Hearing this speech I was rebuked, and besought the Sheykh to forgive my words, and take the gold again. But he would not accept my entreaties, and went away, saying, "If thou didst offer me all thy Kingdom, I would not accept a thread from thee!" So he departed, and I saw him no more.

Having heard such praises of the Princess of Basra, I became quite restless, and desirous of seeking her and observing her generosity. So I put on the habit of a pilgrim, and, going forth secretly from my palace, took the road to Basra.

In a few days I arrived at the boundaries of that country, and when night was come there met me some servants of the Princess, who, with great respect, conducted me to a house of entertainment, and I remained there all night. The next morning, I set out on my way for the city of Basra, and when night was come again, I was met by the servants of the Princess, who cared for me as before. So it happened for seven nights.

At last I reached the gate of the city, and there came forth to welcome me a handsome young man. He greeted me with

great sweetness, and said: "Behold, I am the servant of all pilgrims who visit this city, and I escort each stranger to my mansion, for there is no Khan here. Come with me, and make me happy and contented."

Seeing his pleasant manners and handsome appearance, I rejoiced, and accompanied him. Soon he conducted me to a large and stately mansion. The street before the door was swept and sprinkled with perfumed water, and on either side of the door stood ten black eunuchs, each holding a silver mace. We passed between these, and, entering the mansion, found ourselves in a large and elegant saloon. Costly carpets were spread by the side of the fountain, and silken cushions were laid thereon. Gold and silver boxes containing rare spices, and jars of beautiful Chinaware, were arranged with taste in their places. In the recesses of the wall were gilded baskets filled with oranges, rich confections, and nuts. The saloon was lighted by many lamps in the shapes of cypress-trees and lotus-flowers; while camphorated candles burned in silver candlesticks, over which were placed rich glass shades. The perfume of musk and ambergris filled the whole saloon.

The young man led me forward, with all respect, and seated me on the cushions by the side of the fountain. He then summoned his slaves, and bade them attend me. They immediately did so, washing my feet and hands in scented water, and spreading a cloth before me. They then served me with a profusion of dishes containing various viands, sufficient to satisfy a large multitude.

Seeing such a quantity of roast meats, pastries, confections, and fruits, I took but a mouthful from each dish, and my appetite was satisfied. But the young man pressed me to eat more, saying: "O pilgrim, eat! The dinner is still untouched. Eat without ceremony."

"May Allah the Bountiful bless thy mansion!" I replied. "I cannot sufficiently praise the delicacy and flavour of thy food, but I have eaten enough, so, I pray thee, let the dishes be

removed."

Thereupon the cloth and dishes were removed, and a slave brought a ewer and basin of gold, and, bathing my hands, wiped them with a silken napkin. Then the young man and I conversed for some time with joy; after which he led me to a magnificent couch beneath a canopy of white satin.

I lay down upon the couch, which was softer than a bed of roses; while slave boys placed pots of fragrant flowers by my side and burned aromatic gums. Wherever I turned, my senses were intoxicated with perfumes. In this state I fell asleep.

When morning dawned, I was waited upon by numerous black slaves, and a repast on golden dishes was served; after which I spent the day in delight and amusement. In this manner I passed three days and three nights, and on the morning of the fourth day I requested the young man to permit me to depart.

But he joined his hands together, and said: "O pilgrim, why dost thou desire to leave my mansion so soon? Perhaps I have been deficient in my attentions to thee, for which reason thou art displeased, and wish to go."

I replied with astonishment, "O young man, know that the rules of hospitality in my Kingdom permit a guest to remain three days. These I have fulfilled. To stay longer is to trespass on good manners. Therefore I beg to depart."

"O pilgrim," said he, "do as thou desirest. But first know that the Princess of Basra entertaineth in this wise every stranger who cometh to this city. She now requesteth thee to accept all the dishes, carpets, and furniture, which have been provided for thine entertainment. They are now thy property, and thou mayest place them in a room, and put thy seal on the door. And when thou so desirest, thou mayest remove or dispose of them as thou seest fit."

Hearing these words, I was the more astonished, and refused his offer. But he would take no refusal, so at last I was obliged to place the articles in a room, and close the door with

my seal.

As I was about to bid the young man farewell, and depart, a eunuch approached me, magnificently clad, and carrying a golden mace. He addressed me with humility, and said:—

"O pilgrim, do me the favour to dignify my mansion with thy presence. For if thou doest not so, the Princess will hear that a stranger hath visited this city, and hath not received the entertainment due him. Then will she inflict severe punishment upon me. Even my life may be endangered."

At first I refused to listen to his request, but he continued to urge me, until I consented. Thereupon he conducted me to a mansion more magnificent than the other, and entertained me with greater elegance for the period of three days. After which I desired to depart.

The eunuch then presented me with all the gold and silver dishes, and silken carpets, rich furniture, and all other articles in the mansion, and obliged me to place them in a large apartment, and close the door with my seal. But perceiving my embarrassment, he said:—

"O Pilgrim, whatever thy wish may be, impart it to me, and I will convey it to the Princess, and she will satisfy thy desire."

Thereupon I took up a pen, and wrote as follows:—

*"To her whose generosity is greater than that of Hatim Tai, and whose munificence hath inspired my heart with love, and a desire to see her.*

*"Know, thy servants have informed me that whatever my wishes are, thou wilt satisfy them. Know, too, that I am not in want of the riches of this world. I am the son of a King, and have come hither with great fatigue, and with the ardent desire of seeing thee. I now hope, through thy benevolence, to attain the wish of my heart, which is to possess thy hand, and share with thee my wealth and estate."*

Having written this letter, I sealed it, and gave it to the eunuch, who carried it to the Princess.

After a short time he returned, and, beckoning me to follow, conducted me to the door of the royal seraglio. I saw there an old woman, dressed in jewelled garments, and seated upon a golden bench. Before her stood numerous white slave-girls with eyes downcast, and arms folded across their bosoms.

Thereupon I imagined her to be the head woman of the Princess's household, and made my obeisance before her. She signed me to be seated by her side, and said as follows:—

"Know, O young man, that the Princess sendeth thee her salutations, and saith: 'Thou callest thyself the son of a King; why, then, dost thou wander about in the habit of a poor pilgrim? Prove thyself by bravery to be a Prince, and I will marry thee. But thou must first accomplish a task which I will set.'

"Therefore," continued the old woman, "thou must perform a certain difficult and dangerous task, from which none, who hath hitherto undertaken the matter, hath returned. If thou succeed, the Princess will be thine."

Hearing this, I almost swooned with delight. "Tell me," said I, "what this task may be, and I will neither spare life nor fortune to accomplish it."

"Remain to-night in the mansion of entertainment with the eunuch," replied she, "and to-morrow thou shalt know."

So taking my leave of her, I returned to the mansion.

I waited with great impatience, and when the next evening was come, the eunuch again beckoned me to follow him, and I did so. He led me once more to the door of the royal seraglio, and a venerable man came forth, and saluted us.

"O Barawar," said the eunuch, "relate to this pilgrim all that thou hast seen in the Kingdom of Nimroz." And after saying this the eunuch departed.

Thereupon Barawar regarded me in silence for a little time, then he seated me beside him upon the golden bench before the door, and said:—

## Story of the Young Man and the Roaring Bull

"O King's son, our Princess doth possess thousands of slaves, the least of whom am I. Nevertheless, it so happened one time that the Princess delivered to me merchandise of a great amount, and commanded me to go to other cities and sell and buy. I prepared for the journey and set out, and after a year's time, arrived at the country of Nimroz.

"I entered the chief city, and observed that the inhabitants were all clad in black. I asked the reason of this strange thing, but no one would answer me; and many days passed leaving me in this state of astonishment.

"One day, at the time of the new moon, all the inhabitants of the city, both great and small, old and young, rich and poor, went out at the gate, and assembled upon a plain. The King of Nimroz went there also, mounted on his horse, and surrounded by his grandees. All the people formed themselves into a long line, with the King at their head.

"I also joined the throng, to see what strange thing was about to take place. Scarcely had I done so when a beautiful young man appeared riding over the plain on the back of a roaring bull. He held before him an attendant, and carried in his right hand a naked sword.

"As he drew nearer, I perceived that the young man was raging, and foaming at the mouth. He descended from the back of the bull, and sat upon the ground. After which he gave to the attendant an emerald vase. The attendant then passed along the line of people, and showed the vase to each person, and as he did so, all wept loudly and bitterly. In this way he continued to show the thing, until he came to me, when he returned to his master.

"The young man immediately rose up from the ground, and with one blow of his naked sword struck the head of the attendant from his shoulders. He then broke the vase, and, mounted upon the back of the bull, galloped off in the

direction from whence he had come, the bull roaring as he went.

"All present stood like statues, motionless with grief and horror. And when he had disappeared from their sight, they returned weeping to the city.

"I asked everybody I met the meaning of this strange scene, but no one would give me the slightest information. I then sold all my goods, and bought rich merchandise of Nimroz, and journeyed back to the city of Basra. And I related to the Princess all that I had seen.

"Since which time the Princess hath been filled with amazement and curiosity. She longeth to ascertain the cause of the young man's actions, and to learn why the inhabitants of the city of Nimroz wept. She hath, therefore, made a vow that the man who will bring her a true account thereof, him she will accept in marriage, and he shall share in all her wealth.

"Therefore, O King's son," continued Barawar, "wilt thou attempt the journey to Nimroz, and ascertain the cause of this strange event? If so, prepare to depart at once. If, however, thou fearest to undertake the matter, return in peace to thine own home."

"Verily," said I, "I will immediately set out and uncover this mystery. But it is my desire that before I go, the Princess may hear with her own ears the request I presented in the letter. This will inspire my heart with confidence and joy; and I will afterward undertake all that she doth require."

Hearing this, Barawar laid his finger on his lips, and, bowing assent, returned to the apartment of the Princess. And after a short time the same old woman, whom the day before I had seen seated upon the golden bench, issued from the apartment.

She took me by the hand, and conducted me through a passage, on either side of which stood a row of female slaves, as lovely as the full moon, with arms crossed upon their

bosoms.

We next entered a saloon the beauty of which was like the shining sun for splendour. The floor was of alabaster, the ceiling was of blue colour. As for the walls, they were so covered with large mirrors, the frames of which were studded with jewels reflecting the light, that the room seemed inlaid with diamonds.

At the upper end of the saloon was a platform spread with a silken carpet, and embowered with shrubs of silver set in beds of gold. And on the shrubs were flowers formed of jewels of every colour. In the centre of the platform was placed a throne of alabaster whereon was seated the Princess. She, however, was hidden from my sight by a canopy of white brocade fringed with pearls, and supported by silver poles encrusted with jewels. On seeing all this beauty and wonder, my eyes were dazzled and my mind confused. Thereupon the old woman led me forward and seated me on a chair of sandal-wood placed before the Princess's throne.

The old woman then took her seat upon the step of the throne, and at the same moment a voice as sweet as honey and clear as a bird's issued from beneath the canopy.

"O my nurse," said the Princess, for it was she, "relate to this King's son, the story of my life, for it is wonderful!"

Thereupon the old woman began thus:—

## The Treasure Chamber

"Know, O King's son, that the Sultan of this country was very powerful, and had seven daughters. One day he held a feast and the seven daughters stood before him in sumptuous attire.

"He looked toward his daughters, and said, 'If your father had not been a Sultan, and ye had been born in the house of a poor man, who then would have called you Princesses? Therefore all your good fortune cometh from me, and ye

should be filled with humility and gratitude toward me.'

"Six of his daughters, being of one mind, made answer thus, 'O our father, what thou sayest is true, all the happiness in our lives is due to thee alone!'

"But the youngest stood with downcast eyes, and did not speak.

"The Sultan then looked toward her, and said, 'What, O my daughter, hast thou nothing to say, after all the benefits I have conferred upon thee?'

'If my lord will permit his child to speak the truth,' replied the Princess, 'I will unfold the thoughts of my heart.'

"'Speak!' said the Sultan, 'whatever thou hast to say.'

"'O my father,' said the Princess, 'the voice of truth is bitter! The King of Kings, who hath made thee Sultan, hath also made me a Princess. Thou art my sovereign, and my benefactor, but all the good that cometh into the life of every man is from Allah the High, the Great!'

"At this the Sultan was filled with rage. 'What!' exclaimed he, 'shall such big words come from a small mouth! Let this be the punishment for thy presumption and ingratitude! All thy gold and jewels shall be taken from thee, and mean garments shall be put upon thee, and thou shalt be thrust out into the wilderness, where no human trace is to be found! And soon thou shalt see what will befall thee, when thou art removed from the beneficent protection of the Sultan thy father!'

"The Sultan, having thus spoken, motioned to his chamberlains, who immediately led the Princess from the royal hall. They stripped her of her jewels, and clad her in mean garments, and, placing her upon a mule, carried her forth from the city. And they ceased not to proceed until they arrived at the desert, and they set her down in the midst and departed.

"As for the Princess she wandered about, not knowing whither to go, until darkness fell. She then said, 'There is no

strength nor power but in Allah the High, the Great.' And she laid herself down upon the sand, and slept in peace.

"And when morning appeared she awoke, and, clapping her hands, called for her slaves. Thereupon she remembered what had occurred, and rising said her prayers. Thus she put her trust in Allah, whose name be exalted!

"In this manner she passed three days without food or drink. Her delicate frame became exhausted, and her rosy colour turned pale, and her mouth was parched with thirst.

"But on the morning of the fourth day, she perceived a Sheykh with bright eyes and red cheeks, and wrapped in a green veil, walking swiftly over the desert. And as he drew near, her heart filled with hope, and she arose and bowed before him.

"'O my sister,' said he, 'what doest thou here in the heat of the day? Come with me, and I will refresh thee.'

"So saying, the Sheykh led her to a cave, near which was a well of springing water. He plucked some leaves from a tree, and, making a cup, gave her to drink. He then fed her with bread and dates, and she was refreshed.

"'O good man,' said the Princess, 'permit me to build on this spot a small habitation in which I may live.'

"'My sister,' he replied, 'first rest thyself, and after that dig the foundations for the walls; and I will go forth and collect reeds and clay with which to erect a hut.'

"Thereupon the Sheykh departed, and the Princess arose. She took a stick, and began to dig in the earth near the well. And, lo, when she had dug a yard in depth, she perceived a trapdoor.

"It opened with ease, and what was her amazement to behold a large treasure chamber stored with jars of yellow gold, bars of white silver, cups brimming with rubies and jacinths, and heaps of large white pearls. She was struck with wonder and delight. She then took four handfuls of the gold, and, closing the trapdoor, filled up the place with earth.

"Soon the Sheykh returned bearing an armful of reeds and a basket of clay; and the Princess, weeping with delight, related to him all that had occurred from first to last. At this the Sheykh rejoiced exceedingly, and said:—

"'O my sister, permit me to fetch workmen, and command them to erect on this spot a magnificent palace, the like of which hath never been seen in this land!'

"'Go' said she, 'and do all that thou desirest, and make this desert like a garden.'

"So he went forth, and returned immediately with numerous carpenters, masons, and other workmen. They proceeded to work with such wonderful rapidity that in a few hours a magnificent palace arose, with a garden like a paradise.

"Its walls were marble of dazzling whiteness; its doors of massive gold; its floors of alabaster; while rich carpets, silken curtains, gold and silver dishes, and magnificent furniture of all sorts filled the saloons. On every hand moved black and white slaves, and officers of the household. The Princess's apartment was provided with elegant garments of every kind, and with ornaments of gold set with precious stones and pearls. The spacious garden roundabout the palace was filled with playing fountains, shady walks, shrubs and flowers, and trees bearing delicious fruits.

"The Princess, rejoicing, took up her abode in the palace, but the Sheykh continued to dwell in his cave, which was now in the midst of the garden. Each day the Princess dispensed handfuls of jewels to the poor, so that her fame soon spread abroad throughout the Kingdom of Basra. So fared it with the Princess who had been cast forth into the desert!

"As for the Sultan her father, when he heard of the magnificent palace that had sprung up in a day he marvelled much thereat, and sent messengers to inquire the name of the owner. They soon returned and said:—

"Behold in the desert dwelleth a Princess whose beauty is greater than that of all the Princesses of earth. She doth

possess magnificent furniture, gold ornaments and jewels without number. And she daily giveth handfuls of precious stones to the poor and needy."

"The Sultan marvelled all the more, and immediately sent ambassadors to the Princess to ascertain of what country and rank she was, and to announce that on the following day he and all his Court would visit her palace.

"At this the Princess's heart leaped with joy, and she took a pen and wrote as follows:—

"'*To the Servant of Allah the Protector of the World, Prosperity and Peace!*

"'*Know, that thy visit to this humble abode will cause thy servant infinite rejoicing! How happy is the place where thy footsteps pass, and the inhabitants on whom thou dost cast thy shadow! Thy coming will illuminate this place like a sun. To say more is to exceed respect.*'

"She sealed the letter, and gave it to the ambassadors, and, presenting them with rich gifts, dismissed them. They immediately departed and returned to the Sultan.

"The Princess then prepared a platform of sandalwood supported by one hundred thousand and five and twenty pieces of silver. She placed thereon a peacock throne, over which was spread a canopy of gold and silver brocade. She filled a hundred and one large trays with jewels, gold pieces, boxes of rare spices, and rolls of costly silks and fine muslins. And she commanded her slaves to caparison two elephants and six Arab steeds, as gifts for the Sultan.

"When the morrow was come, lo, a great dust arose that covered the face of the desert, and the Sultan and his Court appeared. The Princess advanced to meet her father, but he knew her not, for her face was covered by a veil.

"'O Sultan of the Age,' said she, 'a friendly and free and ample welcome to thee!'

"Thereupon she made her obeisance, and led him to the throne which she had prepared. He seated himself upon it,

and gazed in wonder at all the magnificence around him. The Princess then bowed before him again, and stood with arms folded humbly across her bosom.

"'O Princess,' said the Sultan, 'of what country art thou, and why hast thou taken up thine abode in this desert, instead of seeking an habitation in the city of Basra?'

"'This slave,' replied she, 'is that offender whom thou didst cast forth from thy presence with the command to live in the desert. Behold how Allah—whose name be exalted!—hath befriended me.'

"And even as the Princess spoke, she drew from her face her veil, and when the Sultan saw his youngest daughter before him, he made haste to descend from the throne and clasp her in his arms. Then he wept aloud, and, placing her upon the throne beside him, summoned her mother and sisters. They came from the royal palace in their litters with all their attendants; and when they saw the Princess, they embraced her with love. The Sultan then seated them all around him, and they partook of the feast that had been prepared.

"The people of Basra rejoiced, the shops were closed, and the drums of joy were beaten. After this the Sultan passed a part of each year with the Princess in her palace, and the rest of the year he spent in affairs of state.

"Thus matters remained for some time, until at last the King died, and the government of the Kingdom descended to the Princess; for among her family, except herself, there was none fit to rule over the people.

"Now, O King's son," continued the old woman, "thou hast heard the astonishing history of the Princess, and if thou dost intend to journey to the country of Nimroz, then depart at once. But know that many Princes and grandees have set out for that land, and have never returned."

I replied: "Verily I go at once, and will unravel this mystery, and return to Basra again. Then will I claim the hand of the Princess, as she hath promised."

"Go, O King's son," said the sweet voice from beneath the canopy, "and may success and peace go with thee!"

### Continuation of the Story of the Young Man and the Roaring Bull

At this my heart beat with eager hope, and I took my leave, and, putting on the habit of a wandering Sheykh, I set out at once. I travelled over mountains and desert wastes, and ceased not to proceed on my way for a year's time, after which I arrived at the capital city of Nimroz.

I saw there old and young, rich and poor clad alike in black, even as the slave Barawar had related. After some days the new moon appeared, and all the inhabitants of the city assembled upon the plain and the King and his grandees went with them.

Soon I perceived the young man on the back of the roaring bull, advancing across the plain. He was raging, and foaming at the mouth in a most dreadful manner, and he carried a naked sword in his hand, and held before him an attendant.

Although I had undergone great dangers and hardships in the journey to the country of Nimroz, in order to ascertain the cause of this mystery, yet at the sight of the young man I became motionless with astonishment. He did according to his custom, and having severed the head of the attendant from his shoulders, and broken the emerald vase, he mounted on the back of the roaring bull and rode to the place from whence he had come.

I followed the weeping inhabitants to the city, and when I was recovered from my astonishment, I repented of what I had done, and resolved to await the next new moon.

I counted the days with great impatience, and when at last the new moon appeared, the King and the inhabitants assembled once more upon the plain, and I went with them. Suddenly the young man appeared on the back of the roaring

bull, and all happened as before. When he departed, however, I ran after him; but the inhabitants laid hold of me, exclaiming: "What art thou doing? If thou art tired of life, choose a less fearful way of dying!"

I struggled to escape from their hands, but three or four men seized me, and led me back to the city. And there I remained, full of regret, until the next new moon. And when the inhabitants assembled according to their manner, I separated from them, and, going to a distance out upon the plain, hid myself behind a large tree.

The young man soon came in the usual way, and after he had done according to his custom, and was returning on the back of the bull, I left the tree and ran after him. At the sound of my footsteps he turned and, perceiving me, gave an awful cry. Then, frowning horribly, and drawing his sword, he urged the bull toward me.

I, however, was fearless, and bent down my head to receive his blow. Thereupon, in surprise, he put back his sword, and said, "O rash youth, if thou hadst tried to escape, I would have severed thy head from thy neck!"

He then drew a jewelled dagger from his sash, and threw it to me, saying, "I have no money with me, so take this, and return to thy home."

Then the young man gave another loud cry, the bull roaring beneath him, and rode away across the plain.

But I followed after, and he, turning again, perceived me, and frowned most horribly. But I did not heed him, and continued to pursue him for five miles. I then perceived a castle built entirely of rocks, and the young man rode up to its door. The door opened of itself, and the young man rode in, and it closed again as before.

I remained outside in great perplexity, and presently a black slave came forth, and said:—

"O unhappy one, come in, for thou art called. But take care, for a sharp sword hovereth above thy head! What evil

Destiny hath brought thee to this place?"

"A good Destiny," I replied, "hath urged me hither." And having so said, I went into the castle without fear. The slave led me to a garden, where I saw the young man sitting alone upon a bench, with tools of a goldsmith before him. He motioned to me, and I sat down with respect.

Soon he rose up, his eyes rolling with fury, and as he did so, all the slaves ran and hid in different rooms. I hid likewise, and the young man came and fastened the locks of the doors.

He then returned to the garden, and, taking a whip, began to beat the bull so that it roared most horribly. The animal's roarings reached the room in which I was locked, and made my heart quake. Nevertheless, I burst open the lock, and, rushing into the garden, I hid behind a tree. From there I perceived the young man beating the bull, after which he stroked the animal's neck, and kissed its muzzle, and gave it food to eat. He next went into the castle, and, unlocking the doors, said to his slaves, "Call hither the wandering Sheykh."

On hearing myself thus summoned, I rushed from behind the tree, and stood before him. He desired me to sit next him, and ordered a fine repast to be served. After we had eaten, he dismissed the slaves, and said:—

"O youth with a rash heart, tell me what great misfortune hath befallen thee, that thou seekest a dreadful death?"

I thereupon related to him all my adventures, from first to last.

On hearing my tale, he heaved a deep sigh, and said:—

### Story of the Lost Fairy

"Hear, O rash youth! I, whose heart is torn in twain, am the son of the King of Nimroz. My father at my birth summoned all the astrologers of the land, and inquired of them concerning my Destiny. When they were assembled, they said: 'O King, the Prince is born under a favourable star, and

he will be learned in all the sciences, and his bravery and renown will be as great as that of Rustem and Hatim Tai. But if he see the light of the sun or moon before he is sixteen years of age, he will be afflicted with madness, and retire to the wilderness to live among animals and birds.'

"On hearing this prediction, the King my father caused a tower to be erected. Its walls were lined with felt, and were without windows, so that no ray of light might penetrate into the tower. There I was brought up, with extreme care and tenderness. I was taught all branches of science and art, and amused myself with toys and flowers, and was fed on every dainty that could be procured from the countries and islands of the world.

"On the eve of my sixteenth birthday, I was reclining upon my couch, when I perceived an astonishing flower to descend from the dome of my room. As I gazed, it increased in size, and I stretched out my hands to seize it. Immediately it eluded my grasp, and mounted again to the dome. I gazed upward, and beheld a face shining like the moon, smiling down upon me. At the same moment the dome opened, and the moonlight streamed in, and there descended into my room a jewelled throne raised on the shoulders of Fairies.

"Upon the throne was seated a Fairy of exquisite beauty, clad in white satin, and her form wrapped in a veil of silver gauze. She held in her hand an emerald cup, which she placed at my lips. Before, however, I could drink from it, a number of Fairies flew down from the dome, and whispered in her ear.

"At their words she turned pale, and trembling said: 'O my beloved, I am the daughter of the King of the Fairies, who dwelleth in the Mountains of Kaf. Take thou this magic roll, and by its aid seek me out in the Kingdom of my father. But I must now depart, for the evil Marid Jadu pursueth me.'

"She handed me a roll, and all the Fairies ascended with the throne to the dome, where they disappeared. At the same moment a gigantic Afrite rose through the floor, and

attempted to snatch the roll from me. I struck him with it, and he was immediately transformed into the roaring bull on which thou hast seen me ride.

"Since which time I have been afflicted with madness, and on every new moon I mount on the back of the bull, and ride across the plain, and do as thou hast seen. The inhabitants come forth and weep, because I am the heir to the throne, and they wish to do me honour. I cannot be released from this madness until a friend find for me my lost Fairy."

So saying the young man groaned, and was silent.

At hearing this, I wept and said, "O Prince, thou hast suffered much! Behold I make a vow to wander forth, and not to return to the Princess of Basra until I have found thy lost Fairy."

"Therefore, O my companion," continued the first Sheykh, "I have wandered seven years from clime to clime, and have found no trace of the Fairy. And last night I ascended a mountain, and when I reached the summit, a horseman appeared at my side. He had bright eyes, and red cheeks, and was wrapped in a green veil.

"'O Prince of Persia,' said he, 'depart at once for Istambol, and meet the Prince of China. The King of that country is called Azad, and when ye three meet, ye shall all receive the desires of your hearts.'

"So I came hither, and to-morrow I will seek the presence of King Azad. Do thou, O my companion, relate to me now thy story."

Thereupon the second Sheykh began as follows:—

### The Rosy Beauty and the King of the Blue Genii

Know, O my friend, that this poor wretch is the son of the King of China. I was brought up with delicacy and care, and was unacquainted with the grief and evil of life.

When I reached my tenth year, the King my father

became ill, and knew that he must die. He then summoned my uncle, his younger brother, and said:—

"I am now leaving my wealth and my Kingdom behind. My son, who is heir to my throne, is too young to rule justly. Therefore do thou govern in his stead until he arrive at the age of discretion. When he is sixteen years old, permit him to ascend the throne, and marry him to thy daughter."

After this speech, my father died, and my uncle governed in his place. He regulated the affairs of state, and commanded me to remain in the seraglio until I should attain the age of manhood. So I was brought up delicately among the women in the royal palace.

On my sixteenth birthday, a negro slave named Mubarak, who had been my father's faithful servant, came to me and said:—

"O Prince, thou art now a man, therefore thy uncle will soon fulfil the commands of thy father, and give thee thy throne. To-day will I conduct thee to the Hall of Judgment, and thou mayst claim thy rights."

So saying, Mubarak led me into the hall and presented me before my uncle, who was seated upon the royal throne, with the grandees of the Kingdom standing about him. He listened with respect to my words, and spoke softly, and said: "O son of my brother, thou art welcome. I have consulted the astrologers and find that this year will be unpropitious for thee to mount the throne, but next year will be propitious. Therefore return now to the seraglio, and wait in patience for twelve months." Whereupon Mubarak made his obeisance and led me away.

After three days had passed, he came to me, weeping, and said: "Know, O Prince, that all the officers and grandees of the Kingdom were rejoiced at seeing thee, for they said, 'Now the son of our King is a man, and he will rule over us!' These words have come to the ears of that wicked wretch, thy uncle, and he hath determined to slay thee."

At hearing Mubarak speak thus, I was dumbfounded with terror, and fell to the ground in a swoon. But the faithful slave revived me, and, lifting my head, said, "Have no fear! Mubarak will aid thee! While we have life, we should not despair!"

He took me tenderly by the hand, and conducted me into a closet, where the King my father often used to sit. Mubarak then moved a bench, and lifted the carpet, and began to remove the marble tiling from the floor, and, lo, soon a large window appeared.

He motioned me to look through it, and I approached in fear and trembling and did so. And behold, I saw a great apartment divided into four rooms. In every room were ten transparent vases, filled with gold pieces and suspended by chains of the same metal. On the mouth of each vase was laid a brick of gold whereon was a monkey of ebony with jewel eyes. I counted forty of these vases in the four rooms; but I perceived that on the mouth of the fortieth vase was neither brick nor monkey.

"Mubarak," said I, "what is this place, and of what use are the figures of the monkeys?"

"O my Prince," replied he, "thy father had a friendship with Sadik, the King of the Blue Genii. Every year thy father used to visit him, taking as a gift twenty camels laden with rarities of China. He stayed a month, and then returned bringing one of these monkeys. Thus he did for thirty-nine years.

"One day I said to him, 'O King of the age, each year thou dost carry to the King of the Blue Genii rarities worth a thousand pieces of gold, and thou bringest back with thee only the figure of a monkey! What is the advantage of such an exchange?'

"'Hear, O Mubarak,' replied thy father, 'and do not divulge the secret to any one. Each monkey is a Talisman, and is obeyed by a thousand Marids. But until I gain the full forty monkeys, I cannot command the Marids.' Soon after this thy

father died without completing the number.

"So, O Prince," continued Mubarak to me, "one monkey remaineth to be obtained. Then, by the help of the Marids, thou mayest overcome thy uncle, and regain thy Kingdom and thy throne. Let us depart this night, and seek Sadik, the King of the Blue Genii, and he will aid thee for thy father's sake."

To this I was well agreed, and when midnight was come, we disguised ourselves, and stole out of the royal palace unobserved. We proceeded northward, and travelled night and day for the period of a month. At last we reached a broad plain in which was no sign of habitation.

"O Prince," said Mubarak, "we have now attained the end of our journey. Behold the encampment of the Blue Genii!"

"But," said I with great surprise, "I see no person but thee."

Thereat Mubarak smiled, and took forth from his bosom a pot of ointment, and rubbed some of it upon my eyes. I immediately saw that we were in the midst of a vast encampment, composed of rich pavilions of every colour. At the same moment innumerable Genii in the forms of men came forward and embraced Mubarak. They then led us to the royal pavilion, and presented us before Sadik their King.

He welcomed me with kindness, and said: "O Prince, thy father was my friend, and I would serve his son as well. Know that I have an affair for thee to transact, and if thou executest it properly, I will then give thee the figure of the fortieth monkey which will gain for thee thy throne and Kingdom."

Hearing this, I joined my hands and bowed before him, saying, "Thy servant will cheerfully perform whatever service thou dost require."

Thereupon Sadik called me close to him, and showed me a paper. "Search," said he, "and find and bring to me the Rosy Beauty whose portrait is painted hereon."

When I examined the paper, and saw the portrait, its

beauty was such that my heart stood still, and I nearly fell to the floor. But I restrained myself, and answered the King, "It is well, I will take my leave, and go hastily to seek her."

So bidding farewell to the King of the Blue Genii, I left the encampment, and, accompanied by Mubarak, bent my steps toward the country of India.

For seven years I wandered from city to city, suffering dreadful misery. At last Mubarak and I reached a city, populous and large, and beheld near the gate an ancient blind beggar asking alms. As no one gave him even a copper coin, I pitied him and presented him with a piece of gold.

Thereupon the old man blessed me, and said, "Perhaps thou art a stranger, and not an inhabitant of this city?"

"I am a stranger," said I, "and a traveller who for seven years hath vainly sought for a much-desired object!"

"My house is poor," said he, "and I have little to eat, but such as it is, is thine if thou dost desire to partake of it."

On this I thanked the old man, and followed him through the streets. At length we arrived before a mansion that from neglect was falling down, and which stood in the midst of a ruined garden.

"This mansion," thought I to myself, "was once fit for a grandee! How cometh it, then, that it is the abode of this poor old man?"

We entered a dark passage, and the old man felt his way with his stick, and I heard a sweet voice saying: "O my father, is all well to-day? Why art thou returned so early?"

"O my daughter," answered he, "a compassionate traveller hath presented me with a piece of gold, and I have brought him here to partake of our food, such as it is!"

As he spoke, he led me into a room lighted by a single candle, and, lo, standing there I perceived before me the Rosy Beauty, whose portrait was painted upon the paper given me by the King of the Blue Genii. I was overwhelmed at the sight, but, collecting myself, sat down upon some cushions, and

permitted the damsel to wait upon me. This she did with such grace and sweetness that she drew sighs from my bosom. The old man, hearing me sighing thus, said:—

"O stranger, relate to us the cause of all thy sorrow and wandering during seven years."

Thereupon I told them all that had happened to me from first to last.

The old man then said: "Know, O my friend, that what thou dost relate is extraordinary, wonderful! And it hath all befallen thee because of my daughter! For this Rosy Beauty is my child, and on her account I, too, have suffered much. So hear my wretched tale:—

"I am a grandee of this Kingdom, but ruin hath befallen me. The beauty and elegance of my daughter was celebrated throughout the country of India. The son of the King of this city heard her praise, and loved her without seeing her. He no longer ate, or drank, and became melancholy.

"The King his father, learning the cause of his despair, commanded me to marry my daughter to his son. My daughter wept and tore her hair, but the preparations for the marriage were completed. When the servants of the King came to take away the bride, to escort her to the royal palace, invisible hands showered them with stones and rocks, so that they fled for their lives.

"The King, in anger, ordered fifty of his soldiers to proceed to my house, and put me to death, seize the bride, and confiscate my property. They endeavoured to do so, but when they approached the house, the same invisible hands attacked them so fiercely that they also were forced to flee.

"Since that day no inhabitant of this city may come near my house without being assaulted. So we have lived here, and all our friends have forsaken us, and our gold is gone, and our house fallen into ruins.

"This, then, is my wretched story, and as for my daughter, if she will go with thee, perhaps the King of the Blue Genii

may take pity upon us, and remove from us the cause of our woe."

When the Rosy Beauty heard the story of her father, she bowed before me, and said: "O King's son, I will go with thee, and entreat the King of the Blue Genii to release us from this enchantment."

She then left us for the night, and we lay down upon our couches, and slept until day dawned. But, alas! when we woke, we found that the old man had died in the night. His daughter and I mourned for him, and Mubarak buried him in the garden.

So we took the damsel with us, and departed. We pursued our journey for many weeks, over mountain and valley and desert waste, until we were within a night's journey of the encampment of the Blue Genii. Then we heard loud noises, and Mubarak said, "Behold the troops of the Genii surround us!" But I saw nothing at all.

At the thought of separation from the Rosy Beauty my heart almost broke. And she, seeing my sorrow, said to me: "Alas, soon we must part! After all the toil and suffering thou hast endured for my sake, my soul inclineth to thee!" Thereat we both spent the night in weeping.

Meanwhile Mubarak awoke, and, seeing our excessive grief, he said to me: "Be comforted, Mubarak will aid thee! I have with me a box of ointment, the perfume of which the King of the Blue Genii cannot endure. I will anoint the damsel with this, and he will perhaps abandon her to thee."

At this we rejoiced greatly and dried our eyes, and Mubarak arose and anointed the Rosy Beauty with the ointment. Scarcely had he done so when King Sadik appeared, and claimed the damsel. He approached to take her away, but before he could do so, he smelt the powerful perfume of the ointment.

At this he was enraged, and his eyes rolled, and, drawing his sword, he rushed upon me. Perceiving by his looks that he

intended to slay me, I drew forth my dagger, and plunged it into his body.

What was my astonishment to see him roll on the ground in the form of a huge ball. He then flew up into the sky, and ascended to such a height that he disappeared. The moment after, flashing like lightning, he descended and gave me such a blow that I became dizzy and swooned away.

When I recovered my senses, I opened my eyes and saw that I was lying in a vast wilderness, among thorns and briars. I arose and wandered about, and of every one whom I met, I inquired, "Where is Sadik, the King of the Blue Genii? He hath stolen my Rosy Beauty!" But no one answered me, for all thought I was mad.

Thus I have wandered for five years. Last night I climbed to the top of a high mountain, intending to cast myself down from it. At the same moment a horseman appeared at my side, wrapped in a green veil, and having bright eyes, and red cheeks.

"O Prince of China," said he, "the days of thy unhappiness are nearly over. Go at once to the city of Istambol and meet there the Prince of Persia and Azad, King of that country. And the wishes of all three will be fulfilled in the same place."

So I hastened and came hither, where I have met thee, O Prince of Persia, according to the saying of the horseman in the green veil. This, then, is my unhappy story.

When the second Sheykh had finished the relation of his adventures, the morning began to appear. Thereupon King Azad arose from beneath the tree, and, without discovering himself to the Sheykhs, returned to the city. He entered his palace, and, removing his mean garments, clad himself once more in royal robes. He then went to the Judgment Hall, and sat down upon the throne. He summoned his Vizier, officers, and grandees, and made his chamberlains go forth and fetch the two Sheykhs.

The chamberlains did so, and presented them before the

King. And when the Sheykhs saw the royal state of King Azad, and the executioner standing behind his throne, they knew not what to think, and were filled with fear.

Seeing this, the King commanded them both to sit down, and said, "Know, O Princes, that last night when ye were relating your histories, I was present."

At hearing this, the two Sheykhs turned pale, and trembled, and hung down their heads in silence. But King Azad said: "O ye sons of Kings, fear not, nor tremble! Know that there is no person in this world to whom a wonderful incident hath not happened. Though I am a King, yet have I seen strange sights. Hear now my surprising tale."

## The Story of the Vizier's Daughter and the Twelve Rubies

When the King my father died, and I ascended the throne, I was a mere youth. It happened one year that a merchant of Khurasan came to this city, and brought with him rare merchandise of his land. I sent for him, and he bowed before me, and presented me with many rarities, and among them a ruby in a golden box. The jewel was wonderful to behold, for it was as large as a pigeon's egg, and of a fine shape and very brilliant. Though I was a King, I had never seen such a large precious stone.

I accepted it, and made the merchant many rich presents, and gave him a letter sealed with my ring, in which I commanded all my subjects throughout the Kingdom to treat him with kindness. After which he departed.

I used to send daily for this ruby, and amuse myself by looking at it while I sat upon my throne. One day, when I was surrounded by the officers of my Kingdom, and the ambassadors from other lands stood before me, I sent for the ruby according to my custom. The treasurer brought it, and I took it in my hand, and, praising it, gave it into the hand of the

ambassador of the Franks. He seeing it, smiled, and said, "O King of the age, thy good Destiny hath procured for thee this stone, for surely no other King of earth hath its equal!"

Hearing this, my father's Vizier, who was old and wise, approached the throne, and bowed himself. "If my lord," said he, "will grant me my life, I wish to impart to him a bitter truth!"

"Speak," said I, "and make known the truth."

"Know," said he, "that it doth not become a mighty King to so value a bit of stone, although it is precious, and of a large size and beautiful colour. The ambassadors of other lands, who are here present, will return to their Sultans, and say, 'As for the King of Istambol, he is a strange man, for he hath got a ruby from somewhere, and each day he sendeth for it, and first praiseth it himself, and then showeth it to all present.' And the Sultans will certainly laugh.

"And I would have my lord the King know, also, that there is a poor merchant in Khurasan, who hath twelve rubies, each the size of a hen's egg, sewn in a collar, which he hath put around the neck of a dog."

On hearing the words of my Vizier, I was filled with fury at his imprudence in uttering them in the presence of my Court. I made a sign toward my guard, and they seized the Vizier and were about to lead him forth to the place of execution.

Thereat the ambassador of the Franks joined his hands in humble supplication, and stood before my throne.

"O King of the age," said he, "may I know the Vizier's fault?"

I answered, "What can be a greater fault than to lie in the presence of the King?"

"But," replied he, "thou hast not yet ascertained whether he hath told a falsehood! Perhaps what he hath said is true. To put an innocent person to death is not right!"

"Verily," said I, "I can never believe that a merchant, who

wandereth from country to country and from city to city, hath sewn twelve rubies, each as large as a hen's egg, into the collar of his dog."

The ambassador answered: "Nothing is surprising! Perhaps it is the case, for merchants going from country to country often secure great rarities. Let the Vizier be imprisoned, and do thou send and find whether his words be falsehood or truth! The services and fidelity of a whole life should not be forgotten!"

Though I desired to punish the Vizier with death, yet the ambassador of the Franks gave such wise replies that I could not answer him. So I said, "Verily, he shall be imprisoned for the space of a year, and if at the end of that period his words be proven true, he shall be released, but if his words are false, he shall be put to death with torments."

Accordingly I commanded that the Vizier should be bound with chains, and placed in the prison; and it was done.

## The Dog-Worshipper

When this news reached the wife of the Vizier, weeping and lamentation took place, and all was mourning.

Now, the Vizier had a daughter, fifteen years of age, who was beautiful and intelligent. He loved her with all tenderness, and had erected for her a magnificent apartment, where she lived with her companions, the daughters of grandees. It happened on the day when the Vizier was sent to prison that she was sitting with them, and they were making a feast for their dolls. Music was sounding, and sweetmeats were prepared, and the feast was spread by the side of the fountain.

Thereupon the Vizier's wife rushed suddenly in, weeping and lamenting, and tearing her hair.

"Alas!" cried she, "better were it for me if thou wert a blind son, instead of only a daughter! He at least would be a comfort to thy father!"

"O my mother," replied the Vizier's daughter, "of what use would a blind son be to thee? What he could do, that I might do also."

"O unfortunate wretch," said her mother, "know that a great calamity hath befallen thy father, for he hath been confined in prison."

"And why," asked the Vizier's daughter, "hath he been imprisoned?"

"Because," said her mother, "he hath told the King that a merchant in Khurasan hath sewn twelve rare rubies into a dog's collar. The King believeth him not, and hath imprisoned him for one year. At the end of which period, if his words be not proven true, the King will put him to death with torments!

"Now, if thy father had a son even a blind son he would assist him, and beseech the King's pardon!"

At these words the Vizier's daughter comforted her mother, and bade her be hopeful, so that the woman became patient, and returned in silence to her apartment.

As for the Vizier's daughter, when night was come, she sent for the steward of the house, and falling at his feet weeping, she said: "I have formed a plan to release my father, and only thou canst afford me assistance. I will set out in disguise for Khurasan, and see the merchant who hath such large rubies sewn in his dog's collar. Make, therefore preparations secretly for my journey, for I would go as a young merchant. Load me some camels with merchandise, and procure for me a disguise."

The steward made haste, and loaded some camels, and procured the habit of a young merchant, and made all ready. The Vizier's daughter put on the habit, and mounting a mule, took with her the steward, and departed in secret. When morning was come, the Vizier's daughter had disappeared and no one knew whither she was gone.

She, however, in the guise of a young merchant,

journeyed night and day, until at last she arrived at the principal city of Khurasan, where she put up at the khan.

She then left her goods with the steward and went forth to the market, where four streets crossed each other. She perceived on one of the streets a jeweller's shop, in which were displayed great quantities of precious stones, together with gold and silver ornaments without number. In the door of the shop sat an elegant man, surrounded by slaves magnificently clad. Many merchants were with him, seated on stools, and conversing one with the other.

The Vizier's daughter rejoiced at this sight, and thought to herself, "Surely this is the merchant of whom my father spoke." And as she thought thus she beheld, in the shop next to the jeweller's, a room in which two iron cages were suspended. In each cage was a man, all skin and bones, with his hair long and uncombed, and his nails like claws; and he sat crouched down with his head upon his breast. Two ugly negroes, completely armed, were standing one by each cage.

Struck with amazement, the Vizier's daughter turned her eyes away, and saw, on the other side of the jeweller's shop, another room, in which a silken carpet was spread. An ivory stool was placed thereon, with a velvet cushion, and on it a dog was lying chained by a golden chain. And, lo, around his neck was a collar set with twelve large and brilliant rubies! Two handsome slaves waited upon the dog. One was shaking above his head a peacock fan with a golden handle set with precious stones, while the other slave held an embroidered handkerchief with which he wiped the dog's mouth and feet.

At this sight the Vizier's daughter could scarcely restrain her joy. "I must," thought she, "devise some means whereby I may show the twelve rubies to my lord the King!"

She was plunged in these thoughts, and the passers by, seeing her youth and beauty, stopped and gazed upon her with admiration. And they said to each other, "Never have we seen before to-day a youth so lovely and charming!"

The jewel merchant beheld her also, and sent a slave to address her.

"O young man," said the slave, "my master the Khoja of the jewel-market, wisheth to see and welcome thee. Be so kind, therefore, as to enter his shop and partake of his refreshments."

Immediately the Vizier's daughter advanced toward the shop, and the Khoja rose up to meet her. He kissed her upon the forehead, and made her sit down beside him, and asked whence she came, and whither she was going.

"I come," said she, "from Istambol, and have an affair to conduct in this city. I hope to complete it shortly, and then I shall at once return to my home."

"O my son," said the Khoja, "give me not such bad news! Stay with me for some days! Tell me where thou hast left thy slaves and thy merchandise, and permit me to have them conveyed to my home. I will give thee a house, and provide thee with a shop, so that thou mayest live in this city, and buy and sell."

The Khoja then, without waiting for the consent of the Vizier's daughter, ordered his slaves to go to the khan, and fetch her goods. They did so, and conveyed them together with the steward, to the Khoja's mansion.

As night was approaching, the Khoja closed his shop, and conducted the Vizier's daughter to his house. At the same time, one of the two handsome slaves took the dog under his arm while the other slave lifted up the ivory stool and carpet. The armed negroes placed the two cages upon their heads. And all followed the Khoja home.

They entered the mansion, and the Vizier's daughter perceived it to be spacious and magnificently furnished. A carpet was spread by the side of the fountain in the court, and a delicious repast was laid out. The two slaves placed the stool on the carpet, and the dog thereon, while the negroes hung the cages containing the men, upon the wall.

The Khoja then seated the Vizier's daughter beside him; but before they ate, he filled a golden platter with roast meats and the most delicate viands. This the slaves carried to the dog, and, spreading an embroidered napkin, laid the platter before him. The dog descended from his stool, and ate as much as he liked, and drank water from a golden bowl. After which he returned to his stool, and one of the slaves wiped his mouth and his feet with the napkin.

Thereupon the two negroes took the men from the cages, and, giving them many blows with whips, made them eat what the dog had left in the platter. At this sight the Vizier's daughter was filled with indignation and said:—

"O evil man! Why dost thou so cruelly treat these men, and make them eat from the platter of an impure dog? Is it not enough that these miserable creatures are thy prisoners, but that thou must beat them like brutes? Verily, thou art a dog-worshipper! Until these doubts are removed from my mind, I will not eat with thee."

At this the Khoja sighed and answered: "Alas! O my son, the inhabitants of this city believe me to be a dog-worshipper, and call me so, and even force me to pay double taxes, such as idolaters pay. But no one knoweth the secret motive of my conduct; the relation of which is too grievous! I have not strength of mind or composure enough, to tell my sad history, and that of these two men and the dog. Nevertheless, know that I am no dog-worshipper, nor idolater, but a follower of Allah, the High, the Great."

This removed the doubts of the Vizier's daughter, and satisfied her mind, and she partook of the food. After which she abode with the Khoja for the space of two months, and bought and sold in the market.

One day, in the midst of a feast, the Vizier's daughter began to weep, and seeing it, the Khoja comforted her, and wiped away her tears.

"O my father," said she, "what shall I say? If I had not met

thee and experienced thy kindness, I should not now be weeping! I am cruelly distressed, for I must return at once to my land and my kindred. But at the thought of separation from thee, I have no hopes of life!"

On hearing these words, the Khoja wept loudly, and exclaimed: "O light of my eyes! Art thou so soon tired of thy friend, that thou desirest to leave him? Banish from thy heart the wish to go, and as long as I live, remain here. I shall not exist a day in thine absence!

"The climate of Khurasan is very fine, and this city wealthy. Let me send a messenger to thy parents, to bring them and their property hither. I have no son, and I love thee more than son, and will make thee heir of all I possess."

"Verily," replied the Vizier's daughter, "thou hast been more than a father to me! But know that this unhappy one's father is in extreme old age, and will die a fearful death if I return not to him. Therefore I must depart."

"Then," said the Khoja, "if thou wilt not abide here with me, I will go with thee; for I love thee dearer than my life."

So saying he arose, and prepared for the journey. He took all his gold and jewels to a great amount, together with rich rarities and many servants and slaves. He loaded his camels, and, going forth from the city, pitched his tents outside the gate.

And when the merchants of the city heard of his departure, they likewise took their goods and servants, and joined the Khoja, so that the caravan resembled an army. And the march began; first came five hundred brave Tartar and African slaves, armed and well mounted, to accompany the caravan. After them followed a thousand camels laden with jewels and every sort of rare merchandise, and these were accompanied by the merchants of the city. In the rear of the caravan rode the Khoja and the Vizier's daughter, each carried in a magnificent litter. Near them in another litter lashed to the back of a camel, reposed the dog upon a velvet cushion,

and attended by his slaves; while the two cages containing the men, were slung across the back of a mule.

They travelled night and day, over desert and plain, until they approached Istambol, and thereupon the caravan encamped outside the city. The Khoja also pitched his tents, and he and the Vizier's daughter sat down to eat.

It happened, O Sheykhs, continued King Azad, that one of my chamberlains passed that way, and, seeing the encampment, was astonished. He saw also the Khoja, and the Vizier's daughter dressed like the son of a merchant, sitting in state, and waited on by a hundred black slaves. And near them he perceived the dog upon his stool, and the two men in their cages. He hastened to return to the royal palace, and he related to me the strange sight.

Hearing of the dog's state, and of the two poor wretches, I exclaimed: "This wicked merchant doth not deserve to live! Go immediately and bring me his head!"

At this the ambassador of the Franks, who stood before my throne, smiled, and I became angry, and said, "O disrespectful man, wherefore dost thou grin and show thy teeth in the presence of the King?"

"O King of the age," the ambassador replied, "know that certain thoughts crossed my mind, whereat I smiled! The first was, the Vizier spoke the truth, and will now be released, and thy soul O King, will not be stained with his blood! The second was, that thou hast commanded this merchant to be put to death, without cause or crime, and without making inquiry. Call, therefore, this merchant before thee, and ask him his story."

When the ambassador thus spoke, I also remembered what the Vizier had said, and commanded that the merchant, his son, his dog, and the cages should be immediately brought before me.

The guard went forth, and soon returned, and brought them all into the Judgment Hall. They set the cages and the

dog before me, and the Khoja and the young merchant drew near to the throne. All present were astonished at the beauty and delicacy of the young man and his elegant attire. He brought in his hand a golden tray whereon were heaps of precious stones, which illuminated the hall. He laid it before the throne, and, making his obeisance, stood in silence.

The Khoja also kissed the ground before me, seeing which, I exclaimed: "O Eblis in human form! What diabolic net hast thou spread for human beings! What is thy belief, and what idol dost thou worship?"

"O mighty King," replied the Khoja, "know that I worship no idol, but because of my dog, I am called an idolater, and pay double taxes. But there is a reason, which I cannot disclose, why I act thus, and am called a dog-worshipper."

On hearing these excuses, my heart was inflamed with anger. "O wicked man!" said I, "thou art beguiling me with words. Relate to me the cause of thy vile actions, or I will order thee to be put to the most cruel of deaths."

Thereupon the Khoja replied: "O King, do not spill the blood of this unfortunate wretch! But take instead all my wealth, and release me and this my son."

Thereat I smiled, and said: "O fool! dost thou wish to bribe me with thy wealth? Thou canst not be saved, unless thou speak the truth."

At these words tears streamed from the Khoja's eyes, and, approaching nearer to the throne, he kissed the carpet, and said:—

"O mighty King, if thou hadst not ordered me to be put to death, I would have borne every torture, and would not have disclosed my story. But life is sweet, and if thou art determined to hear the events of my past, first command these two men to be taken from the cages, and placed before me."

And, after the two men were taken from their cages, and made to stand before the Khoja, he began thus:—

## The Faithful Beast

"Know, O King, that the man who standeth on the right is my eldest brother, and he who standeth on the left is my second brother. I am younger than they.

"My father was a merchant in Persia; and when I had attained the age of fourteen, he died. After the days of mourning were over, my brothers said to me one day, 'Come, let us divide our father's wealth, and separate, and each do with his share what best pleaseth him.'

"I said: 'O my brothers, I am young, and our father is dead, and ye stand in the place to me of a father. I am a boy, and have not yet learned enough. What am I able to do? Educate me, that is all I wish. Let me remain with you and wait upon you. A dry loaf is all I shall need!'

"On hearing this, they replied, 'Thou wishest to ruin us, and make beggars of us like thyself!'

"Thereupon I retired to a corner and wept with grief. In the morning my brothers conducted me to the Cadi, and I repeated to him what I had said to them. They then said to the Cadi, 'If he is sincere in what he saith, let him sign a paper giving us his share of our father's wealth.'

"I said to myself: 'Verily, they are my elders, and will do me good! If I get my share of the property I may spend it, but if I have an education I can become a successful merchant.' So I signed the paper, and we returned to our house.

"The second day after this, my brothers said to me: 'We wish the room in which thou sleepest. Hire another place of residence, and go and stay there.'

"It was then I perceived that they did not wish me even to remain in my father's house!

"I had no remedy, and determined to leave. I placed my garments in a bundle, together with a number of rarities which my father had given me. I went forth from the house, and, selling my rarities, received for them a considerable sum

of money.

"I bought a small house, and resided there, and this dog followed me thither. I purchased household furniture, and bought two slaves to attend me. I then opened a shop for the sale of garments, and sat down quietly in it, with a thankful heart. I was content with my Destiny, though my brothers had behaved unkindly to me.

"In three years' time my shop became famous, and whatever handsome garments were ordered by the families of grandees came from me. I amassed much money, and lived at ease.

"It happened one Friday, as I was sitting at home, that a slave of mine returned from the market-place in tears. 'Why,' asked I, 'art thou grieving? Tell me the cause, that I may relieve thy sorrow?'

"Whereat he said: 'What is it to thee! Thou dost enjoy thyself, but thy poor brothers are being beaten for debt in the market-place!'

"On hearing this, my blood boiled with rage, and, ordering my slaves to hasten with some gold, I ran to the market-place. I beheld there my brothers, with their arms tied behind their backs, being whipped with rods; while their creditor stood by, saying, 'Pay me my gold, or ye shall be beaten to death!'

"I paid the creditor in full, and brought my brothers to my house, where I had them bathed, and dressed, and fed. And I never asked them what they had done with my father's wealth, lest they should be ashamed.

"What I say is truth, O King Azad! Ask them if I have lied in aught."

Thereat the two brothers hung their heads with shame.

"Well, after some days," continued the Khoja, "when they had recovered from their beating, I said to them thus, 'O my brothers, ye have lost your good name in this city, and it is better for you to travel to other parts, and trade there until this matter be effaced from the memories of all.'

"So I purchased for them a large amount of merchandise,

and they joined a caravan, and departed. After a year the caravan returned, but I heard no tidings of my brothers. At last I went to the leader of the caravan, and asked him what had befallen them. And he answered, and said:—

"'One of thy brothers hath lost all his goods at a gambling-house, and he is now a sweeper in the same house, and waiteth upon the gamblers who assemble there. Thine other brother, likewise, hath become poor, and is now a porter. They are both in the city of Bukhara.'

"On hearing this, I was in a sad state, and hunger and sleep vanished through grief. I took some money in my purse, and immediately set off alone for the city of Bukhara. On arriving there, I searched for my brothers, and, finding them, led them to the khan. There I had them bathed, and clothed in new garments; and, lest thy should be ashamed, I did not mention to them the past.

"I again purchased merchandise, suitable for a sea-voyage, and, taking my brothers, embarked in a large ship. We weighed the anchor, and the ship set sail. This dog was sleeping upon the bank of the river, and when he awoke and saw the ship far from land, he barked, and, jumping into the water, swam to the ship. And the sailors brought the faithful animal safely on board.

"After we had been voyaging for one month, my brothers consulted together and determined to destroy me, and seize all my property and goods.

"One night I was sleeping in my cabin, and my second brother entered hastily, and awoke me. 'Come,' said he, 'we desire to show thee an amazing sight!'

"I rose in haste, and ran out upon the deck, and this dog followed me. My eldest brother was leaning against the side of the ship, and gazing into the water. He made a sign to me, and I also looked into the waves.

"'Behold,' said he, 'mermen are dancing in the water, bearing branches of coral to which are attached pearl oysters

and scarlet shells!' Hearing this, I was filled with curiosity, and leaned over the ship's side. He then gave me such a blow that I fell into the foaming waves. Whereupon both of my brothers began to run about the deck, shouting, 'Alas! our brother! He is drowned!'

"In the meantime the ship went on, and the waves carried me far away. I was sinking fast, when my hand touched something, and I grasped it with all my might. I then perceived that it was the tail of this dog, who was swimming by my side. He kept on swimming, and pulled me along, and in this manner we passed seven days and nights.

"On the eighth day we reached the shore. I had no sense left, and, throwing myself upon the sand, I remained unconscious that day. When the next morning was come, I came to myself and heard the barking of this dog. I rose up, and walked until evening when I approached a city large and inhabited.

"I entered and passed through the streets, and came to the market-place, where I saw the shops of the bakers and confectioners. I was extremely hungry, and my soul was fainting within me, and at that moment I perceived two young men walking arm in arm, and richly clad. I was about to ask them for alms, when, lo, I saw that they were my two brothers!

"At the same moment they knew me, and my second brother struck me such a blow that I staggered and fell, while the other kicked and cursed me. At that all present in the market-place ran toward us, and my brothers said, 'This rascal was our younger brother's servant, and he pushed our poor brother overboard, and stole his goods.' They then tore their clothes, and wept loudly, and beat and kicked me cruelly.

"In the meantime the soldiers of the Governor arrived, and, seizing me, led me to the Judge. And my brothers told him their lying tale. He then condemned me to be cast alive into a pit, and to be left there to die.

"Now, this pit was an ancient well, dark and narrow, dug by Afrites in the time of Solomon, the son of David, on both

of whom be peace! The soldiers carried me thither, and lowered me into the well. Except this dog I had no one to weep for me, and his state of despair was such that he rolled on the feet of the soldiers, and barked and howled. They tried to beat him off with sticks, but he would not leave the place. So they left him there, and returned to the city.

"I lay for some time senseless, and after a while I heard some one moving about. 'Who art thou?' I exclaimed. 'If thou art a human being, speak!'

"At that, I heard two men laugh, and one said, 'This is the prison of Solomon, and we are prisoners!' And even as they spoke, some person came to the mouth of the well, and let down a jar of water and a loaf, and the two men near me seized them, and ate and drank.

"Now, my little dog, who was standing beside the mouth of the well, saw this done; and he immediately ran back to the city. He beheld in the marketplace, some round cakes of bread piled in a baker's shop, and, leaping up, he seized a cake in his mouth, and ran off with it. The people pursued him with stones, and the dogs of the street fought him, but he saved the cake, and soon left his pursuers behind. He came to the well, and threw the cake in, and barked so that I might know it was there. I took it up, and ate it, and my hunger was appeased.

"After throwing the cake into the well, the dog went to look for some water. He approached a hut, at the door of which an old woman sat spinning. She seized a stick, and arose to beat the animal, but he rubbed his mouth on her clothes, and wagged his tail, and then ran toward the mountain where was the well. He then returned, and seizing a rope and a bucket, pulled at the end of her dress.

"She was surprised at such intelligence, and picked up the bucket and rope. Thereupon the dog took hold of her dress, and drew her to a spring. She filled the bucket, and he barked with joy, and leaped around her. He then led her to the

mountain, until they came to the well. She let down the bucket, and I seized it, and drank.

"In this way the dumb animal daily brought me bread to eat and the woman gave me water to drink. And when the baker perceived that the dog came every day, he had compassion on him, and threw him each time a large cake of bread.

"One night, while the two prisoners were asleep, and my heart was heavy, I began to weep. When, lo, what did I see but a rope hanging down from the mouth of the well! I heard a low voice say, 'O unfortunate man, tie the rope to thy hands, and I will draw thee forth!'

"Thereat I trembled so much that I could hardly obey. I tied the rope around my waist, and some one pulled me forth. I then saw my deliverer by the light of the moon. He had bright eyes, and was wrapped in a green veil; and I beheld near him a horse.

"'O young man,' said he, 'mount this horse, and flee for thy life.'

"With my heart full of thanks, I mounted the horse, and it ran like the wind. And this dog followed me. Soon we had left that land far behind, and when morning dawned, I found myself near a large and fine city.

"I descended from the horse, and it immediately turned and ran back by the way it had come. I then entered the gate, and the guards met me, and took me to their King. He was well pleased with me, and showered favours upon me, and made me an officer of his Court.

"I accumulated wealth, and passed my life in extreme delight. At the end of two years a caravan arrived, and I saw among the slaves of the merchants two poor men. They were thin and ragged, and in a miserable condition. I looked at them with great attention, and perceived that they were my brothers.

"Thereupon my heart was filled with pity and shame for

their condition, and I caused them to be brought to my house, and clothed and fed. After which I gave them each a purse of gold. But the wicked wretches again conspired to slay me.

"One night, when I was asleep, they entered my apartment, and drew their swords to kill me; when this dog, who lay sleeping near me, awoke and began to bark. He then flew at them, and held them by their clothes, and the guard rushed in and seized them. At the same moment the young man with bright eyes, who had delivered me from the well, appeared before me.

"'Behold,' said he, 'I am thy guardian Genie, Ali of the Green Veil. Do thou reward this faithful animal by the most tender care, and place around his neck this collar containing twelve rare rubies. As for thy two brothers, they shall henceforth be confined in two cages, and fed from the platter of this dog; and nightly they shall receive a beating. Such shall be their punishment until they have learned that an ungrateful man is worse than a faithful beast!'

"And as the Genie spoke thus, these two negroes entered the room bearing the cages upon their heads. They placed my brothers in them, and ever since have been their attendants.

"I then took this faithful dog, and all my jewels and wealth, and journeyed to the chief city of Khurasan. There I opened a shop in the jewel-market, and amassed great wealth.

Hence I am called the dog-worshipper, and am forced to pay double taxes.

"Such, O King Azad," added the Khoja, "is my extraordinary story! Now, thou mayest either put me to death, or spare my life, according to thy royal pleasure."

Hearing this, O Sheykhs, continued King Azad, I was enraged at the two brothers, and delighted with the faithful dog. I caused a robe of honour to be brought for the Khoja, and a gift for the young merchant, and I commanded the wicked brothers to be put back into the cages, and to be kept there.

I then asked the Khoja, "Is this thy son?"

And he replied: "O mighty King, he is not my son, but an inhabitant of thy city Istambol. Nevertheless, I am about to make him the heir to all my wealth."

I then said to the young merchant, "O Youth, who art thou, and who are thy parents?"

Thereupon the young merchant fell down before the throne. "This slave," said he, "is the daughter of thy Vizier! My father was imprisoned on account of the Khoja's rubies. And thy servant in this disguise went to Khurasan to save him! Now that thou hast seen the dog with the rubies, and hast heard the Khoja's story, I beseech thee, release my father, and restore him to thy favour!"

On hearing this the Khoja gave a groan, and fell down in a swoon. When he had recovered his senses, he slapped his face and tore his hair.

"Alas!" cried he; "O dire mishap! I thought to make this young merchant my son and heir! But all my hopes are perished, for he is only a damsel!"

Seeing his grief, O Sheykhs, I pitied the Khoja, and said, "Do not grieve. I will marry her to thee!"

At this he became a little comforted, and composed. I then commanded my chamberlains to release the Vizier, and array him in robes of honour. When the Vizier entered the Judgment Hall, I descended from my throne and embraced him.

On the following day a feast was prepared, and I married the Vizier's daughter to the Khoja, and conferred upon him titles and honours.

Such, O Sheykhs, was the strange thing that happened to me in my younger days.

## The Prince Baktiyar

And King Azad ceased speaking, and immediately a

commotion sounded in the palace, and a eunuch came running from the royal seraglio. He cast himself down before the throne, crying, "O King of the age, may thy glory increase! This moment a Prince is born to be thine heir, before whose beauty the sun and the moon are abashed!"

At this the King nearly expired with joy; and he summoned his Vizier Kiradmand. He commanded that a great feast should be held, the drums beaten, the city decorated, and the purses of the poor filled with gold, and that the prisoners should be released and those condemned to execution should be pardoned. The whole city rejoiced, and the King with them. And they named the Prince, Baktiyar.

In the midst of this happiness the sounds of weeping and lamentation issued from the seraglio, and the eunuchs came forth crying: "Alas! Alas! When the nurses were bathing the Prince Baktiyar, a cloud descended from the ceiling. The nurses became senseless, and when they recovered, they found that the Prince was gone!"

The King was thunderstruck at this dreadful calamity, and the whole country mourned. For two days no one ate or slept, but grieved for the Prince. But, lo, on the third day, the same cloud appeared, and a cradle set with jewels, with a covering of pearls, descended from the ceiling. And the nurses saw therein the Prince playing with golden toys.

They told King Azad, and he made haste to enter the seraglio. He perceived the Prince laughing and kicking in his cradle. He was clad in a robe of fine muslin and pearls, and wore around his neck a necklace of gold inlaid with precious stones. Thereupon the King and all his people were transported with joy.

And so it happened on the first day of each new moon, the cloud came, and carried away the Prince. And on the third day after the cradle filled with rarities descended from the ceiling. So matters continued for three months.

At the end of that time the King made a feast, and sum-

moned the two royal Sheykhs. They passed the night in merriment and song, until the hour of midnight approached. Then suddenly they perceived a turquoise throne descending from the dome; and thereon were inscribed in letters of gold, these words:—

*O King Azad, fear not, but mount this throne!*

The King wondered much thereat, but, taking the Sheykhs, he mounted the throne. Immediately it began to ascend, and, passing through the dome, soared, as if on wings, through the air. And it continued to fly, until at last it descended on to a plain.

Thereupon an invisible hand put ointment upon the eyes of the King and the Sheykhs, and, lo, they saw that they were in a vast assembly of Genii, standing in double rows. The King then advanced between the rows, and approached a throne whereon sat Sadik, the King of the Blue Genii. And near the throne, he beheld the Prince Baktiyar playing with a little Princess.

The King of the Blue Genii, descending from his throne, embraced King Azad and the Sheykhs. He then seated them beside him, and requested them to relate the stories of their lives: and they did. After which King Sadik said:—

"Know, O my friends, that three months ago there was born to me a lovely daughter, whom I resolved to marry to one of the Princes of earth. I therefore ordered my Afrites to search the four corners of the earth, and bring to me a boy who was born at the same moment as was my daughter. The Afrites flew immediately to the four corners of the earth, and fetched hither the young Prince Baktiyar.

"I took the boy on my lap, and loved him as tenderly as I did my daughter. I presented him with golden toys and the third day, returned him to his father. Since then each month I have sent my Afrites for him, and they convey him hither in a jewelled cradle. When the Prince and Princess are grown, I will marry them to each other.

"Now, as to these Sheykhs, the desires of their hearts shall be fulfilled."

So saying, King Sadik sent forth his Afrites to fetch from the four corners of the earth the Princess of Basra, the Prince of Nimroz, the Lost Fairy, and the Rosy Beauty. The Afrites made haste, and returned immediately carrying them in their arms. But when they set them down before the throne, they found that the Lost Fairy was still missing.

Then King Sadik frowned, and said, "O Flyers, why hast thou not brought the daughter of the King of the Fairies?"

"O our lord," said they, "the Marid Jadu hath stolen her away, and hath confined her in his magic fortress in the Mountains of Kaf. And we were not able to bring her because the place is strong, and he is a powerful, evil Marid."

On hearing this, King Sadik boiled with rage, and commanded an army of the Blue Genii to go at once to the Mountains of Kaf, and destroy the fortress of the Marid Jadu, and rescue the Fairy. They did so, and shortly placed her safely at the foot of King Sadik's throne.

Whereupon all present rejoiced, and the King of the Blue Genii presented the son of the King of China with the figure of the fortieth monkey. He then married him to the Rosy Beauty; and gave the Lost Fairy to the Prince of Nimroz, the Princess of Basra to the Prince of Persia; and betrothed the little Prince Baktiyar to his daughter.

After which he caused a magnificent banquet to be served, and all partook thereof. He then commanded his Afrites to convey the Princes and their brides to their Kingdoms; while King Azad, taking the little Prince Baktiyar in his arms, mounted the flying throne, and was wafted gently back to his palace in Istambol.

## Conclusion of the Fountain of the Genii

Thus ceased the Tales of the Good Genii. And Ali of the Green Veil bowed before the golden throne, and ascended his own silver one.

"O good Fairy Moang," said the King of the Genii, "the children of Guialar, the Iman of Terki, have listened in all due silence to the tales of the servants of our lord Solomon, the son of David, on both of whom be peace! Conduct them, therefore, to the Garden of Fruits, and permit them to rejoice with the Sons and Daughters of the Fairies. Only bring them hither again when the period of a year hath passed."

The Fairy, smiling, led the excited children through a golden door, and they found themselves in the Garden of Fruits.

They beheld a spacious place, in which were palms, and many trees laden with the coloured fruits. The odour of rare spices filled the air, and bright-feathered birds flew sweetly singing from tree to tree.

A river watered the garden, flowing through arbours of roses, and jasmines, and myrtle. Upon its green bank played the Sons and Daughters of the Fairies, clad in their robes of blue, pink, violet, and white. Some were sailing Fairy boats, and others were flying coloured kites shaped like birds and beasts. And with them was the happy Genie Abdallah.

He smiled at Patna and Coulor, and when they perceived him their hearts beat with joy, and they hastened toward the river. Then all the boys and girls, advancing and laughing, drew them into their midst.

They tossed golden balls, and rejoiced together, and sang

with the birds. They danced in the grass, and plucked bouquets of flowers, and feasted on fruits and creams, and walked beneath the trees with the happy Genie Abdallah.

But when the sun was beginning to set, the Fairy Moang drew near. "Patna and Coulor," said she, "must now say farewell to the Sons and Daughters of the Fairies, and return to their father, who doth await them by the side of the Fountain of the Genii."

At this the children were overcome with grief, but before they could utter a word, they found themselves once more in the basin of the fountain, and they perceived that they were holding golden baskets full of the coloured fruits.

The Fairy Moang took them each by the hand, and they rose through the water without wetting their clothes. On reaching the pool of the fountain, the Fairy placed them upon the ground; and, lo, they saw the Iman Guialar seated upon the marble bench beneath the cool shade of the trees.

When he beheld Patna and Coulor, he arose and ran forward to meet them, and embraced them with tenderness. But when he turned to address the Fairy, she had vanished away, and in her place stood the beautiful and fragrant citron-tree.

The Iman then led the children to the palace; and on examining the coloured fruits they saw, with wonder and delight, that they were changed into the most brilliant jewels! He then seated the happy children beside him, and they related to him all the Tales of the Good Genii from beginning to end.

# Jewish Fairy Tales and Stories

Translated and Edited by Gerald Friedlander

# Preface

All the stories in this little book, except the first, have been collected from various Jewish writings. No attempt has been made to give a literal translation. The stories have been retold in a modern setting. Some of them may possibly recall a few well-known tales and parables. Most of them are original, and on that account of more than passing interest, apart from their intrinsic value. Something of the spirit of Israel lies concealed in the old Jewish stories. It is the earnest hope of the present writer that a little of this spirit will be found to be revealed in the following pages.

# The Black Dwarf

There once lived long, long ago, in some happy land, a Jew named Samuel. He was most pious, but, as so often happens with the good, he was unfortunately very poor. He had an aged mother to keep, as well as a charming wife and two sons. He dealt in cheap second-hand old clothes. His scanty earnings barely sufficed to enable him to make both ends meet. It often happened that the family had neither meat nor vegetables from Sunday to Friday. He generally managed, however, to find sufficient money to procure a substantial meal of fish, meat and wine for the Sabbath. His object was to honour the holy Day of Rest in accordance with the good old Jewish custom.

In spite of his extreme poverty he was always ready to share his frugal fare with those less fortunate than himself. Jew and Gentile were always welcome at his table. He was a man of principles which he strove to put into practice. One of his rules was never to spend quite as much as he earned. Another was never to lose heart, so much so that he was wont to exclaim on sundry occasions: "If God should help me and make me a man of means, I will help others to get on in the world."

It happened one Friday morning, when he was going his usual round, that he saw himself all of a sudden confronted by a dwarf with a very long black beard. The little man was dressed in a smart black suit. He was closely examining the bundle of old clothes on Samuel's arm.

"What have you got there?" asks the dwarf.

Samuel replies: "Old clothes for sale."

"What is the price of this suit on top, which I see is black?" queries the dwarf.

Samuel answers: "The price is ten shillings. I cannot afford to take less, but if it should please the good God to help me and to make me a man of means, I promise to give you an entire suit free of charge."

"So be it," cries the dwarf; "I agree to purchase this suit for ten shillings. I am sorry to tell you that I do not happen to have all that money about me just now. I will, however, give you half a crown as a deposit. One day I will call on you and pay you the balance. Meanwhile please be good enough to keep the suit for me, for it is now mine. Do you agree?"

"Most gladly," replies Samuel, who put forth his hand to receive the half-crown.

The next moment the dwarf was no longer to be seen. "Well, I never!" said Samuel. "I have never seen such a funny little fellow, all in black, with such a long beard, and then to disappear just as suddenly as he crossed my path. Very strange! Most peculiar!"

Samuel looked hither and thither for him, but all in vain. "He must be lost in the crowd of passers-by," he said to himself. He then reminded himself that he knew neither the name nor the address of the dwarf, but he remembered that he had promised to call for the suit and to pay the balance. As an honest man, Samuel naturally refused various offers which were made to him by several of his customers who desired to purchase the little black suit. His reply to each one was, "It is sold already." One customer even offered to pay twenty shillings for it, but in vain, for he was not to be tempted.

It was still early in the day when he had lost sight of the dwarf. Normally he would continue to work till an hour before the Sabbath came in. That day, however, he began to feel tired and worn out before noon. The bundle of clothes on his arm seemed to him to grow heavier and heavier every

minute. "I must get home quickly," he said to himself; "I must not lose a moment, for I cannot stand the strain. My poor arm will break."

When at last he reached his house he cast down the bundle, which fell on the floor with a heavy thud. He told his wife what had happened to him, and the reason of his early return. "I sold," he added, "the old black suit for ten shillings; it cost me only four shillings, because it was so small. I have done a good stroke of business to-day, thank God! I feel most grateful to our Heavenly Father for His never-failing mercies."

Now, there are times when a modest and unassuming man finds genuine consolation in forgetting for a while his daily occupation. Such a man loves to shut his eyes on the real world as he knows it and to think for a moment of another world, and to dream of things that might come to pass if kind fortune would but smile on him. As an offering of thanksgiving Samuel resolved to spend the coming Sabbath with greater joy than was his usual wont. He told his wife that for once in a while he would do the shopping and buy the food for the Sabbath. "I shall also invite as many poor people as I can find," he added; "they shall share our meal this evening."

Away he went after he had had a good rest, and came to the butcher. He ordered a large rib of beef to be sent to his home. "I will pay," said he, "for it now." He tendered the half-crown to pay his bill. This was the piece of money which he had received from the dwarf. The butcher took the coin, and lo! it was a sovereign, a real golden coin. He naturally gave Samuel the correct change. The latter observed that he was receiving much more than he expected. "Do not give me more than I am entitled to receive," he remarked.

"Leave that to me," said the honest butcher.

Samuel then went to the baker's shop and bought bread. "How much do I owe you?" he asks.

"Tenpence," replies the baker.

"Good," says Samuel. He opened his purse and took out a shilling, which he placed in the baker's hand.

The baker beheld a sovereign in his palm, and exclaimed: "I must give you nineteen shillings and two-pence change."

Samuel took the money, and although he marvelled greatly, he said nothing. The same miracle happened in all the shops he visited, with the result that not only did he obtain the best of everything he needed for the Sabbath meal, but he also found his pockets full of change. The dwarf's half-crown had suddenly made him a wealthy man. The miracle was by no means exhausted. For he found on his return home, when he began to empty his pockets, that as soon as he had emptied them, lo! and behold, they were full again. This pleasant experience kept him very busy for a long time.

At last the hour of the Sabbath came near and he had to hurry to get to the Synagogue in time. Whilst on his way he was delighted to think that he had filled a large box with the coins. When he came to the House of Prayer he thanked the Almighty Father of Mankind with heartfelt gratitude for the great wealth so suddenly bestowed upon him, "Make me worthy, Lord," he said, "to use this wealth aright, so that I may find grace in Thine eyes and in the eyes of all who see me." After the conclusion of Divine Service he sought out the poor people and was very happy to take all of them home with him.

After the termination of the Holy Sabbath he began to count his money. He was again exceedingly surprised to see golden coin in the box which he had filled with silver coin. "This is simply marvellous!" he exclaimed. He then went to the corner of the room where the old clothes were piled up. He was about to take up the black suit belonging to the dwarf in order to pack it up, when it seemed to him to be slightly moving.

"This is perchance due to the wind," said he. But he found that the windows and the door were shut. He now put his

hand on the black coat and he was startled to find it warm, and at the same moment he felt his own hand being very gently gripped by another hand. He tried to release his own hand, but he could not do so until he had lifted up the entire suit, which seemed to shape itself upon the figure of the dwarf, who now stood before him dressed in the black suit.

"Peace be unto you, good Samuel!" cries the dwarf; "you surely recognise me, do you not? I have just come in for a moment, as I promised, to fetch my suit. I thought I might as well try it on now I am once here. See how excellently it fits me. I could almost imagine it was made to order and cut to measure. I am very well satisfied with my purchase, and I am now quite ready to pay you the small balance I owe you."

"Stay!" whispers Samuel, with a slight tremor in his voice, "what is the meaning of all this? The half-crown you gave me last Friday morning has grown into a fortune. At last I am wealthy—see, there is more money here in this box than I ever expected to possess. Take it back, good little friend; it is really yours."

"Nay," interrupted the dwarf, "I lend you all this money as long as you remain modest, pious and charitable. It is your wealth as long as you know how to use it as it should be used, and as long as you do not suffer it to be abused by yourself or by your children. If it be squandered or hoarded it will disappear." The words were barely uttered before the dwarf had vanished, and Samuel felt the empty suit of clothes falling across his arm.

He seemed almost stupefied, and passing his hand over his eyes he began to ask himself: "Am I dreaming? Truly our life is but a dream, and we feel most happy when we dream. All this business is very strange. I wonder how it will all end?" He then sat down in order to think matters over. Innumerable plans arose in his mind; he resolved to do this and to do that with his money; above all, he made up his mind to engage at once competent teachers to instruct his children, whose

education had hitherto been somewhat neglected by reason of his dire poverty. He also resolved to find a more comfortable dwelling appropriate to the position in life in which his wealth now placed him. He then arose and filled his purse and set out to distribute its contents among the poor in the streets. On his return home he determined to assemble his family and to tell them all about his newly acquired wealth and the plans he had formed.

After he had told them all that had befallen him, his mother turned to him and expressed her great surprise that he should have allowed himself to be trapped and misled by the Evil One. She said: "my dear son, know that the dwarf is Satan, and all that he has given you is accursed. Go and give away all the money to the poor, and we will be quite content to live as hitherto. Were we not all quite happy, even though we were sometimes hungry? Does not our Holy Bible tell us to avoid witchcraft and magic? Is not all this miracle but a piece of magic? All that has befallen you, dear son, is the work of witchcraft. Do you not see that I am right? Speak, dear Samuel."

"Yes, dear mother," cried he in fear, "I have ever striven to honour you and to obey you. I shall not fail now in doing my duty. I see, of course, the serious mistake I have made in having traffic with Satan. I will not trust him again, and as for his wealth, I do not want it; let him take it away. And now I will do exactly as you have bidden me."

Samuel's wife and the two little sons were too astonished to say a word. They also began to fear that the Evil One had bewitched them. Meanwhile Samuel was betaking himself to his store-room where the money was, and when he came there a fresh surprise awaited him. The box was quite empty —the money had vanished. He immediately ran back to his family and told them that a new miracle had taken place.

"I came," says he, "to the store-room to take the money to the poor, and lo! the gold had disappeared, the box is

empty, and I cannot explain what it all means."

"Did I not tell you," exclaims his mother, "that the Evil One had tricked you? First of all he gives you silver, then he changes it into gold, and finally he takes it all away again."

"Look!" cried the children in terror. "Who is that strange little black man at the door?" They all turned towards the door, and there stood the black dwarf, with a kind smile across his little face.

"Do not be afraid of me, good friends!" said he. "I am neither Satan nor a friend of the Evil One."

"Who are you, then?" said the old lady.

"I am one of God's little messengers," he replies, "sent by the Holy One, blessed be He, to reward the honest and industrious. Your beloved father, dear children, is a pious and charitable man. And you, good woman, his mother, do not for a moment believe that he would have traffic with the Evil One. 'Tis true I gave him great wealth, and 'tis true I have taken it away again because you had no faith in the power of God to hear the cry of those in need. I will at once restore all the money if you all agree to use it properly. Now do you agree?" And they all said: "Yes."

He then called to the younger of the two sons and said to him: "Just sit on my knee whilst I bless you." The little boy came to him and sat on his knee. He kept quite still whilst the dwarf was blessing him. After a while he began to play with the long black beard of the dwarf, when all of a sudden it fell off.

"Oh, dear me! What have I done?" he cried.

"Never mind," said the dwarf, "a new one will soon grow again." Whilst they were all looking at the dwarf, lo! a new beard grew there and then.

"Keep my beard," said he, "as a memento. It will remind you of a good friend, and now I must be off; so farewell till we meet again." The dwarf vanished and they all gathered round Samuel, asking him to see if the money had been restored.

They all went to the storeroom, and sure enough the box was full of golden coins.

The rich Samuel then took a large house, and his family came to live there as soon as it was ready for them. One room was set apart, as it was to be used as a Synagogue. On the walls the following inscriptions were to be read: "Be diligent, honest and true"; "Remember the poor"; "Fear evil and love the good"; "Seek peace and pursue it"; "Love God and thy fellow-creature." Samuel put the beard of the dwarf in a small cabinet in an adjoining room, the key of this room being entrusted to his wife's care.

Samuel and his family gathered together in their Synagogue every morning and night to praise their Heavenly Father and to thank Him for His loving-kindness. They did not forget the dwarf's instructions. The poor were always received most kindly in their house. Every deserving case was dealt with in a sympathetic manner.

His wealth became the talk of the town. In time he received a summons from the king to come to his court. His genuine modesty and consideration for others endeared him to all who met him. The king counted him among his friends and frequently consulted him. "Let me serve you, most gracious sire!" said Samuel to the king, "and also the country where I live, and you will make me the happiest of men." He was variously employed on different occasions, and his ability enabled him to discharge his difficult tasks with complete success. The more he gave away in charity, the richer he grew. He never accepted any remuneration for the services he so gladly rendered on behalf of his king and country. His disinterestedness marked him out among his fellow-citizens.

As the years went by the sons grew up. They did not by any means come up to the standard expected by their parents. In time the elder son, Mark, left home and went abroad. His father had given him a large fortune on his departure, but he had soon squandered every penny of it. He wrote home to his

father asking for further help. Samuel sent him the same sum he had originally given him, and he wrote to warn him that he was not carrying out the agreement which the dwarf had stipulated. He added: "Money is to be used and not abused. Unless you mend your ways you will not prosper." Within a year this son met his death whilst engaged in wicked frivolity.

Dan, the other son, remained at home, but his conduct was so very unsatisfactory that his mother took it so much to heart with the result that she became seriously ill and ultimately died. Her death was followed by the passing away of the aged grandmother. Samuel now sent for his son and said to him: "Alas! my son, your evil conduct has brought your dear mother to her grave. I know that my days are also numbered. I shall soon be with her and you will be alone in the world. You will inherit all my wealth. I bid you remember how it all came to me in one day; it may also depart in one day. You gamble, you have evil companions who follow you for the sake of gain. You despise the poor, and I grieve to think you forget God. Repent, my son, now whilst the opportunity presents itself. It may be too late tomorrow, since there is no man alive who knows when he may be called from this earth. I cannot help you if you will not help yourself. Now go, and see if you cannot change your conduct."

With these words ringing in his ears, the lad left his father's presence and at once betook himself to his evil companions. He told them of the interview which he had just had with his father. They persuaded him to think that all would eventually be well, since he was the only son and heir. They even reminded him that one day he would possess the immense fortune of his rich father. Within the next few weeks the father died.

With the death of Samuel, the glory and honour of his name passed away. The immense wealth, of which everybody was speaking, also seemed to vanish. Dan found life unbearable in his father's large house. He allowed it to be neglected,

and the doors were shut. The poor knocked in vain and went away unanswered. Dan gambled day and night. He became more reckless than ever. Ill-fortune seemed to dog his footsteps. Failure and disappointment were marked across his path. "Might-have-been," said his father's friends, when they saw him pass.

The lucky star of Samuel had set, never to rise again. At last Dan resolved to actually risk all he possessed in a last mad gamble to regain all his previous losses. He again lost and found himself penniless. Remorse began to touch his heart. He hurried home and threw himself upon his bed. He wept till he could weep no more. He then began to think of the many charitable deeds of his father. He also remembered the black dwarf. "To him will I make my last appeal," said he to himself; "he helped my father and he will surely not refuse to assist me."

He sprang off his bed and ran to the little Synagogue in the house. He had not been there for such a long time—it all seemed so strange. He began to pray for help, and promised to behave better in the future if his prayer were answered. In the stillness of the holy place he seemed to hear his mother's voice whispering in his hot ears: "Work, work." "Ah!" cried he, "am I to work and help myself? What's the use of praying?" He then felt a key being pressed into his closed hand. He took it and left the Synagogue. He thought that the key might fit a room where, unknown to him, a portion of his father's wealth might be stored. He tried to fit the key in the various locks in the different rooms, but it did not fit any lock. At last he found a door at the end of a passage. He tried the handle and found it locked. He then put the key, which he held in his hand, in the lock, and it fitted exactly.

He unlocked the door and entered a large room. At one end there was a cabinet. His eyes gazed around looking for the piles of gold, but all in vain. On the wall facing the door he saw something gleaming, but when he came nearer he

recognised the dwarf's face with the long black beard. He quickly turned round to escape the piercing look of his penetrating eyes, and he heard shrill laughter coming from the cabinet. He went nearer, and saw in it the black beard of the dwarf which he had pulled off when he was a little boy. He put his fingers in his ears to deaden the mocking laughter. He turned round again and saw on the wall opposite a fiery inscription which read: "Reap the reward of folly." The letters almost burnt his eyes.

"Away! Away!" he cried in terror, and he ran to the entrance. He found the door closed and locked.

"What is this," he shrieked, "here in my hand?" He looked and exclaimed: "It is half a crown. Well, this is lucky! I was just now penniless, and now I am like my wonderful father—with a lucky half-crown to start my fortune."

"Not quite so quick, wicked spendthrift!" cried a little voice. "See, I am your dead father's old and true friend. You have squandered all his fortune which I lent him. I now come to you to demand the return of all the wealth I lent. This half-crown which I just placed in your hand is to remind you that you do not even possess this very small amount. Reap the harvest you have sown." Without another word the dwarf—for he it was who was speaking—snatched away the half-crown and vanished. Dan fell to the ground in a faint, and at that moment the house of Samuel shook and fell in.

## The Giant Og

In very ancient times, long before the Flood, there lived a very mighty man, one of the men of renown, named Shemchazael. He had two sons named Og and Sihon. The latter was the younger, and was born at the time of the Flood in Noah's ark. Og was one of the tallest giants ever known. His height equalled that of seventy men. His appetite was enormous, and he could easily swallow a thousand oxen at one gulp; and as for his drinking capacity, he would think nothing of drinking the contents of a hundred flasks of wine at a meal. Og refused to sleep on a wooden bed, for he knew that it would not be strong enough to carry his weight. He therefore had an enormous bed made of iron; it was so large that a hundred men could easily have slept in it. When he walked he covered three miles at a step.

In his early days he had heard Noah telling the people to repent, as otherwise the good God would send a flood to destroy them. When the flood came the waters almost reached up to his knees, and he betook himself as quickly as he could run to Noah. When he came to the ark he found that the door was closed. He therefore sat down on a piece of wood under the gutter of the ark. He then called to Noah, who refused to allow him to enter the ark. "But," he roared, "I shall die of hunger if you do not feed me." Noah replied: "I will feed you daily if you will swear to be my servant for ever." He there and then swore to Noah and to his sons that he would be their slave for ever. Noah then bored an aperture in the ark and he put through it food for him, and he was kept alive in this way whilst Noah was in the ark.

After the flood Og went to Sodom, one of the wealthiest cities in the world. In this town every need of daily life was supplied without any trouble. The dust of the city was of gold, precious stones were in abundance. The men of Sodom were cruel and very wicked, but they did no harm to Og, for they were afraid of him. They ill-treated Lot, the nephew of Abraham. Then some neighbouring kings attacked Sodom and took Lot captive. Og hastened to Hebron to inform Abraham of his nephew's plight. Og says to himself, "I feel sure Abraham will at once set out to save Lot. He will, I hope, be killed, and then I shall be able to wed his beautiful wife Sarah." "Thy wish," responded Divine Justice, "shall not be fulfilled. As a reward for telling Abraham of Lot's misfortune thou shalt live for another five hundred years. Thy punishment for thy evil desire to possess another man's wife is thy doom, for thou shalt die by the hand of Moses, the descendant of Sarah and Abraham."

When Abraham returned from his victorious battle with the kings, he looked at Og and asked him what he would have done had the victory been on the side of the kings? "Say, I had been killed," exclaimed Abraham. "Well, I should have married Sarah," replies Og. "Did you not wish me to die in battle or to be taken captive? Speak, for I am a prophet, and I am able to read your thoughts," says Abraham. Og made no reply, and when Abraham rebuked him he became so furious that he gnashed his teeth in temper and one fell out. Abraham had a large ivory bed made out of Og's tooth, and he used it all the rest of his life.

Og was one of the guests at the banquet given by Abraham on the day when Isaac his son was weaned. Og had often foretold that Abraham would not beget children; he had even called him a sterile mule. The guests teased Og and asked him: "What do you say now, Giant Og? Is it not a fact that Abraham has begotten a son?"

"What I say," he roared, "is that Isaac is no true

descendant of Abraham, since I could kill the weak baby in a moment by merely touching him with my little finger." The voice of Divine Justice resounded in his ears and he heard the words: "Thou art an impudent braggart! Fie upon thee! As a punishment for thy foolish words thou shalt live to see a hundred thousand descendants of Abraham and Isaac who will come to fight thee and thy people, and thou shalt be defeated and perish in shame."

When Isaac's son Jacob came to the land of Egypt, the king asked that the Hebrew patriarch should come to see him. When Jacob entered the palace of Pharaoh he heard the people ask: "What will Og the giant say when he sees Jacob and his descendants?" Jacob came before Pharaoh and blessed him. Then the king turned to Og and said to him: "Didst thou not foretell that Abraham would have no seed, yet here before us stand Jacob and his seventy descendants, all the seed of Abraham?" Og in shame held his peace. But the sneer infuriated him, and in his wrath he cast an evil eye upon the children of Israel. Again he heard the voice of Divine Retribution crying in his ear: "Thou shalt yet fall into the hands of their descendants."

After these events Og journeyed to the lands west of the Jordan. Here he became king. He owed this piece of luck to a magic coat which he had stolen from Nimrod, king of Babylon. This wonderful coat had originally belonged to Adam and Eve after their expulsion from the Garden of Eden. When Og put on this coat all the beasts of the field came and prostrated themselves before him. The people saw this, and thought this was due to the power of his might. Moreover, they were mightily afraid of him and thought it best to ask him to be their king and protector. He consented, and made the people build sixty new cities in his kingdom.

He was one day terribly upset to learn of the death of his only brother Sihon, king of the Amorites. It came about in this wise. The Israelites, who were the descendants of

Abraham, sent messengers unto Sihon, saying: "Let us pass through thy land; we will not turn aside into field, or into vineyard; we will not drink of the water of the wells: we will go by the king's highway until we have passed thy border." But Sihon would not suffer Israel to pass through his border: but he gathered all his people together and went out against Israel into the wilderness, and he fought against Israel. And Israel smote him with the edge of the sword and possessed his land. When the news of the disaster reached Og he was staying in his palace at Rabbah. He became very alarmed at the prospect of having to fight the Israelites. He thereupon called his nobles together and bade them meet him at his fortress of Edrei.

Og knew that his prowess and renown counted for next to nothing in the eyes of the mighty Moses who had led the Israelites when they encountered Sihon. True it was that Og was a man of gigantic stature, but all his people were not by any means as tall as he was. Even if the Israelites considered themselves as grasshoppers when compared with his people, nevertheless the issue of battle depended on something more powerful than human might; it rested with the God of battle as to which side should win. Og remembered the voice of Justice which he had so often heard.

When Moses and the Israelites came to attack Og at Edrei it was nightfall. Next morning Moses and his men were ready at dawn to begin the attack, but when he looked at the wall of the city he exclaimed in great surprise: "See now, they have in the past night built a new wall around their city!" When Moses came nearer he found that he had not seen clearly owing to the morning mist. There was no new wall, but only the legs of Og who was sitting on the wall with his feet reaching the ground below. Moses was somewhat taken aback at the huge size of the giant. God, however, said to him: "What avail is the enormous stature to the giant, when I have decreed his destruction? Fear not, only be strong and of good

courage." The Israelites then began the attack, whereupon Og with one hand uprooted a huge mountain and hurled it against his foes. In the nick of time this was intercepted by Moses, who pronounced the Holy Name of God. Later on, when Moses was not looking, Og uprooted another mountain three miles in length. The cruel giant intended to crush all the Israelites beneath it by hurling it upon their camp. Whilst he was carrying it upon his head a swarm of ants burrowed through it so that it fell with a sudden blow upon his neck. He began to try to lift it up, but in his terrific exertion his teeth began to grow, and pushed out to the right and left of his mouth, like tusks of an elephant and thus the mountain was kept in its place on his neck. As soon as Moses saw this he took an axe ten ells in length and jumped upwards ten ells so as to be able to reach Og's ankles. He dealt him a mighty blow so that he fell, and then Moses quickly cut off his head. Long after his death a grave-digger said that he had once hunted a stag which fled into the hollow thigh-bone of Og. The stag was pursued three miles before it reached the end of the bone. The conquest of this powerful giant lingered long in the imagination of the Israelites as one of the chief exploits of their beloved leader and lawgiver Moses. The whole of Og's kingdom was assigned to the tribes of Reuben, Gad and half-Manasseh. This was the story of the greatest of the giants. It was believed that Goliath was one of his descendants. He also, in his turn, was slain by David, a descendant of Abraham.

# The Luck of Nahum

Nearly nineteen hundred years ago there lived a great master in Israel named Nahum. He dwelt in Gimzo, a small town in the Holy Land. He counted among his disciples the celebrated Akiba, who died a martyr's death in the year 135 C.E.

Nahum was called by his friends "Ish Gam Zu," which corresponds to "The Lucky Man." The exact meaning of the words is, "The man of this also." This nickname arose from Nahum's habit of exclaiming, "This also is for the best," on every occasion when good or evil fortune befell him.

Now it happened that the Jews had to send a present to the Roman Emperor. At this period the Jews were no longer their own masters. Judea was part of the Roman Empire and its inhabitants were forced to pay tribute to their imperial master. The elders of Israel met and asked one another: "Who shall be our representative to go to Rome to see the mighty Cæsar? Whom can we trust as our messenger to convey our gift to the Emperor?"

The majority voted for Nahum of Gimzo; they said: "Can we find anyone in our midst more suitable? Do we not know that our Heavenly Father has wrought so many miracles on his behalf?" It was finally agreed that Nahum should be their messenger. The elders went to inform him, and found that he was living in a wretched hut; the walls were almost tottering, and it seemed as though the roof would collapse. "Will not your house fall in?" they exclaimed in alarm, as they were about to cross its threshold. "It will not fall in," replied Nahum, "as long as I am beneath its roof. Have no fear, good

masters! we are perfectly safe in this my humble home."

"Come now, good Nahum, listen to us," they began; "we come to you from the priests and the scribes, and see what we have brought with us. This golden casket is full of most precious jewels. Take it to Rome and deliver it to the Emperor as a tribute from our people. Plead with him and his counsellors to remit our burdens, and to suffer us to rebuild the Temple of God on Mount Zion. Go in peace, and may the Lord prosper your way."

"This also is for the best," exclaimed Nahum in accepting the casket. "I will gladly do as you bid me, and may it be the will of Heaven that my journey may bring comfort and peace to our unhappy people."

Without delay Nahum set forth on his journey. At sunset he resolved to find a lodging for the night, as he did not think it safe to travel after dusk, as he was alone. He came to an inn, and after he had partaken of a frugal supper he went to bed. Whilst he was fast asleep the host entered Nahum's bedroom and opened the casket. After he had taken out all the valuable contents, he refilled it with earth which he had taken from under the threshold, and closed the casket again. He then left the bedroom without disturbing the tired sleeper.

Nahum slept well and arose in the early morning, feeling quite refreshed and happy. He opened the casket, and to his intense astonishment he found that it no longer contained the glittering gems and precious jewels; all he could see in it was moist earth. "Strange!" said he; "but this is also for the best." He paid his host for his night's lodging and supper, and without a word about the jewels he departed and continued his journey to Rome.

In due course he arrived at his destination. He was permitted to enter the palace in order to bring the gift to the Emperor. When he was conducted to the imperial presence, he was surprised to find that the Emperor was seated on his throne without anyone else being present. The Emperor

received him with marked contempt. He averted his gaze and said: "Son of Judea led captive! what dost thou bring from the land of thy fathers?"

"I bring a precious casket, mighty Cæsar!" said Nahum, making an obeisance.

"'Tis well spoken," continued the Emperor. "Now tell me, what does it contain?"

"Originally when I received it," replied Nahum, "it contained most beautiful gems, priceless jewels."

"Well?" interrupted the Emperor.

"Dost thou know, great Cæsar," continued Nahum, "that the imperial police suffer thieves to be innkeepers in the Roman Empire? Consequently the valuable jewels which were in this casket have been stolen and replaced by moist earth. Yet methinks this is not quite as bad as it might have been had the thief also stolen the casket."

"Stop thy prattle!" cried the Emperor in a terrible rage. "You Jews are making sport at my expense, but, by all the gods of Rome! you shall find out that it is a very costly thing to mock a Cæsar. I will avenge myself by having an edict issued, and in it I will decree that all the Jews in Palestine shall perish by the sword."

"If God so wills," exclaimed Nahum, "this also is for the best."

At that second Nahum was very astonished to see at his side a distinguished-looking man, dressed in the toga, the mantle worn by the senators of Rome. In reality it was Elijah the prophet in the guise of the senator. Elijah is always at hand in the hour of danger and distress. He comforts and helps when human hearts need consolation and encouragement.

"Sire!" began Elijah, "I have most important matters of state to discuss with you. Your troops have again suffered a reverse. Let me beseech you not to act too hastily with this Jew. Perchance the moist earth in this beautiful casket is no

ordinary earth. It may be earth from the land of Abraham, the so-called Holy Land. It is said in ancient records that he possessed land the dust of which became like swords, darts and arrows. The Scriptures of the Jews tell us that "He will make the dust as His sword and the driven stubble as His bow." Now your Majesty's imperial troops have been fighting for three years across the Danube, yet victory is as far off as ever. Why not try the efficacy of this moist earth? It may perchance help your brave legions to gain the long-desired victory."

The Emperor listened with intense interest to every word spoken by the senator, as he was thought to be. His advice seemed to be most reasonable, and the Emperor told Nahum to retire and to await further instructions. The imperial generals were forthwith commanded to make use of the moist earth brought by Nahum in their next attack. Complete success crowned their efforts, and the victory was won.

The happy Emperor sent for Nahum and told him how pleased he was with the valuable gift sent by the Jews. He promised to protect them and to remit half of the annual tribute. As a further mark of his gratitude he instructed the imperial treasurer to fill the pockets of Nahum with gold and silver coin. He thereupon dismissed Nahum with every mark of honour and favour.

On his homeward journey Nahum came to the inn where he had been robbed. He was cordially welcomed by the wicked host, who with a sly twinkle in his evil eye asked his guest how he had fared on his trip.

"My journey," replies Nahum, "was a complete success. Of course I knew it would be so, for did I not say when I arose after my night's rest in your house, 'This is also for the best'?"

"But tell me," said the roguish host, "what did you take to the great Cæsar in Rome? Why did you find favour in his eyes?"

"Listen!" cries Nahum. "I brought to Rome that which I

took away from here, good host. Now let me have a morsel of bread and honey and I will continue my journey."

After Nahum had departed the wicked innkeeper ordered his servants to pull down his inn and to remove the precious earth on which it stood. He had this earth most carefully packed in large boxes and placed on a strong cart. He took it to Rome and demanded an audience of the Emperor. When he was admitted he told the Emperor that he had brought a large supply of the wonderful moist earth, just the same as Nahum had brought in his casket.

The Emperor ordered his servants to test the earth, which was found to be just ordinary earth, without any miraculous qualities. When informed of this fact the innkeeper was cross-examined. "How do you know that Nahum's casket contained earth?" asked the Emperor. "I confess," cried the wretched innkeeper, "that I robbed him, and it was my hand that placed moist earth in the casket." "Traitor!" thundered the angry Emperor; "you have robbed me and not the Jew, for the precious gems in the casket were intended to be presented to me as a gift from the people of Israel. To rob the Roman State or the Emperor has for its penalty death, and you will meet your doom in accordance with the laws of justice."

Three days later the wicked innkeeper was crucified, as prescribed by the laws of the Romans. When Nahum heard of his fate he exclaimed: "This also is for the best."

## Head or Tail

It often happens that little children think that they are wiser than their parents. The young imagine that they know better than their elders. Just as sensible would it be for the new-laid egg to try to teach the chicken. Once upon a time there was an enormous snake. It happened one day that the tail said to the head: "Pray tell me how long wilt thou take the lead? I should so much like to change places with thee." "Good," said the head; "thou shalt be leader for the rest of the day and I will follow thee. Now lead on, Master Tail." On it went, and the rest of the lengthy snake followed with the head at the rear. All of a sudden there was a terrible splash, the whole body of the large snake fell into a cistern of water which was in a ditch. "Now where are we?" cries the head in a state of alarm. "Where has that blind tail landed us? Well, I must get out of this, as otherwise we shall be drowned, tail, body and head." Once again the head led the body and the tail followed, and out they all came from the cistern. The tail again led the way, and after a while it moved right into a bonfire which some boys had kindled in the road. As soon as it felt the burning fire it cried to the head: "Clever Mr. Head, please get us out of this horrible fire; I really did not see it, otherwise I should have avoided such a nasty thing." Once again the head led the body, and the tail was glad to follow and to escape out of the cruel fire. "Well," said the head to the tail, "hast thou had enough? Dost thou still wish to take the lead?" "Well," replies the tail, "let me have one more trial; I think I know all about it now." "Very well," said the head, "and now lead on." Away they went, and all was well for a few

minutes. "Help!" suddenly shrieked the tail. "I am in a thornbush and it hurts terribly." On and on it fell with the enormous body pressing it down. Even the head was caught by the thorns and received nasty scratches. "This is too bad," cried the head. "It's all thy fault, Master Tail!" "No," retorted the tail, "it is all thy fault, Mr. Head. Thou shouldst have remained the head and not allowed me to take thy place. Hadst thou done this all would have been well."

## The King's Servants

There was once a king who had very many servants. One day when he felt very happy he called all the servants to his presence and gave to each one a most beautiful coat, made of the finest material, fit for the king himself. "Take these gifts," said he to them, "and notice that each coat is spotless and new." They thanked him very much for his great kindness, and bearing their gifts across their arm they left the royal presence.

Now, some of the king's servants were very wise. They went straight home with their new coats in order to put them away so that they might not be soiled. "We will keep them even as they are now, and when we are called to his Majesty we can put them on," they said to one another. But there were also some foolish servants of this king. They were glad to have these new coats, but they said to themselves: "What's the good of having a nice coat in the wardrobe? When you have something smart and fine, why not wear it?" They therefore put on the coats given to them by the king, and everybody looked at them and admired them. They went to work in these coats, and kept them on when they had finished their daily tasks. In a short space of time the coats lost their fresh and new appearance, for they were soiled and stained.

After a while the king sent a message that he would like all his servants to return the coats he had given them, as he wished to give them something better in exchange. The wise servants were exceedingly glad that they had taken great care of their gift. They hastened home and took out of their wardrobes their garments. They were brand-new, not a spot

to be seen. They put them on and hurried off to the palace. When they came there they met on the threshold and in the courtyard the other servants in their soiled workaday dress. Then they all came before the king, who sat on his beautiful throne, with the glittering crown upon his head. In his hand he held his sceptre and bade the servants welcome.

When the wise servants were about to take off their coats, the king told them not to trouble to do so there, but to go to the royal treasury and to exchange the coat for a better one. "I am well pleased with you, for I see," said he, "that you have been very careful with my gift. You are worthy of receiving a more precious gift, for you have appreciated what I have given you."

Then it was the turn of the foolish servants to come before the king. "What is this," cried he in an angry tone, "that I see? How dare you enter my palace in soiled garments? You insult me by appearing before me in your stained and filthy coats. Get ye hence at once and betake yourselves to our royal wash-house, and take care to cleanse the coats I gave you. When you have thoroughly washed them you will have to see to it that they are dried and ironed, and then you must come again and bring them to me. I know not now whether I shall be able to accept them. I certainly shall not be inclined to exchange them for better coats, since you have despised my gifts. I feel very hurt that you should not have had the good sense to treasure what I, your king, gave you. In fact, I ought to send you to prison as a punishment, for it is treason to hold kingly gifts in light esteem. Be careful in future and do not offend again." With these words the king dismissed his foolish servants, who left his presence with downcast heads, ashamed of their soiled garments and of their ingratitude.

After a long while the king sent another message to all his servants, saying that on the next new moon day he would give a banquet and he desired them all to be his guests; there was a condition, however, that each one should bring his own

chair or stool, or anything else as a substitute. On the day appointed the king's servants came to the palace, and each one brought something to sit on, either a stool or a chair, or a couple of cushions, or a block of wood or a box. A few even brought a number of large stones. The king looked on with a smile on his face and told the company to be seated on whatever they had brought. The banquet was exceedingly well served, and its duration seemed unduly prolonged to some of the guests. All those who had brought comfortable chairs and stools seemed very satisfied, but the servants who had been silly enough to bring stones and blocks of wood began to grumble because they were most uncomfortable. "Is it quite nice for a king to have guests and not to provide proper seats?" they asked one another. "Is it the correct thing for a king to allow his guests to sit on such seats as some of us are now using?" they inquired of the king's chamberlain. He conveyed their question to his royal master.

The king commanded silence and he arose to speak.

"Good servants, you are my guests and I am happy to see you here. Some of you, I regret to learn, are not very happy to be here. They complain about the seating arrangements. In reply I feel it necessary to reprimand those of you who have brought unseemly things in my beautiful palace. Blocks of wood, boxes, stones, and such like are out of place in the saloon of a king. I did not bring them here, yet I am blamed for the want of comfort some of you are now experiencing. The fault is entirely your own. Instead of blaming me you should blame yourselves. Have you not heard of the old proverb: 'In the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be.' 'As a man maketh his chair, so must he sit thereon.'" The guests then held their peace, for each one realised that his comfort or discomfort was entirely due to his own conduct. The banquet came to an end and the king dismissed his guests. After an interval the king again sent the following message to all his servants: "I intend at some future date to give a banquet. I

shall be most happy to have you all as my guests. I expect you to prepare yourselves in a becoming manner; every one should bathe and anoint himself, dress in his best garments and be ready to meet me in my palace." The date was not fixed when the banquet was to take place. The wise servants of the king immediately went home and prepared themselves for the royal banquet. They even went to the courtyard of the palace so as not to be late at the feast. They said to one another: "Is it likely that our royal master will lack anything requisite for the banquet? He owns flocks and vineyards, and he surely is ready to feast with us at any moment."

Some of the servants, however, were thoughtless, and went about their daily work. It seemed but natural to them that, if the king had not fixed the date of his banquet, it was owing to the fact that he was not prepared, and would not probably be so for some time to come. Great was their surprise at even to hear the king's summons to come there and then to the banquet. "What was to be done?" they asked the royal messenger. He replied: "Come at once, even as you now are."

The palace gates and doors were thrown wide open and the wise servants were brought before the king. He received them with warm and hearty greetings. "Right welcome are ye," he cries; "come and sit at my table, for ye are the first to arrive. Nay, I know that ye have been waiting for many hours to be admitted. I am delighted to see you, and I notice how splendidly you have prepared yourselves for the feast." After they had taken their places at the king's table the wine and meat were placed before them, and they began to partake thereof.

After a while the other guests were ushered into the king's presence. They were unwashed, their hair uncombed, their garments soiled and dirty. "What do I see?" cried the king in a furious temper. "Are ye not thoroughly ashamed of yourselves to come in this wise before your king, your master? Is this how you prepare yourselves for a royal banquet? You

surely cannot expect me to sit down with you when you are in such a condition. All I can do is to permit you to look on while my good servants at my table enjoy the banquet, and when we have left the table you can consume the remnants. I rejoice that some of my servants are thoughtful and have prepared themselves in time for my summons. As for you, who are so foolish and careless, I am vexed with your indifference, but as you are the ones who will suffer for you can only look forward to the cold remnants I will pardon you this time, and pray remember to be always prepared for the call of your king. Who knows when it may come?"

# A Dream of Paradise

In the first century of the common era there lived a famous Rabbi in Palestine named Chanina ben Dosa. He was a pupil of the great Rabban Jochanan ben Zakkai. Lake so many of the Rabbis, Chanina lived in abject poverty. It was said of him: "The whole world is sustained through the piety and merit of Chanina," yet he had barely sufficient for the needs of his daily life. He was married, and his good wife did her best to hide their poverty. Of course, neither the Rabbi nor his wife would beg. They would not even accept gifts from their friends.

One day the wife asked Chanina in a gentle and loving voice: "Tell me, dear Chanina, how long shall we continue to suffer this humiliating poverty?"

"What shall I do, sweet wife?" he asks.

"Pray to God," she replies. "You pray so often on behalf of others and your prayers are heard. Now for once think of yourself and me."

"I do not quite follow," observed Chanina.

"I mean," she replies, "that you should ask the good God to let you enjoy in this world something of that which is laid up for the righteous and pious in the world to come. Surely God will take pity on us, and hear your petition and answer you."

Chanina loved his wife very dearly. It pained him to see her face pinched by hunger. He therefore resolved to do as she had asked him. He arose and turned his face to the wall of his room and prayed with genuine devotion.

No sooner had he concluded his prayer than he heard a

strange noise outside his window. He went to see what was the matter, and behold! there was a hand coming from the heavens, bringing to him a golden leg of a golden table. He stretched forth his hand and took it. He called his wife to see what God had sent to them in answer to his prayer.

"This is a great miracle!" she cried. You can sell this heavy piece of gold, and with the money you will have enough to purchase all we need as long as we live. What more do we want?"

"Yes," said Chanina, "that is the question."

"What do you mean?" she asked.

"I mean," he replied, "what will be our fortune in the hereafter?"

"Good husband," she responded, "God will not suffer those who love Him and keep His Holy Law to want in the world to come. Let us be happy now, and leave the future world to take care of itself."

"So be it," he added.

That night the wife of Chanina had a strange dream. It seemed to her that she was carried far away even into Heaven. The vision of Paradise in the world to come was then revealed to her gaze. She saw not only the good Israelites, but also all the pious and all the righteous of all nations and religions, sitting in bliss and contentment, each one at a little golden table. Each table had three legs. She continued to look around, and lo! in the centre of Paradise sat her beloved husband, Chanina. He sat at a table which swayed to and fro, for she noticed that it only had two legs.

She awoke in a terrible fright and called to her husband.

"What's wrong, sweet wife?" cried he.

"I have had," she replied, "a very horrible dream."

When he had heard it, he asked her: "Is it agreeable to you to think that everybody in Paradise should be comfortable with their golden tables set before them, and that we alone should have the misfortune of having a rickety table, which

cannot stand firmly because it only has two legs?"

"No, no!" she cries.

"What shall we do, then?" he asks. "Pray at once, dearest husband," she replies; "beseech God to take back the golden leg of our table in Paradise. Far better will it be for us to want in this world so that we may enjoy the bliss of the future world in peace and contentment."

Rabbi Chanina again arose and turned his face to the wall. He prayed as his wife had bidden him. Then he stood at the window, where he saw a hand from Heaven before him. He fetched the golden leg, and it was taken away by the hand beyond.

Chanina and his wife rejoiced more than ever when they no longer possessed the golden leg. They told the miracle to their friends, who exclaimed: "This second wonder is indeed more marvellous than the first wonder; it is the rule of Providence to bestow gifts, but not to take them back."

# A Just King

During the Middle Ages there were very many Jews in Spain. The kings often employed them as Ministers of State, physicians and bankers. This caused jealousy and ill-feeling among certain classes of the Gentile population. The ill-feeling and jealousy occasionally gave rise to false accusations against the Jews. It once happened that a rumour was spread by two non-Jews to the effect that they had passed through the Ghetto, where the Jews lived, and they saw a Gentile lying dead in the doorway of a house of a Jew, Leon by name. The rumour was followed up by a searching investigation by the police, who actually found the corpse in Leon's doorway.

The incident was reported without delay to the king, who summoned to his presence the witnesses. He cross-examined them, and they stated: "Last night we saw the rich Gentile, whose body has been found by the police, walking towards the Ghetto. He probably had to settle some business with the wealthy Jew banker, Leon. We followed, and we were startled to hear terrible screams. After a moment all was still. We hurried along to see what had happened, and we were shocked to find the corpse in Leon's doorway."

"Let us send for the elders of the Synagogue," cried the king, "and we shall soon learn what has happened." Whereupon the witnesses left the royal presence.

Messengers were despatched in haste, and before long the Rabbis of the Synagogue were conducted to the king's presence.

"Welcome, wise men of Israel!" exclaimed the king.

"How can we serve your Majesty?" they asked.

"I have sent for you," the king remarked, "to ask you to explain and expound a verse in the psalm-book of Israel. The passage reads: 'Behold, He that guardeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.' I have been informed that the Hebrew word for 'slumber' does not imply as much as is conveyed by the word for 'sleep.' So that, unless I am misinformed, it seems that the psalmist wished to say that since God does not slumber He surely does not sleep. Now will you give me your explanation?"

The Rabbis replied: "The verse is very simple. It merely teaches us, as our great commentators tell us, that God, who is the Guardian of Israel, never slumbers, and consequently He never sleeps."

"I do not agree," said the king, "and I now wish to give you the real meaning. God does not slumber, and He suffers not others to sleep, since He is the Guardian of Israel. Just listen how I have discovered this interpretation. Last night I could not sleep. I therefore arose from my bed, dressed and went to the window. It was a most beautiful night, just full moon. As I was looking down the street facing the palace, I saw two men carrying something on their shoulders. I did not know what it was, as it was covered with a cloth. I at once sent for three of my personal attendants and commanded them to shadow the two men, and to report to me what it was they were carrying and what they did with it. They have now reported to me that they did as I bade them. The two men were carrying a corpse which they deposited in the doorway of the Jew Leon. The two men are the same who have raised the rumour against the Jews."

"Bring forward the two witnesses," cried the Jews, "and let them face us."

"So be it," said the king.

When the two witnesses came before the king and discovered that they had been watched by the royal attendants, they confessed that they had murdered the victim, and in order to

escape detection they had resolved to place the corpse in the Ghetto.

"Had I slept," remarked the king, "these two murderers would have escaped, and they would have incited the mob to attack the Jews and pillage their houses, and many innocent people would have been cruelly massacred. But God, who is just and righteous, guards Israel. He never slumbers, and He does not suffer His servants to sleep when mischief threatens the innocent. I am but an instrument in the hand of God, merely His servant. I rejoice that I have been chosen to mete out justice to the people in my kingdom. In this spirit I understand the words of the psalmist: 'Behold, He that guardeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.'"

# The Seven Sons

There was once upon a time a king who had seven sons. They were named according to the days of the week on which they had been born. The eldest was called Sunday, the second son was named Monday, the third Tuesday, the fourth Wednesday, the fifth Thursday, the sixth Friday, and the youngest Saturday. In time the sons grew up, and were all good-looking, smart young men. They were always good friends, as brothers should be. One day they agreed among themselves to go all together to their good father so as to ask him to permit them to leave his kingdom. They desired to travel abroad with a view of gaining experience and learning something worth knowing. They came to the king and spoke of their wish. He listened, and after a moment's consideration began to say: "This is a very good idea, dear boys! I quite approve your suggestion except with regard to one point. You all wish to travel. I do not care to let Saturday go with you. You naturally ask, Why? I will tell you. I might die, and if all of you were out of the kingdom there would be no one of my house to act as regent." They persisted, however, in asking him to allow all of them to go together. At last he allowed himself to be persuaded. He blessed them and told them to keep in touch with him, and under no circumstance should they quarrel among themselves.

Away they went, quite a merry party. Towards dusk they reached a large inn situated at the corner of one of seven cross-roads. They entered and ordered supper. They enjoyed their meal, for they were very hungry. After a good night's rest they all arose very early in the morning. "See," they said, "we

are at crossroads. Let each one of us take a different route, and let us agree to meet here again this day next year. We shall then report to one another all we have seen and done." They agreed and parted.

On the first anniversary of the day of their separation they all met at the inn. They greeted one another affectionately and rejoiced to find one and all hearty and well. The youngest brother turned to the eldest and said: "Dear Sunday! will you tell us what you have learnt in the course of your travels?"

"Of course I will, dear little Saturday," he replies; "I have learnt a most marvellous thing."

"What is it?" they all cried.

"I have learnt," says he, "to use a pair of spectacles."

"That's nothing wonderful," chimed in Saturday, with a broad smile on his chubby face.

"Isn't it, now?" remarks Sunday. "Well, if you put these spectacles on your nose, little chap, you will be mightily astonished to find that they are the most marvellous in the world. For they enable you to see what's going on anywhere up to five hundred miles."

"That's the limit," they all said in chorus. "We agree that is indeed something of which you can be proud."

"Now," said Sunday to Monday, "what have you got to report?"

"I also have been rather lucky in my experiences," said Monday.

"Come along, out with it," cries Saturday.

"Well," rejoins Monday, "I have learnt to play the fiddle—"

"Is that all?" interrupts Saturday, with a shrug of the shoulders.

"Wait a moment, please," replies Monday; "you are so frightfully impatient. You do not give me time to finish my sentence. I was about to tell you that I can play a magic fiddle. If you just listen I will describe its magic effect. It sends all

strangers to sleep who hear me play. What do you think of that, now?"

"I think," Saturday answers, "that you have acquired a most useful art." All the other brothers nodded assent.

"What have you discovered?" said Monday, turning to Tuesday.

Tuesday began: "I suppose you will all laugh when I tell you all about the art I have learnt. It is the art of picking pockets. I can take anything out of another person's hand, be the article small or large, be it held ever so tightly, without that person being aware of what I am doing.

"That is simply marvellous," they all cried. "Now, Wednesday," says Saturday, "it's your turn to give an account of yourself."

"I think," Wednesday remarked, "I can surprise you all when I tell you what I have learnt to do."

"Well, man, speak!" interrupted Saturday. "What is it?"

Wednesday continued: "I can improve upon Tuesday's art of picking pockets, as he calls it. I can put in my coat pocket anything, be it large or small, size does not count at all; and no one knows what I have done."

"Well, I never," said Tuesday, "that is really ripping."

"Come along, Thursday," cries Wednesday; "it is your turn now."

Thursday said: "What I have learnt is a very clever thing."

"Just so," they all cried. "What is this very clever thing?"

Thursday continues: "All I have to do is to cut off a twig of an oak-tree. I then take it in my right hand and I can beat to the ground any number of men, even if ten thousand come to attack me."

"A jolly fine thing," says Saturday, "in war-time. We must tell dear father all about this. I wonder what they will say at the War Office? Now, Friday, it's your turn, please."

"I have learnt," says Friday, "to shoot so well that if I aim at a bird's beak anywhere in the air, and if it have a seed of

corn in its beak, I shall be able to shoot the seed out of its beak without doing any injury to the bird or the seed."

"You must be a crack marksman," observes Saturday. "And now, if you please, it is my turn to tell you my tale of adventure. I have discovered how to throw with my right hand anything, even a millstone, as high as you like, till no one can see it; and I can also catch it again in my left hand."

"We should like to see you do it," they all exclaimed.

"Wait and see," observes Saturday.

"Now," said they to one another, "do not let us return yet awhile to our dear father. Let us first see how we can get on in the world all together. Then we can return home. Meanwhile we can ask our good host to convey a loving message of filial greeting to our beloved father, telling him that we are all quite well and happy." They agreed to do accordingly, and once more they set forth on a great adventure.

They went far into the world, and came to a fine city where they saw a beautiful palace. They rang the bell and knocked at the door, and when it was opened by the butler they asked if they could have an interview with the king. "Please tell his Majesty," said Sunday, "that we are seven princes, all brothers, who desire to see him."

They were admitted, and without delay they were conducted to the royal presence. The king received them most graciously, and in order to show his delight at their visit, he gave a banquet in their honour. Whilst they were sitting at the royal board, the king asked his chamberlain whether he could find out who they were and what they could do. Of course, kings and princes are superior people, and are therefore expected to do great and wonderful things.

The royal chamberlain ventured to ask them who they were, but he did not like to question them as to their abilities. At the conclusion of the banquet the king arose and began to chat with his guests. Meanwhile the eldest brother went to look out of the window. He put on his magic spectacles and

gazed far away. At last he said in a loud voice: "I now see that a wedding is just about to take place. There is the bridegroom, a fine handsome knight, and at his side is the bride. What a funny hand has she—six fingers!"

"Stop!" cried the king; "you see my dear daughter, the princess. One of my knights has carried her off against my will. He has vowed to marry her and I refuse to give my sanction. See now, you seven noble princes, if you restore my daughter to me, she shall wed one of you, and to the rest of you will I give half of my kingdom."

"We agree," cried they, "to your Majesty's proposal. We will undertake to bring the sweet princess here, and the one who does most to bring this to pass shall be her husband. The rest of us will share amongst ourselves half of your kingdom, just as you have promised."

Away they sped with merry hearts. When they came to the knight's castle they asked if they could see the knight on most important business. They were soon brought to the large saloon, where the wedding ceremony was on the point of being concluded.

Monday produced his fiddle and was about to play when the knight said to the princess, whose hand he was holding, "Look, sweetheart! here are travelling musicians in honour of our wedding."

Monday began to play, and all the company fell fast asleep. Tuesday at once went up to the princess and took her away from the hand of the knight without the latter knowing anything of what was happening. Then Wednesday approached his brother Tuesday and put the sleeping princess in his coat-pocket, without any of the company seeing where she was being concealed.

The seven brothers now left the castle; of course, the princess was still in Wednesday's coat-pocket. They had not left the castle many hours before they found that they were being pursued. The knight had hastily called together his

retainers and mustered about a thousand men. He sent these in pursuit, with instructions to rescue the princess and to punish the seven brothers for their impudence in disturbing his wedding. When the brothers saw the soldiers near by, Thursday ran to an oak-tree at hand and cut off a twig. He then began to beat all the soldiers to the ground. He allowed two to escape in order to report the fate of the rest.

The brothers continued their journey, but after their exertions they began to feel very tired. They resolved to rest awhile, and with the beautiful princess in their midst they sat down under a large tree and all fell asleep. Meanwhile the two soldiers had reached the castle and reported to the knight all that had happened. The sad news depressed him very much. Not only had he lost his charming bride, but nearly all his retainers had been killed. He went for a walk in order to collect his thoughts. Outside his castle he met an old miller, who came forward to speak to him: "Noble knight! Just tell me why are you so sad?"

The knight replies: "Why should I tell you all my troubles? What could you do to help me?"

"Who knows?" says the miller. "There can surely be no harm in trying to help you, and perhaps I can."

"Well," cries the knight, "listen to my tale of woe." He then told him all about his misfortunes.

"Good knight," says the miller, "do not worry. Within four and twenty hours I undertake to restore your beautiful bride."

"If," exclaims the knight, "you do this, I will give you half my fortune."

"Agreed!" said the miller, who hastened away.

The miller was a magician. He changed himself into an enormous vulture. He flew to the spot where the princess and the seven brothers were sleeping. He seized the princess with his beak and flew away high up in the air. The princess screamed in fright, and her cries awoke the seven brothers. As soon as they saw what had happened, up they sprang.

Friday took his bow and arrow and shot at the vulture's beak, so that the princess was thrust out of it without being hurt in the least. At the same moment Saturday put forth his left hand and caught the princess.

When the brothers and the princess at last reached her father's palace, a terrific quarrel broke out among the brothers. Each one claimed the hand of the princess in marriage. Sunday began to urge his right by saying: "Had I not looked through my magic spectacles you would never have found out where the princess was."

"True," remarked Monday, "but if I had not played my fiddle you would never have got hold of the dear princess."

Tuesday cried: "She is mine, for who was it who took her out of the knight's hand? It was your obedient servant. Moreover, the knight was not aware of what I was doing."

Wednesday said: "The princess belongs to me, for had I not hidden her in my coat-pocket she would have been seen by the knight's retainers when we were leaving the castle."

"All correct," cries Thursday, "but I claim the beautiful princess. We should have all been killed had I not cut off the twig of the oak-tree and beaten therewith the soldiers who came in pursuit of us."

Friday chimed in: "The bride is mine, for had it not been for my magic bow and arrow the vulture would have carried her off goodness knows where. I shot her out of the vulture's beak, and I did her no harm in rescuing her."

"Now that you have all had your say, just be good enough to listen to me for a minute, please," cries Saturday. "Now let us be fair. Is it not right that I should marry the sweet princess? Just consider, what would have been the good of all your wonderful performances if I had not stepped in at the very end? I saved her life and I brought her down to earth. I had hold of her last, and I am the one in possession. You are all fools for quarrelling; did not dear father warn us not to fall out? If I had not caught her she would have fallen to the

ground, broken in every bone."

The brothers saw that justice was on Saturday's side, and they agreed that he had won the hand of the princess. The king and the princess approved also. The wedding took place without any delay. The other brothers received half of the kingdom, which they agreed to share. Then they all returned to their father's dominions and visited their beloved father, who blessed them all. He heard their wonderful tale of adventures and congratulated them on their achievements. "It is a lucky thing for all of us," said he, "that I did not die whilst you were all away. Now I am happy in being able to have such a sweet and charming daughter-in-law." They all lived happily for many years, and then they died in peace.

# The Jewish Fairy Book

Translated and Adapted by Gerald Friedlander

# The Magic Apples

Once upon a time, a long, long time ago, there lived a happy family in some little town, the name of which I have forgotten. The family consisted of a good Rabbi, his wife and an only daughter. The girl was exceedingly sweet-tempered, and as she grew in years so did she grow in beauty. Every one who saw her fell in love with her at first sight. As is the rule in Jewish homes the girls are never allowed to be out of their parents sight, and the Rabbi's daughter was no exception to the rule. She was always with her mother or father. The years sped on their course, and one day she was keeping her twentieth birthday. No one till then had had an opportunity of speaking to her, unless her father or mother had been present.

"'Tis time," said the Rabbi to his wife, "to think of our darling daughter's future. She is now twenty years old, and it is not good for a young woman to remain a child. We must let her see just a little of the world, and if the call of love comes to her—why! let her answer; even as you did when I sought your heart and found it."

"Good husband! have you not noticed how very fond our dear daughter is of her cousin Jacob, my sister's only son?"

"Yes, I have seen that they like one another as cousins usually do, but I have also noticed that she seems to prefer her other cousin, David, my brother's only son."

"I cannot say," exclaimed the wife, "that I have noticed this preference. I certainly think that my nephew would make her an excellent husband. Jacob is, as you well know, a most learned man, fit to be a Rabbi, and he is a very good man."

"Yes, yes, dear wife! but I prefer my nephew David as our

future son-in-law. He is very clever, and will one day make his mark in the world."

"That is quite likely, dearest husband! but I do not like him as much as I like Jacob."

"But, Dearest wife! you know I always preferred David."

"Now listen, best of husbands! I don t want my only daughter to marry David."

"Dear me! sweetest of wives! don t you know that I really do not wish our lovely child to marry her cousin Jacob?"

In this strain they argued till long past midnight, discussing the pros and cons of the two nephews. They could not, however, come to a final decision,

At last they agreed to call together their friends and relatives and to take their advice and to let them settle the question.

Next evening a large party of relatives and friends, including David and Jacob, came together at the Rabbi's house. An excellent repast was provided and in the middle of the meal the Rabbi arose and addressed the company in the following words:—

"My dear wife and I are most happy to see you all at our table. I have brought you together to give us advice. As you know, our dear daughter is now of a marriageable age. The question which perplexes my good wife and me is, whom is she to marry? I have every reason to believe that her cousin David would be an ideal husband. My wife seems to prefer her nephew Jacob. What shall we do? Please help us to decide this very difficult problem. See, here is my daughter at my side, and here are her two cousins. What do you suggest?"

The Rabbi resumed his seat. One of the oldest of the guests arose and said—

"Good host and hostess! The matter seems to be in my opinion exceedingly simple, so much so that there was really no occasion to put yourselves to all this trouble in inviting us here to-night. All that you have to do is to put your two

nephews before your sweet daughter and to tell her to pick and choose. Let her settle the matter."

The advice appealed to all the company, and the Rabbi asked his daughter to decide between Jacob and David. With a crimson blush on her beautiful face she replied, "I love both my cousins alike, and I cannot show any preference."

"Now," cried the Rabbi, "what are we to do? She cannot marry both."

Again the old guest arose and said:—

"Good host and hostess! It seems after all that you did well in calling us together to help you to find a solution to the problem of your daughter's marriage. What we advise you to do is to give a sum of money, say one hundred pounds, to each of your nephews and to send them out into the wide world to seek their fortunes. Your daughter will wait one year from to-night, and then she will marry the one who returns with the larger fortune."

"Hear! Hear!" cried the guests, and the nephews also appeared to be satisfied.

The Rabbi expressed his entire approval. All present agreed that this was a fair and proper solution.

The party broke up and all went home satisfied with the result at which they had so unanimously arrived.

That same night the Rabbi in the presence of his wife and daughter gave the two nephews one hundred pounds apiece and blessed them, wishing each one good luck. Next morning the two nephews set out on their quest of gaining a fortune. They traveled all the morning together and at noon they came to a market town. They resolved to buy something with their money and on the morrow they would part and each one try his luck. David invested his money in a large stock of silk. "I will," said he to himself, "be able to sell this at a good profit and I will buy a further supply, and by the time the year is round I shall have put by a good sum." Jacob bought a number of jewels which he put in his pocket. They had agreed to

spend the night together at the inn in the market-town. David had his bales of silk brought into the inn and carried into their bedroom. After they had enjoyed a good supper they retired to their room, both very tired after their day's tramp.

Unknown to themselves they had been watched by a gang of thieves, who broke into the inn in the middle of the night. They found their way to the bedroom where the cousins were fast asleep. The thieves emptied the pockets of both men, and glad in having secured the precious jewels they hastened away. They did not remove the bales of silk, for this might have attracted attention in the streets. With the break of dawn the two cousins arose and said their morning prayers, asking Heaven to prosper them on their way. Whilst David was arranging with the host for the removal of the bales of silk, Jacob cried aloud,—

"Cousin David! I have been robbed. I showed you the jewels last night just before we went to bed, and you saw me replace them in my pocket. Now my pocket is empty. Do not think I grieve because I have been robbed, but I am overwhelmed with sorrow, for I fear I have now lost the hand of our beautiful cousin whom I love with all my heart. What shall I do?"

"Now, good cousin, do not lose heart. You have a whole year in which you can make a fortune. Of course I now have a great advantage over you, but that is not my fault. Should I return home I will tell our uncle and aunt that you have gone on a long journey, but that you will return within the twelve months. Now go in God's name, and may good luck attend you."

Thus they parted and each went his own way. David was happy and confident, whilst his cousin was sad and despondent. He said to himself: "Uncle is always right in saying that cousin David is very clever. I also believe that he will become a rich and great man. Dear me! What a fool I was to put all

my money in a handful of jewels. Alas! before twelve hours have passed I am penniless. I was never born to be a merchant. I am a student and I ought not to meddle with things which I do not understand. David will, I suppose, marry my lovely cousin, and I shall be unhappy all my life."

David prospered and at the end of six months he returned home. He went to visit his aunt and uncle. They inquired after Jacob and were satisfied to learn that he had gone on a long journey. The Rabbi's daughter asked David when did he think Jacob would return. David replied that he did not expect to see him for another six months.

Meanwhile Jacob knew that the only hope for his future peace of mind lay in his pursuit of knowledge. He realized that he was hardly likely to become a rich man. He therefore determined to spend his year of probation in study. "This," said he to himself, "will be my comfort and I may be of use to my fellow beings."

On and on he trudged till he arrived at last at the Jewish College at Sura in Babylon. He entered the College hall and sat by himself in a dark corner, for he was ashamed to show himself before the teachers and pupils owing to his shabby appearance. His boots were worn out and his clothes were thread bare. He listened to the lecture given by the head of the College and followed every point with the deepest interest. The pupils were asked to solve a difficult problem arising out of the lecture, and to be prepared with their solution on the following day.

At sundown all the pupils left the College and poor Jacob remained behind. He had nowhere to go for the night's shelter. He thought he would spend the evening in reading the Talmud so as to be able to solve the problem set by the lecturer. He was so very tired and hungry that it was not long before he fell fast asleep over the book in front of him. It was a sleep of sheer exhaustion. His eyes were barely shut by the bands of sleep when he began to dream. He saw the beautiful

girl in his uncle's house and she looked more lovely than he had ever seen her. This vision faded away and he saw a very old man with a snow white long beard and such a noble face. He heard the old man's voice, it was like an angel's song, so winning and so gentle. The voice said, "I am Elijah, the prophet. I come to give thee the greatest treasure on earth, knowledge and understanding. Make good use of it and thou wilt be blessed. Farewell." The vision faded and Jacob awoke. He felt refreshed and happy, for he had seen his beloved and the great prophet Elijah. Elijah, like the good fairy, is always at hand to comfort the sorrowful, to cheer the despondent and to help those in distress.

Jacob now thought of the problem set to the pupils. The solution flashed through his mind; he saw the whole problem in all its bearings. He wrote out the answer on the table in front of the teacher's seat. When the class assembled next morning the teacher asked whether there was any one who could answer the question set the previous day. No one replied. His eyes fell and he read with no little surprise the correct solution written on the table. Turning to his pupils he asked, "Who has written this answer?" There was again no reply. The answer was perfectly correct and he added: "I feel very proud to know that one of the class has been so very diligent. I rejoice to think that this pupil is so modest, for he is not anxious to disclose his identity. The true scholar is always humble."

Again that day he set a new question, more difficult than the one set on the previous day. Again the same result ensued. The correct answer was written on the table opposite to the teacher's place. He again asked, "Who has written this answer?" The pupils were silent. For a third time a fresh problem was set. The teacher now determined to find out the intelligent and modest pupil whose answers had been so accurate. He bored a small hole in the wall and watched events from the next room. When all the students had left

the class-room he saw a stranger leave the corner and advance to the table. He was dressed in threadbare garments and looked very famished. He saw him write out the answer and then return to the corner, where he fell asleep. The teacher had seen enough. He now knew why his own pupils had not been able to admit that one of them had written the answers to his questions.

Next morning he repeated his usual question, "Who has written this answer on my table?" Once more there was silence. He now requested the stranger to come forward. The latter immediately did as he was bidden.

"Did you write this answer to my question!"

"I did, honored Rabbi!"

"Why did you come here?"

"To learn, good master! I wish to stay here three months and then to return to my home."

"You are most welcome, but not as a disciple."

"Why not, may I ask?"

"You are wise enough to teach these my pupils. If you care to stay with us we shall be not only thankful but also honored. As long as you remain you will please do me the favor of being my guest."

"These kind words, great master! touch my heart, but I have really journeyed here in order to sit at your feet and learn. I left home nearly four months ago and I must be back within one year. Pray accede to my wish and accept me as a pupil."

"Your extreme modesty is very becoming. You are a master in Israel, and there is nothing that I can teach you. I shall yet find that you are able to teach me. To-morrow you will begin your duties as a new teacher in our college."

That day the Rabbi took Jacob home with him to live.

Next day Jacob began to teach. The disciples were greatly surprised at his vast knowledge and admired his marked ability as a teacher. He was soon beloved by all who knew him.

At the end of three months he told his good friend, the Rabbi, that, much to his regret, he would have to take his leave and return home.

"Stay with me and you shall wed my daughter, who loves you!" the Rabbi said.

"I greatly appreciate your extreme kindness and I am glad to think I have found favor in the eyes of your good daughter, but my heart is entwined with the heart of my cousin. I have pledged my word to see her in less than five months." He then told the kind-hearted Rabbi of the circumstance that led to his being there. He told him how his cousin David and he had received £100 each and that the one who should have at the end of twelve months the larger fortune would receive the hand of the beautiful daughter of their uncle. "I have determined to be home in time for the wedding, even though it may not be my good fortune to be the lucky husband," he added.

"Go in peace," said the Rabbi, "and God prosper your way."

Jacob started on his return journey in a happy mood. He was returning with a treasure far more precious than the jewels which had been stolen from him. Elijah's blessing was indeed something worth having. On and on did he tramp for the best part of the day, for he stopped neither to eat nor to rest, so fiercely did the desire to see the face of his beloved burn within him. At last his feet refused to carry him any further. He was also very faint; hunger and thirst began to claim attention, and he did not know how to satisfy them. He looked about and saw on his left a fine tree with very large apples, as bright as silver. He dragged himself to the tree and picked off an apple. He then seated himself under the tree and began to eat the fruit. The taste was very bitter and he had barely eaten half when he noticed a strange feeling coming over him. He felt sick, and his skin seemed to grow cold. His hands were as white as snow, like a leper's skin. He looked

at his feet and legs and they were also white. He knew that it was leprosy.

"I have eaten," said he, "poisonous fruit. Woe is me! Surely this is not Elijah's blessing. I will rest here no longer; I will go on my way till I fall to the ground. To die would be a release. "On he went, and after a few steps he came to another tall tree laden with very large apples with a golden hue. "I will taste," said he, "one of these apples, they look so lovely. If I die well and good, for what am I to do now that I am a leper?"

He plucked an apple and began to eat it. It had a most delicious taste, as sweet as honey, as juicy as a grape. He felt ever so much better, his faintness disappeared and, miracle of miracles! the awful white color of his hands vanished. His leprosy was cured. He thanked God for His wonderful mercy and love.

He felt himself renewed with vigor and life. "This is all indeed a blessing," he mused. "I must go back and fetch some of the silver apples," and he did so. He then picked off a few of the golden apples and continued his journey. At last he came to the capital of the kingdom where he had been born. His own home, where his lovely cousin also lived, was situated in a small town not very far from the capital. As soon as he entered the city he heard the sound of lamentation. All joy and happiness had fled; sorrow and weeping met his gaze. He feared that some dread disaster had befallen the city. He inquired of the first person whom he met concerning the misfortune.

"What's the meaning of all this sorrow?" he asked.

"Why, our dear old King," came the reply, "has a most terrible attack of leprosy. From the sole of his foot to the crown of his head, his skin is leprous. Poor King, he will not live long, for all his doctors are unable to cure him."

Jacob listened with rapt attention and passed on. He now betook himself to the King's palace. When he came there he knocked at the door. He stood waiting for some one to come

out and ask him what he wanted. At last the palace door was opened and the royal butler asked Jacob why he had knocked.

"I must see His Majesty at once."

"What is your business?"

"I will cure His Majesty."

"What and who are you?"

"I am Jacob the Jew, a Rabbi and a doctor."

The butler then brought him to his royal master. Jacob saw that the King's head and face were covered, for he did not like his servants to gaze upon him in his terrible condition.

"What is your wish?" cried the King. "Have you also come to torment me by promising to heal me, knowing all the while that you are deceiving me?"

"Nay, your Majesty; God has given me wisdom and understanding. I am sure I can help your Majesty to be restored to good health."

"If it be as you say, I will give you half my kingdom, and fifty thousand pounds. Should you fail, mark you, you will lose your head."

"I agree," cried Jacob, making an obeisance. "One condition do I make," said the King, "and that is—you must not have recourse to any species of magical art or sorcery. I will not allow you to use any charms or spells."

"Your Majesty has already heard that I am a Jew. Our holy religion has always forbidden us to practice sorcery."

"Quite so, but how do you propose to cure me?"

"Your Majesty must first of all leave yourself in God's hands. I do not boast of any special skill, but God has given us mortals certain knowledge and insight. I will do my best, and if you trust in the Heavenly Father, I think you will be quite satisfied."

The King was greatly pleased by these modest remarks, and he told Jacob that he was satisfied with him.

"But," he said, "I should just like to know the nature of your treatment."

"At first your gracious Majesty will become worse, you will feel sick, weak and very depressed. This is the first stage, for leprosy must be very acute before it can be radically cured."

"Stay," cried the King, "if I become worse I shall die."

"Not so, your Majesty! You will die if you do not become worse; for there is no cure for your disease in its present form. I will cure your Majesty if you will submit to my treatment.

"I agree," the King said, "and now proceed with your cure."

Jacob asked for a supply of sugar, two knives, and two plates. When these things were brought to him, he took from his pocket one of the silver apples and cut it up into small pieces. He put sugar over these pieces and gave the plate to the King, saying,—

"Your Majesty will be good enough to eat this sour apple, every piece. I have added sugar to make the taste more palatable. You will feel very uncomfortable for a while, but as I have already said, this is absolutely necessary."

The King obeyed Jacob's order and ate the pieces of the apple. No sooner had he done this, than he began to moan. "I am much worse, I am dying," he murmured.

"Not so, your Majesty! The cure is already beginning to act."

"Look at my hand," exclaimed the King, "it is now as white as the driven snow; it is so cold, it is lifeless."

"Patience, your Majesty! In one hour you will take another apple and your leprosy will vanish. I will stake my life on your Majesty's complete recovery."

Meanwhile he began to cut into small pieces one of the golden apples. There was no need to put sugar on this fruit. When, at last, he gave it to the King there was no more grumbling. The King ate it with relish and said he was sorry there was no more left.

"I never tasted such wonderful fruit in all my life," he cried in a happy voice. "I feel quite well again now. See my skin—

it is no longer leprous. You are a great doctor and you have saved my life. I am so much better, I shall be able to get out of my bed. I am indeed grateful and I will keep my promise; fifty thousand pounds shall be paid to you this day and you now own half of my kingdom."

"Your gracious Majesty!" cried Jacob. "May God preserve your life and give you length of days. I do not desire to accept all you offer. I ask for a small gift, and that is—give me the right of owning the small town, not very far from your capital, where my uncle and aunt live, where my home is."

"Most gladly will I do this."

The King caused letters-patent to be issued declaring Jacob to be the Prince of that town. He also gave him a valuable gold chain as a mark of his royal favor.

"Now, Sire! pray let me go," said Jacob, "and take possession of my town."

"Go, and twenty knights of my retinue shall accompany you."

Away they went, a fine procession to behold. News spread far and wide that the new Prince of the town was about to enter his new territory. The inhabitants came forth to greet him. When he came to his castle he was met by a deputation consisting of the most respected of the citizens. Jacob was dressed in splendid attire with the golden chain about his neck. He had changed considerably since he had left home and he was not recognized. Among the members of the deputation was Jacob's uncle, the Rabbi.

Jacob began to speak: "I am right glad to see you all here in my castle. As the Prince of this town I will henceforth take up my abode within these walls. Your lives and mine must be identified. Your joys shall be mine and I will share your sorrows. You will be happy to learn that our gracious King is now restored to health. It was my good fortune to help His Majesty to regain his health and he in his kindness of heart has made me Prince and owner of this town. I shall respect all my

friends, be their religion what it may, for the good of all nations and religions are sure to inherit eternal bliss. Please let me know when you are about to celebrate any family festivity, and I will be present."

"Now that is very fortunate," exclaimed Jacob's uncle. "In three days I shall have my only daughter married, and your presence will increase our happiness."

"I hope so," said Jacob with a happy smile, "and now farewell till we meet at the wedding."

The deputation withdrew, well satisfied with the courtesy shown to them by their new ruler.

Three days later Jacob betook himself to his uncle's house, just as the wedding ceremony was about to commence. He was received with marked attention by his uncle and aunt, who had not the faintest idea that the new ruler was their nephew. Turning to the Rabbi, Jacob said—

"May I be introduced to the bride before the ceremony takes place?"

"Of course you can," exclaimed the happy father.

No sooner did his daughter look at Jacob than she cried aloud—

"Father! Mother! this is my cousin."

"True," exclaimed Jacob. "Listen, good friends. To-day is the anniversary of our last gathering here, when you, dear uncle, gave me one hundred pounds and you also gave my cousin David, whom I see here, a similar sum. I do not know whether David has turned his hundred pounds into a very large fortune. I, for my part, am the owner of this town and that means a fairly large fortune. Our sweet and lovely cousin has agreed to marry the one who has the larger fortune. His Majesty the King has even been good enough to promise to give me half of his kingdom as well as fifty thousand pounds. Need I say more?"

The remarks were greeted with applause by all present, and David agreed that the bride had been fairly won by Jacob.

Every one was thoroughly delighted except David, who slipped away and was heard of no more.

Jacob and his wife lived a very happy life, blessed with worldly prosperity. Elijah's blessing was realized to the full, and Jacob never forgot his wonderful dream in the College at Sura in Babylon.

## The Wise Merchant

There once lived a merchant who had an only son. Wherever the father went his son accompanied him, for the former was somewhat advanced in years and the son did not like his father to travel alone. In those days traveling was not a pleasure. It made no difference whether one went by land or sea, robbers were rarely absent. The father and son dealt in precious jewels, and it once happened that they set out on a sea voyage. They carried with them a large box full of valuable gems.

Father and son occupied one cabin and they had the large box placed there for safety. One of the crew had discovered that the merchant had very valuable treasures in his cabin. He told this to the rest of the crew, who were a gang of thieves. It happened by chance that when the crew were discussing this matter, the old merchant overheard part of their conversation. This is what he heard—

"Now we have a splendid opportunity of becoming very wealthy."

"How so?" cried the rest.

"Why, I was this morning in the cabin of the merchant and his son to find out what they have in their box. I found the key in the lock and I opened the box. It is full of pearls and diamonds."

"What do you propose!" they asked him. "Speak, for you are our leader."

"My plan," he answered, "is very simple. Tomorrow when we are on the high seas, far away from the coast, one of us will start a conversation with the merchant and lead him to the

side of the ship. I will keep watch, and when he is looking out to sea, I will run across the deck and fall against him and throw him into the water. When the son learns of his father's death he will be overwhelmed with grief. It will then be very easy for one of us to enter the cabin and to remove the jewels from the box, leaving the latter in its place in the cabin."

"How about the spoil?" they asked.

"Naturally we will divide," said he, "all we obtain quite fairly. There are seven of us and we will each have an equal share. This will be enough. We shall all be rich, and we can give up our wretched life on the water and start afresh when we reach port."

"We agree," they cried unanimously.

The merchant had not lost a single word of this very interesting proposal. He smiled and said to himself—

"Well does the proverb say: 'Man proposes, but God disposes.' How am I to outwit these thieves?"

He walked up and down the deck, thinking as hard as he could. He then looked for his son, whom he found in the cabin. They had made a mutual agreement that one of them should spend the best part of the day in the cabin, to keep an eye on their treasure.

"My son," said he, "by God's mercy I have discovered a villainous plot. The crew on board are a gang of thieves and murderers. I have overheard part of their plan. I firmly believe that I did so by God's will, for the Almighty watches over all of us and sends us warning when danger threatens us. My life is in danger and our fortune likewise. Let us act with great caution. If you promise to do exactly as I tell you, I think all will be well."

"I promise, dear father; what am I to do?"

"We must pretend to quarrel. You are to begin by being very insolent to me. I, of course, will rebuke you. Pay no heed to my rebuke, but abuse me and insult me. I will again rebuke you and then I will strike you, calling you a rebellious son

worthy of death. Pay no heed, but raise your hand as though you intended to strike me. Our quarrel will attract the attention of the crew, and when they are eye-witnesses I will rush away to the cabin and bring forth the large box which contains our fortune. I will turn to the crew and cry aloud: See how I now punish my rebellious son. This box is full of jewels, it is all our fortune. I had rather be a beggar than allow such a wicked son to go unpunished. Into the sea I cast our wealth, which I earned with the sweat of my brow. I shall then throw the box into the sea, and whilst I am about to do this I will open the lid and let them see the jewels, as otherwise they will imagine that I am bluffing them."

"Will you really throw all the jewels into the sea, dear father?"

"Of course I will, dear boy."

"But we shall be poor."

"Better poor and alive than rich and dead. Do you agree, my boy!"

"Yes, I will do exactly as you have told me."

They immediately began to play their part, for they realized that the sooner the jewels were over board the safer it would be. They went on deck and began to talk in an excited manner. High words began to pass between them. The crew listened. At last they began to abuse one another and the quarrel seemed so serious that all the crew assembled to look on and enjoy the fun. When the father struck the son, they seemed to the crew to be two madmen. But they could hardly believe their eyes when they saw the old man dragging the precious jewel box across the deck.

"What's he going to do now!" they asked one another in bated breath. "Perhaps he will scatter the gems over the deck and we shall have a lovely scramble."

They watched with strained eyes every movement of the merchant.

"Look, look!" they shouted, "the madman is throwing the

whole box, worth millions, overboard."

The rest of the voyage was spent in peace and safety. There was now no reason to kill the merchant. When they came to port, the merchant and his son hastened to the magistrates and laid a charge of attempted murder and robbery against the entire crew. The police came on board and arrested the rogues. When the case came before the magistrates, the merchant said he would be satisfied with the repayment of the value of the jewels which he had so wisely sacrificed in order to save his life. The magistrates agreed to this proposal, and ordered the crew to refund the sum demanded. They found ways and means to do this, so that the merchant had not only saved his life but, at the same time, he had managed to save his fortune.

## Heavenly Treasures

In the first century of the common era there was a King named Monobazus. He ruled over the land of Adiabene near Assyria. By birth a heathen, he ultimately embraced the Jewish religion. His example was followed by his wife Queen Helena, and their son Izates, who in time succeeded his father on the throne.

Now it happened, shortly after Monobazus became a Jew, that his subjects were sorely oppressed by a very severe famine. Many of the people died of starvation and want. When King Monobazus saw the plight of his people he opened the royal treasuries and distributed all his wealth among the unfortunate poor. His noble conduct displeased his rich relatives, who came to him in order to reproach him. They asked him: "Is it true that thou art thinking of opening the royal treasury of thy late father, our wise and beloved King?"

*Monobazus*: "It is quite true; in fact I have already opened all the royal treasuries."

Then they asked him: "May we inquire what purpose hast thou in view?"

*Monobazus*: "My purpose is to feed the starving poor in my kingdom."

This answer led them to say: "Thy fathers gathered treasures, but thou hast squandered them."

*Monobazus*: "My fathers laid up treasures upon earth, but I lay up treasures in Heaven. My fathers gathered them into treasuries over which the hand of man hath power; I have stored mine in a treasury over which the hand of man hath no power. My fathers gathered that which bears no fruit,

whilst I have gathered that which yields fruit. My fathers gathered wealth: whilst I have gathered souls. My fathers gathered for this world; I have gathered for the world to come, even as it is said in Holy Writ.— 'Treasures of wickedness profit nothing: but charity delivereth from death.'"

## King Solomon's Carpet

When the Holy One, blessed be He, bestowed the kingdom of David upon Solomon his son, He also gave him power to rule over the beasts of the field, the birds of the air, the fish of the sea, the spirits and all things in Creation. On the day of his coronation the demons brought to his palace a magic carpet. Ashmodai their chief, in presenting it to Solomon, exclaimed—

"Great King, son of David! our master and ruler! Know thou that this green silken carpet, so beautifully embroidered, will carry thee whithersoever thou wilt go. It is thine as a gift from thy ruler and master, the King of Kings. Its length is sixty miles and its breadth is as long as its length."

Ashmodai and the demons vanished, and Solomon stood gazing at the wonderful gift.

Now King Solomon had four chieftains ever at his command. There was Asaph son of Berechjah, who ruled over the children of men. Then Ramerat was the chief of the genii. The king of the beasts was the lion. The eagle ruled over the birds. When Solomon traveled the wind was ever with him waiting to obey the royal behest. When it pleased him he would take his morning meal in the east and, on that same day, he would sup in the west of the world.

There was also Ashmodai, King of the demons. Solomon could summon him to his presence by rubbing the magic ring which he wore on his right hand. This ring was engraved with the Holy Name of God. Solomon sent some of the demons to India whence they brought him wonderful water to irrigate his plants, which never withered. These plants supplied him

with wonderful leaves with which he cured disease and sickness. In summer and winter lovely roses adorned his table. He loved to try and understand all things. In order to learn the different ways of men he disguised himself and mixed with all sorts and conditions of people. He was a man who had strung many experiences upon the chain of his remarkable life. Tales could be told of the varied phases of his career. Sometimes he was rich, at other times he was poor. He was King and again a beggar. Now let us listen to a brief account of one day's story in the extraordinary life of this wonderful monarch.

One fine summer's day he arose early in the morning. He was staying in his beautiful palace in Jerusalem. He betook himself as soon as he had dressed to the Holy Temple for the morning service of praise. He listened with bowed head to the sweet song of the Levites. They were singing the beautiful psalms written by his beloved father David. He loved to hear the sweet strains of the Temple organ. He joined in the responses with the rest of the worshipers. After the termination of Divine Service he returned to his palace. He then transacted the various affairs of state. The rest of the day was free. He resolved to spend it on his magic carpet. He would travel abroad and see something of the world.

He took the wonderful carpet out of his pocket. How it glittered in the sunshine! When it was spread out it looked like a sea of gold. He delighted to look at its wonderful embroidery, depicting all the marvels of the universe. He beheld pictures in silk, gold and jewels—there were mountains, trees, birds and beasts, giants and demons. When he stepped upon the carpet he ordered his servants to place his wonderful throne on it. When he sat thereon he sometimes imagined that he was the absolute ruler in heaven above, on the earth beneath, and in the waters under the earth. His pride and vanity grew at the expense of his faith in God. At such moments his humility forsook him. He almost thought that he was a god.

No sooner was he on his magic carpet than he commanded one hundred thousand troops to be his escort. He touched his magic ring and said—

"I will now set out for Damascus, where I will take my breakfast."

In the twinkling of an eye Damascus lay at his feet. The wind, bearing up the carpet, awaited further orders and the carpet was stationary betwixt heaven and earth. The genii served the breakfast which Solomon ate with relish, for it was now the fourth hour of the day and he had tasted nothing since his supper on the previous evening.

"Perhaps," said he to himself, "I will sup to night in Media. Meanwhile, I will traverse the world, my domains, and see how life looks in the different lands. Verily I am great and mighty. There has never been any monarch in all time who has become as famous as I am. The Holy One, blessed be He, has given me unbounded wisdom, understanding, knowledge and intelligence. I am Solomon the Wise and I rule beasts, tame and wild, birds and fish, the spirits and demons, aye, all things in creation. I am truly a wonderful King."

At that moment the wind changed its course and the carpet tilted somewhat, so that forty thousand soldiers fell off the carpet.

They fell down and down till they reached the earth. This annoyed Solomon immensely and he began to rebuke the wind. He cried to it in a sharp voice—

"Wind, return to thy former position, dost thou hear?"

"I hear very well, mighty son of David! and I will do as thou dost bid me, provided thou dost also return to the humble faith in God which David thy father taught thee. Did he not say: 'The meek shall inherit the earth?' God loves humility."

In that moment Solomon was abashed. The rebuke of the wind had been fully deserved by the pride and vanity of the King. The wind bore up the carpet which now resumed its

level position. Again the King rubbed his magic ring and commanded the wind to move on. The carpet flew through space and was just passing over a deep valley when Solomon cried, Halt! Below there were tens of thousands of tiny black ants. Solomon was somewhat taken aback to hear the voice of one ant crying to its little fellows: "Take cover! lest ye be crushed by the mighty army of the great King Solomon, the Servant of God."

Solomon commanded the wind to let the carpet fall nearer to the valley. He then cried aloud in a terrible fury: "We will descend to earth."

He commanded Ashmodai to appear before him. When the King of the demons saw Solomon on his wonderful throne he made obeisance and said—

"Command, great Master, and thy wishes shall be fulfilled."

"Go, Ashmodai, and bring before me the ants in yonder valley."

The ants swarmed on the earth over which the magic carpet was hanging. Solomon said—

"Where is the little ant that gave the command to all the other ants saying: 'Take cover' lest ye be crushed by my army?"

The little black ant came a few inches forward and said—

"I am the one that gave this command."

"Who art thou?"

"I am the queen of the ants."

"What is thy name!"

"Machashamah."

"Now tell me, little queen, why didst thou give thy command to the other ants?"

"I was afraid that the ants might venture to gaze at thy magic carpet and thereby they would interrupt our service of praise with which we glorify God all day long. If we cease to praise our Creator we deserve to die, for then we are of no use

in the world."

"Is it not true that ants also work?"

"It is true, but our work is also prayer. Idleness leads to pride and vanity, whereas toil makes one humble and meek. Dost thou not think likewise, wise King?"

"Never mind what I think, but let me rather ask thee a simple question."

"Dost thou not know, King Solomon, that it is not seemly for the one who asks a question to be on high, whilst the one who has to reply is down below?"

"What dost thou wish me to do, Machashamah!"

"Why, lift me up, of course, wisest of Kings."

King Solomon bent down and lifted up the ant. He placed the tiny insect on his magic carpet just in front of his golden throne. He turned to it and sat on his throne exclaiming—

"Is it all right now?"

"No, it is not all right, great King."

"Why not, Machashamah?"

"It is also unbecoming for the questioner to be seated whilst the one who gives the answer is standing on a lower level. Take me upon thine hand and I will answer thy question—if I am able."

Solomon obeyed the ant.

"Is there any one in all the world greater than I am?"

"To be sure there is."

"Who is it, Machashamah?"

"It is I."

"How dost thou dare to say this?"

"Because it is the truth."

"Prove it."

"If I were not greater than thou art, surely the Holy One, blessed be He, would not have sent thee to me to take me upon thine hand."

When Solomon heard these words he was beside himself with fury. He cast the ant off his hand to the carpet and said

to it—

"Ant! thou knowest not to whom thou art speaking. Thou dost not really know who and what I am. I am Solomon, son of David, of blessed memory; I rule all things on earth, in the air and in the sea. I have a magic ring and a magic carpet, and what hast thou?"

"O Solomon! thou wilt one day be the food for the ants; they will feast on thy body in the grave, therefore boast not."

At that same moment Solomon fell upon his face and was put to shame by the truth spoken by the little queen of the ants.

He then commanded Ashmodai to remove all the ants to their former haunts, and calling to the wind to carry his carpet on high he said: "Away!"

The wind began to lift up the magic carpet, and as it was about to fly away into space, Machashamah cried out—

"Farewell, King Solomon, forget not to praise God and to labor for the glory of His Holy Name. Remember all I have told thee and boast no more."

Solomon continued his journey betwixt heaven and earth. On and on he went, over hill and dale, across rivers and mountains. At last he came to a vast desert and noticed a huge mound. Coming nearer he saw that it was a large building almost entirely covered by the sand of the desert. He called to the wind to slacken its speed, saying that he wished to descend to the earth. His magic carpet glided down to the earth and Solomon stepped upon the sand. He at once summoned Ashmodai and bade him fold up the carpet. When this was done he put it into his pocket. He then asked his Princes and servants if they knew what sort of building it was. They shook their heads and told him they had never been in that desert before.

"See!" cried he, "it is much larger than my palace in the Lebanon. I will enter and see what sort of place it is. Find the entrance."

His Princes and servants looked on all sides for a door, but their efforts were all in vain.

In his despair he again summoned Ashmodai.

"What is thy wish, master?"

"I am vexed because my Princes and servants cannot find an entrance to this building. What can you suggest?"

"Sovereign master! I will order my demons to ascend to the roof, and perhaps they may be able to find there a man or an animal. Dost thou approve?"

"Be it so, and let there be no delay."

Ashmodai bowed to the ground and vanished. The King of the demons bade some of his servants among the genii and demons to ascend to the roof and to report to him what was to be seen. They ascended, and having looked around they descended. They returned to Ashmodai and said—

"Royal master! We saw not a son of man upon the roof, but we found a large mountain eagle sitting in her nest."

Ashmodai reported the result to Solomon, who commanded him to bring to his presence the sea eagle, the prince of the birds. When the sea eagle came before Solomon, he ordered it to fetch the mountain eagle from the roof of the building. This was done. As soon as the mountain eagle saw Solomon, she began to utter the praise of God and then she greeted the King.

The King looked at the old bird and said—

"What is thy name?"

"Alanad."

"How old art thou?"

"My years number seven hundred."

"Hast thou ever seen the door of the building on the roof of which thou hast thy nest?"

"O King! mayest thou live forever! By the life of thy head I know nothing of the door. I have a brother two hundred years older than I am. He is more learned than I, perhaps he can tell thee, King, what thou desirest to know. He lives in a

nest a little above my home."

Solomon again commanded the sea eagle to fetch Alanad's brother. When he came before the King he was praising the great and good Creator of all things. He then greeted Solomon, who asked him—

"What is thy name!"

"Alôf."

"What is thy age?"

"The days of my life are nine hundred years."

"Dost thou know where the entrance to yonder building is situated?"

"Mighty King! By thy life I assure thee that I know not where the entrance is. May be that my brother, who is four hundred years older than I am, can tell thee. His nest is a little beyond mine."

Once more Solomon told the sea eagle to bring this old bird before him. "Do not forget," he added, "to carry it if it cannot fly." It was brought before the King, and like its brother and sister it was praising God.

After their mutual greeting Solomon inquired—

"How old art thou?"

"I am one thousand and three hundred years old."

"What is thy name?"

"My father called me Alta-'amar."

"Hast thou seen any entrance to this building here?"

"By thy head, O wise King! I know it not, but well do I remember my late father speaking of its golden door. This was situated on the side looking towards sunset. Owing to the time that has passed since it was last opened, when it admitted a mighty King, it has been covered over by the sand of the desert. For this reason it is now hidden from view. If it please thee, wise Solomon, let thy command go forth that the sand shall disappear. Forgive my presumption in giving advice to one so wise."

"I thank thee, Alta-'amar, for thy advice, but I do not see

how I can cause the sand to vanish. Can you suggest how it might be done?"

"Command the wind to blow the sand away on the side facing sunset and the entrance will be seen."

"Many thanks, and now farewell."

The three old eagles returned to their nests. Solomon commanded the wind to blow with all its might and to drive away the sand on the west side of the building. In a few minutes a wonderful sight met the King's gaze. Lo! there stood a beautiful portico, and Solomon entered. He came to a massive iron door. Time had made her inroads and the iron was very rusty. There was an inscription in Hebrew which Solomon began to read. The following was what he read—

"O children of men! be it known to you that I and my Princes dwelt in this magic palace for very many years in joy and contentment. At last hunger invaded its walls and entered within. We ground our best pearls with the little corn we could obtain, but all in vain. Hunger drove us forth and we left our home for the eagles to take our place. At length we grew weary of life, for we were faint in our souls and bodies and we laid ourselves down to sleep in the dust. We told the eagles to say to all comers, who might ask them about this wonderful palace, 'We found it already built. Let no man enter unless he be a King or a prophet. If he desire to enter let him dig up the sand on the right side of the portico, where he will see a crystal box. He must break this box open in order to get the keys of the palace.'"

Solomon told his Princes and attendants that he would inspect the palace by himself. He followed the directions which he had read and he was very happy when he found the crystal box. When he had broken it open he took out the keys. Without any delay he opened the iron door and entered the palace.

He was greatly surprised to see that another door now faced him. It was of burnished gold. He found the key to open

this door, and when he had opened it he was amazed to find another door in front of him. After he had opened it, he entered a large room full of pearls and precious jewels. In the next room he found gold and silver coins in large boxes. He went on and saw a large courtyard. Its pavement was of gold. He passed on and entered a magnificent dining hall, very spacious and lofty. It was perfumed with the scent of paradise. "Never have I seen such a noble room. It is truly fit for a King," exclaimed Solomon in astonishment and delight. The dining hall had another courtyard at its further end. Solomon passed through and saw in the center the image of a scorpion cast in silver. He removed it and found beneath it a large ring set in a wooden trap-door. He lifted up the latter and saw a secret staircase. He descended and found treasures uncounted, precious jewels and money. He went on and came to a door of silver on which he read these words—

"The lord of this magic palace was a King, mighty and honored. At his presence lions trembled and bears fainted, for he was a mighty warrior. Here he lived in bliss and peace, ruling the lands east and west. After many happy years his time to die came, alas! all too soon, and when he died his crown fell off his head. If thou art stout-hearted enough to enter the next room, thou wilt see wonderful and terrible sights. If thou art faint-hearted return and begone."

Solomon knew no fear; did he not wear on the little finger of his right hand his magic ring? He went to the next room and opened the door. He entered and found a sack tied at its mouth. He untied it and found that it contained rubies, emeralds and diamonds. He saw a large label attached to the sack and he read the following words written thereon—

"The owners of these gems were very wealthy men; their treasures are here, but they are dead. Worldly treasures remain on earth when their owners pass from this life. Reader! Ask thyself these questions and find their answers. How long shall I stand on earth? What will happen to me? How much

will I eat and drink? How often shall I dress myself in beautiful garments! How often shall I make others afraid and how often shall I feel afraid! Son of man! be not deceived by time. Thou also wilt wither and pass away, leaving this magic palace, and thou wilt sleep beneath the soft earth. Do not be in too great a hurry, thou hast little that is really thine, for the world takes from one to give to another. Take provision with thee on thy last journey. Prepare whilst it is still day what thou mayest require when it grows dark. Thou also wilt pass from the light into the darkness where is the shadow of death. Thou knowest not the day of thy last journey."

Solomon read and re-read the strange words. When he came to the end of the room he was some what startled to see in front of him a life-size image of a man seated on a throne with a crown upon his head and a scepter in his hand. Solomon gazed at it for a few seconds—it seemed to be alive. Did the lips tremble! Did not the eyes open! Did not the scepter seem to move! Solomon advanced nearer and nearer, and at last he put his hand upon the scepter and tried to remove it. He could not, the hand held it fast. He now put his hand on the crown, when he was terrified to see the lips open and he heard the image cry in a terrible voice that shook the palace—

"Come hither, ye children of Satan! See, Solomon, King of Israel, is here. He has come across the desert to destroy you in this your magic palace."

Whilst the image was speaking fire and smoke came forth through its nostrils. At that second horrible screaming and wild tumult, as loud as the crash of thunder, deafened Solomon's ears. The very earth seemed to quake. Solomon knew that now was the moment for him to be mastered or to overcome his foes. He cried in a bold voice—

"Hearken to my words, ye children of Satan! You think you can frighten me? You are mightily mistaken. I am Solomon, son of David, I come here in the name of the Holy

One to rule and subdue all things which He has created. If you presume to rebel against me I will punish you with terrible chastisement. Now begone, and let there be peace wherever the children of men dwell."

He then pronounced the Name of God and all was as silent as when he entered the room. Then the image fell to the ground and the children of Satan vanished. They hastened on and on till they came to the great sea, into which they threw themselves.

Solomon again advanced to the fallen image and took a silver plate out of its mouth. It had a strange inscription which he was unable to read. He returned to his retinue and handed round the silver plate, asking them to read it. They could not do so. He then told them what he had seen and done in the magic palace.

"You know," he exclaimed, "how very much I have exerted myself to explore this wonderful palace, and now that I have seen all it contains and I have learnt its secrets, I am puzzled by this little inscription. I must find out what it means."

He rubbed his magic ring and summoned Ashmodai.

"Good Ashmodai, find someone who can read the writing on this plate."

Ashmodai made an obeisance and vanished. In a moment he returned with a child of the desert. The lad was dressed like a shepherd boy. As soon as he saw Solomon he fell on his face to the ground. The King told him to rise. He obeyed and said to the King—

"Tell me what is troubling thee, mighty Solomon, wisest of mortals!"

"Take this silver tablet and read its inscription."

The child of the desert took the silver plate and looked at it for a few moments. He then said—

"This writing is neither Hebrew nor Arabic. It is Greek, and the following is its meaning: 'The image on the throne

with the Crown on its head and the scepter in its hand is the likeness of Shadad the son of 'Ad, King of the desert. I ruled over a thousand thousand provinces. I rode a thousand thousand horses. A thousand thousand Kings paid me tribute. I slew a thousand thousand warriors and when the angel of death came near to me, I was powerless. My strength left me, and I was helpless. So will it ever be with all who trust in horses and chariots and rely upon the arm of flesh. Take heed, reader, and ponder well over these words. Weigh them in thy heart and remember them.'"

"Enough," cried Solomon; "spread out my magic carpet—O Wind! lift it up and carry us back to Jerusalem. It is getting late and I will not sup to-night in Media but in the Holy City. Away."

The next second all the retinue around their King, who sat on his golden throne, were on their way to Jerusalem. In the twinkling of an eye, just as the sun began to set in the west, Solomon arrived in his capital. He entered his palace and sent for his golden pen. He dipped it into his imperishable ink and with a smile across his mouth he wrote in his scroll the story of his day's experience: "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

# The Magic Lamp

There once lived in Paris, in the good olden days, a great Jew called Rabbi Jechiel. He was a wonderful man, deeply read in the mystical lore of Israel. He was a student of the Kabbalah, or mystic science of the Hebrews. People said that he was a past master in the use of spells and magic. In fact he was supposed to be able to perform miracles by means of the formulæ current among the Kabbalists. Some people went so far as to say that he was a wizard, for strange things happened in his house. True he had many disciples who came every morning and every evening to listen to the words of wisdom that fell from his lips. Did he not have a magic lamp? He never bought oil, and in those good olden days oil was the only known means of obtaining illumination.

The story that Rabbi Jechiel had a wonderful magic lamp passed from mouth to mouth, till at last it reached the ears of the King of France. The tale sounded so extraordinary that the King determined to ascertain whether this story was mere idle rumor without any foundation, or whether the Rabbi really had a marvelous lamp. He accordingly ordered his attendants to fetch the Rabbi and to bring him to the royal presence.

As soon as Jechiel entered the salon where the King sat on his throne, he made a profound obeisance and remained standing. The King greeted him in a cordial manner and requested him to be seated. When Jechiel had obeyed the King's command he waited for the Monarch to question him.

"I have sent for you because I hear grange stories about you. You are undoubtedly a very wise man, but some of the

people say that you are a magician. You are said to possess a magic lamp which you are able to burn without oil. Are you so skilled in witchcraft as to be able to do this miracle? Speak freely and have no fear. I promise to give you my protection, come what may."

Rabbi Jechiel replied—

"Your Majesty must pardon me if I do not appear to be as frank as I might be. I cannot reveal the secrets of the Kabbalah. One versed in the Kabbalah can certainly do much more than one who is not acquainted with the ancient and wonderful teaching. Now as regards the magic lamp. I do not admit that it is a magic lamp. What I possess is a lamp the like of which your Majesty has not probably seen. This little lamp gives me sufficient illumination to suit my purpose, and true it is that I do not use any oil with this lamp."

"Now, good Rabbi, please tell me a little more about this lamp."

"Your Majesty's will is my pleasure. Now before I explain the nature of my lamp, I think it my duty to assure your Majesty that the Jewish religion is utterly opposed to magic and witchcraft. What we are, however, permitted to do—nay, we are even commanded to do it—is to study nature and to subdue it. Man is the King of all things in the universe. If my lamp can give light without oil, it is because nature has provided a substitute. People have imagined that I have this magic lamp because I do not buy oil. They do not pause to think and to ask themselves, Can we obtain illumination by any other means? The whole purpose of the Kabbalah is to teach man the duty of studying nature, and how to wrestle with it till we discover its secrets."

"I am greatly obliged to you," said the King, "and I shall be glad to see your lamp one day."

The Rabbi was then dismissed and returned to his home. The King was not entirely satisfied with Jechiel's explanation. If anything the royal curiosity was increased by what the

Rabbi had said, The King determined to call on the Rabbi one evening and to take him by surprise in order to see what sort of lamp he really used.

In the good olden days of which we are speaking, there were not a few people in France who were far from being friendly to the Jews. This hostility arose from jealousy and ignorance. The Jews were steady-going people, avoiding taverns and gambling-dens, preferring to live among themselves in peace and happiness. Their religions observances were also totally unlike those of their neighbors. Church was not Synagogue, Jew was not Christian. Hence arose suspicion and misunderstanding. The city ruffians made capital of this and they were ever ready to pillage the Ghetto, or the quarter where the Jews resided. Moreover, the fame of Rabbi Jechiel, now that he had been received at court by the King, increased the excitement of the mob.

Every one wanted to see the magic lamp. The poor Rabbi had no rest. His lessons were constantly interrupted. He would begin to teach and lo! there was a knock at the door. The Rabbi would hasten to open the door and there stood before him an idle good-for-nothing asking whether he might see the magic lamp. The Rabbi replied—

"I have no magic lamp, and even if I had I cannot spend all my days in satisfying idle curiosity."

The magic lamp soon become a source of worry to Jechiel.

"What would the Rabbi do?" asked his pupils.

"I will put a stop to this nuisance," he replied, and you will see that we shall soon have peace.

The Rabbi discovered by means of the Kabbalistic science a method of preventing a continuance of the annoyance. He had in the floor of his study a large nail. Whenever he struck the head of the nail with the hammer, the ground outside his street-door began to give way. When a person came to vex the Rabbi and began to knock at the door, the Rabbi fetched his hammer and knocked the head of the nail in his study.

The unfortunate man at the street-door felt the ground beneath his feet beginning to give way and he hastened away as quickly as his legs would carry him. The device worked so splendidly that at last the Rabbi was left alone.

One winter's night when the snow was on the ground the Rabbi was alone in his study. Outside his door stood the King with two of his attendants. The King had long determined to take the Rabbi by surprise so as to discover what sort of lamp he used. The King knocked at the door. Rabbi Jechiel paid no heed and went on reading the Zohar, the great book of the Kabbalists. Again the King knocked and this time as loudly as he could.

"Ah!" cried Jechiel, "some of my old customers have come to-night; they know that I have given my pupils a holiday and they think I have nothing better to do than to show them my lamp. Where's my hammer? Here it is"; and he picked it up, and struck the nail on its head. "Now be off, idle busybodies!"

Meanwhile the King and his attendants began to sink into the ground. With an effort the King managed once again to knock at the door and to cry aloud for help. Jechiel heard only the knocking, for the wind was blowing hard. Once again he seized the hammer and knocked the nail on its head, when it sprang out of the floor. This gave the Rabbi a tremendous shock.

"This can only happen," cried he in terror, "if the King or an angel were at my door."

At the same moment when the nail sprang out of the floor the ground outside the door began to rise again. Without a moment's delay Jechiel opened the street-door, and there sure enough stood the King of France with his two attendants. The King did not say a word. Jechiel fell on his face to the earth, but the King commanded him to rise up as snow was on the ground. The Rabbi obeyed and said—

"I pray your gracious Majesty forgive me. I knew not that you were at my door. I crave your Majesty's pardon."

The King smiled and gave him his hand. The King was more than surprised, in fact he was rather terrified, as he did not know what next to expect. Such a strange experience as he had just gone through was more than enough for one evening. Here indeed was more to be wondered at than at any magic lamp.

"Well, good Rabbi," at last the King managed to say—

"Do you not call this witchcraft and magic? Here I and my attendants have been descending into the earth as far as our hips and up again we come; what does it all mean? Please explain. I confess that I do not like such sudden shocks, and I must request you not to continue your experiments at my expense."

"That I promise most faithfully," said the Rabbi with a profound bow; "meanwhile let me beg your gracious Majesty to enter my humble home. I have a nice fire burning and your Majesty and your attendants will need warmth before you will feel at all comfortable. I will lead the way and you will soon be warm."

The King and his attendants followed Jechiel and they all entered his best room where there was a nice fire on the hearth. Jechiel gave his guests wine and cake, and once more gave expression to his deep sorrow for what had happened. He said—

"Your Majesty will, I hope, pardon my unfortunate mistake. Had I known that your Majesty was at my door, I should have opened it even before you had knocked."

"Say no more about it," said the King. "I forgive and forget. Now tell me why did the ground under my feet fall in and rise again?"

The Rabbi told the King all about the nail, and why he had recourse to this unusual way of answering a knock at his door.

"Very clever indeed," exclaimed the King, "but I do not suppose you will tell me how you manage to work this magic

nail. Well, well! I did not come out on this wretched night to inquire about your nail."

"May I ask your Majesty, then, why am I honored by your gracious presence, especially on such a night as this? I hear the wind howling outside my windows and the snow is falling fast. Your Majesty has surely some purpose in coming to my home, and as your Majesty now knows, there is some risk in gaining admission."

"Good Rabbi, I like your ready wit. It does me good to hear your clever talk."

"Your Majesty must realize that you were in danger, for had I not knocked a second time on the head of my nail, your Majesty and your attendants would have gradually sunk deeper and deeper into the ground. This is the fate that befalls all the wicked ruffians who come here merely to disturb me in my sacred studies."

"Well, good Rabbi," said the King with a smile on his face, "it is extremely lucky for me and for you that I was not swallowed up alive. At all events I am most grateful to you for saving my life. As to the purpose of my midnight visit to you, let me tell you at once why I am here. You will remember when you came to my palace I asked you whether you had a magic lamp. You told me that you had a lamp which required no oil, but you denied that it was a magic lamp. Not only have I heard so much about your magical powers, I have to-night experienced how powerful your skill is in witchcraft. I have come to see your lamp and I now ask you to show it to me."

"With pleasure. Will your Majesty be good enough to follow me and I will show you the lamp, which I keep in my small sitting-room?"

They entered the little room and on the table in the center of the room there was a marvelous little lamp.

The King looked at it and said: "Wonderful! there is no oil here. The lamp was a crystal mortar full of phosphorus which had been melted some years previously in a few drops

of olive-oil.

Naturally as this was the only source of illumination in the dark room it emitted light enough to enable one to see the different objects in the room.

"This is truly wonderful," exclaimed the King.

"Do not be astonished at this," said Jechiel. "God has given us various means of obtaining light without combustion. Have you never heard of plants that evolve light! Well, there are such plants. Has your Majesty never heard of the luminosity of decaying wood? There are even insects, such as the glow-worm and other beetles, which throw off light. Fish and other living things, such as sea-pens, are also luminous. The same can be said of a number of mineral substances, such as fluor-spar and calcium. Then again we have lightning. Truly knowledge is light, and the laws of God are a lamp on the way of life."

The King was astounded to hear such marvelous wisdom from a Jew. He had never heard anything like it in all his life. Not one of his counselors had ever spoken of nature and her secrets in a similar strain.

"I thank you ever so much for all you have taught me. I have been well repaid for coming to see you. Henceforth you will be one of my counselors of state and I hope you will also be my personal friend. You will live in a suite of rooms in my palace and you will be able to continue your studies undisturbed. Now accept this ring as a token of my esteem."

The King took from his finger a beautiful ring, which he placed on the Rabbi's finger. Then the King departed, greatly pleased with all that he had seen and heard.

Rabbi Jechiel was now established at court. He was the King's favorite. He even taught the King some of the secrets of alchemy. All this aroused the jealousy of the other courtiers and counselors. One day some of them remarked to the King—

"We do not understand how your Majesty can tolerate a

Jew living in your palace. You do not know the nature of a Jew. He is so unlike a Christian. It will surprise your Majesty to learn that he actually despises you, and of course all of us."

"How dare you say this?" cried the King in warmth.

"We can prove it, if your Majesty would but let us do so," said they.

"How so?"

"If your Majesty would give him a glass of wine of which you have tasted but one drop, he will indignantly refuse to empty the glass, he would not even drink a drop. He is so proud and vain. Is the conduct of such a man not a direct insult to your gracious Majesty and to the Kingdom of France?"

The King held his peace.

Next day when the Rabbi came to visit the King, all the counselors and courtiers were also in attendance.

"Give me a glass of wine," cried the King, "and also a little fruit, for I feel somewhat faint."

The page brought the wine and the fruit on a golden salver. The King ate the fruit and sipped the sparkling wine. Then turning to the Rabbi, who sat near the throne, he said in a loud voice so that all present might hear—

"Jechiel, my friend! this is most excellent wine; I have just tasted it, but I do not feel faint now, for the fruit has quite revived me. Here, drink the wine whilst I rinse my hands. It would be such a pity to waste it, and to whom could I give it with more pleasure than to you, my friend and companion."

The courtiers and counselors listened with strained ears to every word, and they now looked at Jechiel to see what he would do.

The Jew put forth his hand and took the glass from the King's hand. He then put it down on a little table at his side. He arose from his seat and said—

"May I crave your Majesty's indulgence? At the moment I do not care to take wine. I have a good reason. I must keep

my head cool, for your Majesty has to discuss with me urgent matters of state. But do not think I am not fully sensible of the great honor which your Majesty is good enough to confer upon me in asking me to drink the wine which you find so excellent. I promise, however, before I take my leave this morning to drink even more than your Majesty proposes."

The listeners could hardly believe their ears.

"What," thought they, "will the Jew drink with Christians?"

When the King had rinsed his fingers with rose water in a golden bowl, the Rabbi arose and took the bowl from the page and laid it beside the glass of wine.

"What's that for?" exclaimed the King in surprise.

The Rabbi arose, and taking hold of the golden bowl said in a fearless voice—

"With your gracious Majesty's permission I will now drink this water which has just been used by you, my King and friend. I may drink this water, for the hands of a good and just King are always clean, and therefore the water is as fresh as when it was brought to your Majesty. My religion permits me to drink water but not wine. The wine is forbidden because it very often happens that wine used by Kings is also used by priests for religious purposes." Whereupon to the great surprise of all present Jechiel drank the rose water and resumed his seat.

The wise King saw all this and understood, "Now I know," cried he, "how greatly this good Jew loves me, and I rejoice to think that he loves his God and his religion with all his heart. Happy am I to have such a friend; would that all my serv ants were as zealous and as faithful."

## Chanina and the Angels

Whilst the Temple was still standing it was the custom of all the Jews to bring their sacrifices and gifts to Jerusalem. Rich and poor vied with one another in bringing offerings to the Holy House of God. Now there was a very poor man named Chanina who lived far away from the Holy City. In his own town he saw his fellow townsmen preparing themselves for their pilgrimage to Zion where the Temple was. Each one had an offering or present and he alone had nothing. He asked himself: "What can I find worthy of God's acceptance?"

He looked around in his humble home, but he could not find anything of value.

"All my neighbors," said he to himself, "will set out next week for Jerusalem taking their offerings with them and I, alas! will appear before the Lord empty-handed. This will not do, it must not be."

He then betook himself to the stone quarries near the town where he lived. He gazed around and saw a huge block of marble which had been placed on the rubbish heap, because its surface was too rough for polishing. He resolved to make its surface smooth, be the trouble never so great. From sunrise till sunset he worked. At last his patience and labor were rewarded. The surface of the stone became smooth and fit for polishing.

When this task was accomplished, Chanina rejoiced greatly.

"Now," he exclaimed, "this shall be my gift to God's Temple. The difficulty which now confronts me is, How am I to get this beautiful block to Jerusalem? I vow to give it to

God's service and it must be taken to the Temple."

He returned to his town to look for carriers. He found a dozen men who could easily transport it. He asked them whether they would take the marble to the Holy City. They replied—

"We will do what you want, if you pay us."

"Tell me, good friends, how much do you want?"

"One hundred golden coins."

"Where can I find such an immense sum of money? See," cried he, "this is all I possess; let me count. One, two, three, four, five pence. This is my total fortune. If you will trust me and should kind Providence help me to earn money, I will gladly pay you all you demand. Now you are going to Jerusalem for the Festival and you might at the same time transport this marble, which I have vowed to give to the Sanctuary."

They laughed at him, as though he were joking, and went their way, leaving him alone. After a while he saw an old man coming along. When they met the stranger greeted him and said—

"What a fine block of marble! Do you know to whom it belongs?"

"I found it here some days ago cast on the rubbish heap. I have polished its surface and I have vowed to give it to the Temple."

"You have done well, my son. How will you have it removed to the Holy City?"

"That is just the difficulty which is troubling me at the present moment."

"Well, perhaps I can help you. I have five servants yonder. If you will lend a hand, I think we can transport it."

"Most gladly will I do as you say, and in addition I will pay you five pence, all I possess at present."

"So be it."

At that moment five tall men came forward and at once placed their hands on the marble. As in a blinding storm they

rushed along, carried by the huge block, and before many seconds had passed Chanina found himself beside the marble in the Temple Court. He rubbed his eyes, for he thought that he was dreaming, but when he saw the priests and the Levites coming towards him he knew that he was wide awake.

"The Lord be with thee, O Chanina," they cried.

"May the Lord bless you!" he answered.

He then turned round to look for the old man and his five men, but they had vanished. He wanted to give them the five pence which he had promised to pay. He then asked the priests to accept the marble as his gift for the coming festival, and he also handed to them the five pence, asking them to distribute the money to the poor. With great joy in his heart he thanked God for the miracle which had befallen him. He said to himself—

"I believe the old man was Elijah the prophet, and the five men with him were ministering angels. The wonders of the Lord never cease."

Chanina felt his coat pressing rather heavily on his shoulders. He put his hands into his pockets, and he was amazed to find them full of golden coins. He rejoiced at this fresh token of Heaven's favor, and when he returned home he had sufficient money to spend his days in comfort.

# The Wonderful Slave

There was once upon a time a very poor man who had a wife and five children. It happened one day that there was no food in the house. The wife told her husband that she had nothing to give the children.

"And I am sorry to say," he cried, "I haven't a penny. I cannot find any work and I don't know what will become of us. God help us, I cannot see any way out of our misfortune."

"Cheer up, dear husband; go down to the market place and perhaps you will be in luck's way and find some job. You are no fool, and you often say, 'God neither slumbers nor sleeps' but watches over all of us."

"To whom can I turn when I get there? I don't know a soul there. As you know we haven't a relative in the town, and as for friends, well we know what they are worth. When we had money we had plenty of friends, but when we lost our wealth we also lost our friends."

"There is, good husband, still one Friend left."

"You mean the good God?"

"Of course I do. Now don't waste time, for we are all starving; go to the market-place and see what happens."

Away he went. Meanwhile the poor children came to their mother and cried for bread. This distressed her very much. She wept and prayed to God to help them in their hour of need.

When the poor man reached the market-place he stood still for a few minutes looking around. It was full of people, hurrying hither and thither. Not a soul did the unfortunate man recognize. Passers-by just looked at him, and he felt very

lonely and sad. He walked across the market-place and sat down behind some bundles of hay, where he would be hidden from view. He began to pray, saying,—

"Lord of the Universe! Thou knowest that I have neither relative nor friend to whom I can go and pour out my heart's troubles. Thou seest the dire poverty and distress which have befallen my family. My only hope is in Thee; take pity upon us, not for my sake, but for the sake of my poor wife and helpless children. I beseech Thee send us Thy help, or if it seem good in Thine eyes let us die, for we know neither peace nor rest."

The man then arose and was somewhat taken aback to see a young man at his side. The stranger was Elijah the prophet, who is like the good fairy in the story-books. His mission is to comfort all who are in trouble. He champions those who cannot find any one to help them. He defends lost causes and helps all those who need succor. He reclaims the lost and seeks those who stray from the highway of life through no default on their part. He is ever moved by a passion of pity and hastens to the side of all who have faith in God, even when all else fails.

"Good-day, good friend," cries Elijah; "peace be unto you."

"Peace be unto you also," replies the poor man.

"Why are you so downcast, what's your trouble?"

"How can you help me?"

"I certainly cannot help you if you do not tell me why you look so forlorn and miserable. Have you lost anything?"

"Yes, I have lost everything."

"Explain, please; do not hesitate to confide in me. You can really trust me."

"Good stranger, since you speak so kindly I will trust you and tell you all about my misfortunes. I have at home a dear wife and five sweet children. They are all starving. There is not a crust in the house. I am penniless and out of work. I will

gladly do anything if I can find any one who will employ me. My will is good and no toil will be too hard or too much for me. If you would really help me, find me work or recommend me to some one to give me employment."

Elijah took hold of the man's hand and said—

"I think I can do something better for you than you suggest. I will do the work for you which will enable you and your dear family to live in comfort. Do not worry and just do what I tell you."

"What do you wish me to do?"

"We will go at once to the slave market, which adjoins this market. When we get there you are to offer me for sale as a slave. The money you will get for my purchase shall be yours. Henceforth you and your family will know want no more."

"How could I do such a thing as you suggest? You are not my slave. You are a perfect stranger, and it would be far more reasonable to reverse the proposition. We will go to the slave market and you shall offer me for sale. Whatever I am worth will suffice to keep my poor wife and children from starvation. Come, let us do as I say, and I shall be ever so grateful to you for obliging me in this way."

"No, no," cried Elijah, "you are to sell me as your slave, and within twenty-four hours you will see me again. When you receive the money from the buyer in the market, do not forget to give me a coin. You do not know who I am. Continue to trust in God and follow my instructions. I assure you all will be well and you will be happy and contented. Now for the slave market.

They came there and all the buyers thought that the poor man was the slave and the stranger his master. They were surprised to hear the poor man call out in a bold voice,

"I have here a most valuable slave for sale."

The bidders began to make offers. At that moment one of the Princes of the King of the land passed by, and when he saw Elijah he returned and resolved to buy such a noble-

looking slave for the King his master. The bidding went on and the Prince offered eighty pieces of gold. Whereupon Elijah whispered to his poor friend—

"Sell me now to this bidder: do not accept a higher price."

He did just as Elijah told him and accepted the eighty pieces of gold and immediately gave, one to his generous benefactor. The latter returned it, saying—

"Now take this coin and live by means of its blessing; it will enable you and all your family to exist in comfort. Want and poverty shall never again trouble you all the days of your life. We will now part, and I wish you God's blessing."

The poor man thanked Elijah with tears in his eyes. He said—

"I grieve to think you should allow yourself to become a slave just to help me and my family. I have done just as you told me because I seem to feel that you are wiser than I am. You said I should see you again within twenty-four hours. I do not see how that will be possible now that you are a slave."

"You will see me within the appointed time; till then farewell."

Elijah then went away, following his new master.

The fortunate poor man hastened home after he had bought food in the market. When he reached his home he found his children and his wife famished with hunger. He spread the excellent food which he had brought with him upon the table and called his dear ones to see what the good God had given them. They ran to their usual seats at table and could hardly believe their eyes. For two days they had seen no food, and now the table was loaded with fish and bread, cake and fruit. They all said the Grace before eating bread and enjoyed their meal more than they had ever done in all their life. They recited the Grace after meals with gratitude in their hearts. Now a strange thing struck all at table. In spite of all they had eaten, and that was not by any means a small quantity, there was enough food left for a week's

supply. This made them all the happier, and they praised God for His never-ending mercies.

"Now please," said the wife to her husband, "tell me how did you manage to obtain all this beautiful food? It is all so good and there is so much of it. I am dying to know what happened to you in the market-place. I know you have not obtained all this food by theft. It was I who urged you to go to the market-place, for I felt convinced that the good God would help us in our terrible misfortune."

He told her all that had happened to him. He described how the stranger came to him in the market-place and how he had allowed himself to be sold as a slave.

"This is a marvelous slice of luck," she cried.

"But it is not all."

He related how he had given the stranger one piece of gold and how it had been returned. The wonderful words which the stranger had said when he returned the piece of gold were also retold. Happiness filled the hearts of the good man and his wife. Henceforth wealth and prosperity never forsook them. They were spared all further worldly cares and troubles.

Meanwhile the Prince had brought his new slave before the King his master. The latter had long planned in his mind to build a wonderful palace in a wood adjoining his capital. He had already commenced the building. The foundation was completely finished. He had hired very many slaves to carry wood, stone and other material required for its construction. When Elijah came before the King he was asked—

"What is your trade?"

"I am an architect and also a practical builder."

"Excellent!" exclaimed the King in great joy; "it is my ardent desire to complete the building of my palace in the wood near by. My architect died six months ago, and since then the work seems to make no progress. It must be built according to my wishes. There must be so and so many stories

with so and so many rooms on each floor."

He then proceeded to tell him exactly what his wishes were. When he had finished Elijah remarked—

"I will endeavor to carry out your Majesty's plan exactly as you have explained. May I ask, when is the building to be finished?"

"If the building could be erected within twelve months I should be exceedingly happy. If you achieve this result I will give you your freedom and present you with a handsome gift."

"I will do my best," replied Elijah; "and now may I ask your Majesty to order your slaves to recommence even at this very hour their tasks. There are yet four hours before sundown. The labor is great and the time is short."

The King forthwith ordered his chamberlain to do as Elijah had requested. The slave architect went to the wood and watched the slaves carrying brick and mortar. At sundown they ceased their labor and went home. Elijah remained alone. He arose and prayed to God asking Him to cause the palace to be built there and then even as the King desired. The prayer of the faithful prophet was heard by the Great Architect of the Universe, who sent down myriads of His ministering angels to complete the building. The work was soon done, every detail was carefully attended to by the heavenly builders. Before sunrise next day the wonderful palace stood complete. Elijah was well satisfied and went on his way. He was seen no more in the King's city.

At daybreak the people heard from the slaves who had gone to continue their tasks that the palace had been miraculously built overnight. The extraordinary news was at once communicated to the King. He went immediately to the wood to see the miracle. Needless to say he was mightily pleased with every thing he saw. He rejoiced to see the wish of his heart realized in such a brief space of time. Every thing was done in accordance with his plan. There was not a single defect to be seen.

"Bring me," he cried, "the marvelous slave who has performed the greatest miracle ever heard of in my kingdom."

The servants of the King searched everywhere for the slave, but he was not to be found. This was reported to the King, who remarked—"This is another miracle."

He now saw that the slave was no ordinary one. "I believe," he added, "that the slave was an angel."

Meanwhile Elijah had gone to visit the man whom he had befriended. When the latter saw him he cried—

"You have indeed come to see me within the twenty-four hours as you promised. Tell me, good friend, who are you?"

"I am Elijah the prophet."

"What happened when you came before the King?"

"He wanted a beautiful palace to be built within twelve months. God hearkened to my prayer and within twelve hours the palace was erected."

"This is all very wonderful."

"Naturally; whatever God does is marvelous. I assumed the role of a slave, and as a good price had been paid for my services, I determined to give good value in return. The palace which has been built through my prayer is, of course, worth more than a thousand times the money paid to you."

"How, saintly Elijah, Man of God, can I repay you? You have saved my life and the lives of my wife and children."

"You can repay me by living a good life, ever helping all God's children in distress."

"This I faithfully promise to do."

The next moment Elijah had vanished, leaving the happy man full of joy and gratitude in his heart.

## About Leviathan, King of the Fish

On the left bank of the Jordan lived a pious old man and his only son. The father was a fisherman and caught sufficient fish to provide for the modest needs of his son and himself. He was accustomed every day after he had drawn in his net to throw a basketful of bread to the fish. He would say—

"These little fish feed me and my son, and I in return must feed those that are left in the river."

One day it rained so heavily while he was fishing that he was drenched to the skin. He felt cold and ill and kept in bed next day. Towards evening he became very feverish, and calling his son to his bed side he said—

"Dear son Samuel, I fear I shall not get rid of my cold. I shall soon trouble you no longer. You have been a very good and loving son and I bless you. I am so sorry I cannot leave you any fortune. Continue your studies of our Holy Bible. I give you my old net as your heritage. If you would prosper continue to observe my custom of feeding the fish. Stand, even as I have been wont to do for so many years, opposite our house on the bank of the river. Do not throw the bread to the fish before you have withdrawn the net. It is not fair to throw in the bread, and when the hungry fish come for their food to swoop down upon them and fill your net with them. First catch your fish, then feed the rest. You will one day understand the saying of our wise King Solomon: 'Cast thy bread upon the face of the waters, and after many days thou wilt find it again.'"

"Dearest father! do not think you will not get well again. I will look after you and by the help of the Almighty you will

soon be about again."

"Good son! I fear not. My days are numbered and I shall soon sleep in the dust. I again bless you if you promise to carry out my wish."

"Of course I promise. Have no fear. I will faithfully keep my promise just because it is your wish."

That same night the good old man slept into death, for the angel of God kissed his lips. He was buried by his sorrowing son who loved him so truly. Every day Samuel went to the bank of the river to throw in his net. He stood just where his father used to stand. After he had drawn in his net, he took out of his basket handfuls of fresh white bread which he threw into the river. He was very much surprised to find that there was always a very large fish that appeared as soon as the bread reached the water. This fish managed to eat up very quickly the larger portion of the bread. Consequently there was very little left for the small fish. Moreover if one of the latter happened to be in the way of the large fish, the unfortunate little thing received a nasty knock in the back from the heavy tail of the greedy monster. This grieved Samuel, but what was he to do? The same thing happened every day since the burial of his dear father.

The more the big fish ate the larger it grew. This made the little ones fear it all the more.

"What's to be done?" said the latter one day, when they saw the greedy fish devour every scrap of bread thrown into the water by their kind-hearted friend. After very many prolonged discussions they resolved to send three of their wisest brethren as a deputation to Leviathan, King of the fish.

"Let his gracious Majesty," said they, "hear our just complaint, and he will know how to rectify our grievance. He will bring the horrid offender to book. It's high time the fat old fish had his greedy head chopped off by the public executioner. He will be a terrible example to all fish to be more careful and not to be greedy and selfish. He is a perfect

disgrace to rob us of our lovely white bread."

Away the deputation swam till they came to the palace of King Leviathan, right at the bottom of the sea. It was such a marvelous palace, built of mother-of-pearl and corals. The King's body-guard were wonderful fish; their scales were luminous and they could be seen miles and miles away. When the three little fish knocked at the palace door, they were at once admitted; and when they said that they were a deputation to his Majesty they were immediately ushered into the royal presence. Directly King Leviathan saw them he began to smile and wanted to laugh in their face. He managed, however, to exercise just sufficient self-control so as not to betray his intense amusement.

"Well, little children! where do you come from?"

"O great and mighty King, we come from the Jordan."

"Where's that?"

"Where Jericho is."

"What's wrong that brings you all the way from Jericho!"

"We will tell your Majesty if you will listen to our tale. We live near the bank of the famous river Jordan. Every day a most kind-hearted man comes to bring us fresh white bread. He breaks it up into ever so many little pieces, so that every one of us shall have something to eat. Now near our homes lives a very big fish. As soon as the bread reaches the water, there he is with his big gaping mouth and he swallows up the lot. We are simply robbed of our daily bread by this wicked old fish. If your Majesty will not intervene to put an end to his tricks, he will at last become as big and as powerful as your Majesty. Would you like that? We should not, and we therefore most humbly beseech your Majesty to protect us and to punish the common enemy."

"We thank you for your concern and loyalty to our royal person. We do not approve of one of our subjects daring to become as big and as powerful as we are. Go, good body-guard, and accompany these three little fish to their home in

the Jordan and see that our orders are obeyed. Now, little fish, listen to our commands. When you reach the Jordan burrow out the ground under the place where the nice man stands when he throws his bread into the water. Tell your enemy, the large and fat fish, to help you also in doing this work. When the kind man comes the next day to throw his bread into the water, the ground will give way, and he will fall into the water. Then my body-guard will catch him and bring him to our royal presence. When we see him, we will hear what he has to say. Of course the greedy fat fish is also to be present when we examine the nice man. Now, little children, do you understand!"

"Of course we do, and we thank your gracious Majesty for your kindness in taking such an interest in our affairs. We will do exactly as we have been commanded and we will soon return with our friend, the good man, and our enemy, the greedy fat fish. Farewell! Long live your Majesty!"

"Farewell, little children."

The little fish were mightily pleased with their audience with their mighty King.

"Wasn't he most charming?" said they to one another. Away they swam, accompanied by the royal body-guard.

"What will the greedy monster say," they whispered, "when he sees us with such a fine body-guard? He will be mad with jealousy. How he will splash when we give him the King's order to assist us in our work and to return with us to the palace!"

When they reached home they called on their enemy and told him all that the King had commanded. He rolled his eyes and opened his enormous mouth as though he would swallow them up alive, and then he said—

"His Majesty's orders shall be obeyed."

The greedy fish did not like this turn of affairs at all. The whole business displeased him very much. In fact, it made him feel very ill and despondent.

"Where shall I now find my daily bread? It was so easy to come down here every morning and to find all I needed thrown into my mouth. So much to eat and so little to do. I wonder when I shall again eat such beautiful and delicious bread, fit for old Leviathan himself. These wretched little fish have added insult to injury by their audacity in asking King Leviathan to order me to assist them in the wicked task of undermining the ground whereon my charming friend stands when he throws his lovely bread to me. Talk about justice, is this not murder? He is bound to fall into the water. He will sink and be drowned like a rat. I wish I could save him, but I fear I must obey the King's orders. I wonder what the royal body-guard are doing here! I do not like to ask them any questions. They always say—'Wait and see'—a very safe rule in the kingdom of the sea."

Without any further delay all the little fish, together with the large one and the body-guard, swam to the place where the kind man was accustomed to stand. They burrowed for all they were worth and never ceased till the royal body-guard cried out: "Enough."

Next morning when the good man came with his net on one shoulder, and in his hand the large basket full of bread, he at once took up his position on his usual spot. When lo! the ground beneath his feet gave way and he was thrown into the Jordan, net and all. At that moment the large fish opened his enormous mouth and swallowed up the man. The body-guard were very vexed at this mishap, but they merely told the fat fish that they were now to swim to King Leviathan's palace. The little fish followed, for they were very curious to know what would happen at the King's court.

When they came to the palace the doors were opened to admit them and they all entered. King Leviathan was sitting on his throne with his golden crown on his head and all his courtiers were around him. The large fish came straight before the King and said—

"I have been as quick as I possibly could in obeying the orders of your gracious Majesty. I have brought with me the man whom you desire to see. Let me tell your Majesty that he is one in a million; he is so kind-hearted. He feeds your Majesty's subjects, and I do hope your Majesty will not suffer any harm to befall such a splendid man. I have now much pleasure in presenting him to your Majesty."

He thereupon disgorged the poor fellow, who felt more dead than alive. His terrible experience had almost frightened him out of his wits. He thought that his last moment in life was at hand when he saw King Leviathan glide off his throne and come nearer and nearer to him. The King's jaws were apart and before the poor fellow could count "one"—he was right in the Leviathan's mouth and down into his inside. Thereupon Leviathan closed his jaws with a terrific bang that made the ocean tremble.

Now the poor man thought of his dear father's blessing and wondered what was coining next. All of a sudden he heard these words:

"I welcome you, son of the children of men; your presence here is most heartily and cordially welcome. I know just a little about nice human beings. It was my great pleasure some long time ago to entertain Jonah, when he came down here on a short visit. I had the privilege of showing him my palace and some of my treasures. I have since been told that he returned to earth, all the better for his visit down here. He had been sent to the bottom of the sea in order to learn the lesson of obedience. You need have no fear. Just answer my questions and I promise to deal kindly with you, for you are now my guest. It was at my special order that you were brought here. Now tell me, Why do you daily throw bread to my subjects, the fish? What is your object and what is your motive in doing this kind and thoughtful act?"

Samuel replied: "One thought only filled my heart and soul, and that was to obey my dying father's last injunction.

On his death-bed he commanded me to go daily to the bank of the Jordan to throw a basketful of nice fresh white bread into the river for the hungry fish. I have done this every day since my dear father's burial. I may tell you that my good father also did the same every day of his life."

"Now tell me," asked Leviathan, "what do you do for your living?"

"I am a poor fisherman, even as my dear father was before me."

"Where do you live?"

"In a little house not far from Jericho on the Jordan. You have surely heard of Jericho. It had mighty walls, and when God's priests blew their trumpets the walls fell down flat on the ground."

"I had heard thereof. I believe the leader of the Israelites who conquered Jericho was Joshua."

"Yes, that is so."

"I have heard of Joshua in another connection. When he was quite a little boy he was swallowed by a whale, and as you well know, he did not perish. Did your father tell you anything else?"

"Yes, he said that if I feed the fish his blessing would always rest on me. Now I fear I have reaped the opposite to a blessing."

"Don't say that, please," said Leviathan in a very gentle voice. "We fish are very sensitive, we never forget a kind action. You and your father have always loved my subjects, and I their King will not prove myself to be ungrateful. I tell my little children, for thus I call my fish, that we are made by God to be a blessing even as all things which He has made are intended to serve the same purpose. To show you how much I appreciate your obedience to your dear father and your kindness, I will teach you the language of birds and beasts. I will also carry you immediately to the bank of the Jordan, not very far from your home. You will have but one hour's walk

in order to reach your house."

Leviathan immediately carried out his promises. He taught Samuel the language of beasts and birds and brought him to the bank of the Jordan. Samuel thanked the kind-hearted monarch of the deep and rejoiced to tread the face of mother earth once again. He stood still for a few moments to gaze around. He could not but enjoy the beauty of the scene, the silver waters of the Jordan, the green grass on the banks, the play of light in the heavens, the song of the birds, the scent of the roses, the sound of nature awake and alert. He recalled the wonderful vision of the deep and the marvelous sights he had seen. He was glad, supremely glad, to breathe the sweet air, and his heart was full of gratitude to God. He suddenly felt very giddy. He had been fasting all the while he had been in the water, and this together with the lack of fresh air affected him for the moment. He put himself to rest awhile under a large tree. He closed his eyes for a few seconds and then opened them again, for the giddiness had passed. He sat still thinking of his strange experiences. He was suddenly startled to hear a little crow say to a large one at its side—

"Look, father! I am going to enjoy myself now by eating the eyes of that man on the ground."

Samuel looked up and saw two crows sitting on a bough just over his head. He listened and heard the larger bird say—

"Do no such thing, the man is probably alive."

"No, father, he is dead, for his eyes were shut."

"Well, they are open now, and he is looking at us. You always think you must have everything you fancy. Listen to your old father, I advise you to stay where you are. If you try to peck out his eyes, he will catch hold of you and kill you. Be wise and do not look for trouble."

Samuel understood the whole conversation, not a word escaped him. He felt very thankful to King Leviathan for the precious knowledge he had imparted to him. Ha thought that the little crow would follow his father's advice. He listened

and then heard the little bird say—

"I am going to eat the eyes of that man, even if I risk my life in the attempt."

Away it flew and came nearer and nearer to Samuel. No sooner had it placed its little feet upon his forehead than he caught hold of it in his hand. He then sat up, intending to twist its neck for being so disobedient to its father. The old crow saw this and flew to the ground and turning to the little bird said—

"It would just serve you right, you wicked and disobedient child. You never will listen to me when I tell you what you should do and what you should not do."

The old bird then turned to Samuel and said—

"If you spare my naughty child's life, I will give you a great treasure, which will make you as rich as King Herod. You will always be wealthy and you will be able to enjoy life."

"I agree," said Samuel, "to do as you say, if you tell me where the treasure is to be found. As soon as I see it, I will set your child free."

"The treasure," rejoined the crow, "is at the foot of this tree, it lies but a few inches beneath the ground. Remove the soil and you will see the treasure."

Samuel looked about for a piece of wood, and when he found it, he scraped away the earth at the foot of the tree. His labor was soon rewarded, for he saw a large box. He opened it and found it full of gold coins. His joy was indeed great. "Now I know," said he to himself, "why King Leviathan cast me ashore at this spot. I guess he knew all about the treasure."

He released the crow and told it to obey its old father in future. The two birds flew away, saying to each other, "What a lucky escape."

Samuel filled his pockets with the gold coin. He closed the box and covered it up with the soil. He then went home. He returned next day to the tree with a wheelbarrow upon which he intended to put the box with the gold. He did this

and was now a rich man. His father's blessing had indeed brought him his wealth and his knowledge of the language of birds and beasts. He was very thankful to God for all these favors. He continued to feed the fish, and he was so glad to see that the little ones were no longer robbed of their share by the greedy big fish.

Samuel lived a good and happy life, feeding and helping the poor and the unfortunate. He was beloved and honored throughout the land and ended his days in comfort and peace.

## The Magic Leaf

Once upon a time there lived on the banks of the Euphrates in Babylon a holy man who spent his days and nights in the performance of religious rites and in meditation. He determined to go to the Holy Land in order to end his days in Jerusalem, where the Temple of God stood. On and on he went and at sundown he felt very tired, and sat down to rest his weary feet. He would have been glad to fall asleep but was unable to do so owing to the loud twittering of the birds overhead. He sat up watching. He saw two of the birds quarreling, while the others went on chirping for all they were worth. At last one of the two birds that were quarreling killed the other, whereupon all the rest took to flight. The holy man sat still, for he was curious to learn what would happen.

He did not have to wait very long before he saw a large bird flying towards him. The bird passed him and came near to its dead brother. In its little beak it held a small green leaf which it placed on the head of the dead bird. Immediately the leaf touched it, a wonderful miracle happened. It was reanimated and stood upon its fleet. It shook its pretty feathers, flapped its wings and flew off.

The man was astounded at what he had seen. He sprang up, saying to himself—

"I must get that magic leaf, it will enable me to quicken all the dead in the Holy Land when I arrive there. This is truly a most extraordinary slice of luck to find such a priceless treasure. I suppose this leaf comes from the tree of life in the Garden of Eden. Had I not witnessed the miracle I should never have believed it possible. This leaf is worth untold gold

and will bring me good fortune and happiness."

He picked up the leaf and put it away carefully in the fold of his turban. He resolved to spend the night beneath a tree near by, as no houses were visible. Next day he awoke very early. The sun rose, scattering with his powerful beams the morning mists.

He pursued his journey after he had said his morning prayers. He had not walked many hours when he came to a farm. He was about to enter in order to ask for food, when he saw just outside the door way a dead fox. He went up to it and said to himself—

"Now I will get out the magic leaf and see if it will re-animate this dead fox. I like to experiment with this most wonderful leaf."

He took off his turban and took out the precious leaf, which he put on the head of the fox. No sooner had the leaf touched the fox, than the latter jumped up and ran away as quickly as his legs could carry him.

"This is marvelous," he exclaimed, while picking up the leaf, which he replaced in the fold of his turban.

He then knocked at the door of the farm-house and was admitted. He asked for a little food which was readily given him by the owner, an old farmer.

"Did you know there was a dead fox outside your door?" he asked the farmer.

The latter replied, "Of course I did, for I killed him yesterday."

*The Visitor*: "The fox is not there now."

*Farmer*: "Where is he?"

*Visitor*: "He ran away just before I knocked at your door."

*Farmer*: "That is impossible."

*Visitor*: "Go and look. You will not see the fox."

*Farmer*: "Come with me and let us look together." They went to the door, and sure enough the fox was not to be seen.

*Visitor*: "I brought the dead fox back to life. I am a holy

man and I can revive the dead."

*Farmer*: "You are a foolish chatterbox. If what you say be true, take my advice and do not meddle with the mysteries of life and death. God alone will quicken the dead. Now, farewell."

The farmer went into his house and shut the door. Whereupon the holy man went on his way, thinking that God had given him such a wonderful treasure because he had lived such a holy life.

"The old farmer does not understand the good fortune which has befallen me," he muttered.

He had not proceeded very far when he saw a dead lion in the road. He thought of testing once more the efficacy of the wonderful leaf.

"This shall be my last experiment," he said, as he took off his turban.

He then took out the magic leaf and placed it on the head of the lion. This was no sooner done than the lion arose and growled with delight at seeing a fine meal in front of him in the shape of the holy man. The next instant as the holy man began to regret his extreme folly in restoring the dead lion to life, the latter sprang upon him and devoured him. The lion also ate the magic leaf. With this disaster the possibility of reviving the dead passed away and mortals must now wait patiently for the quickening of the dead till the great day of the resurrection comes.

## The Princess and the Beggar

Now King Solomon had a daughter, who was the most beautiful princess in the world. On her fifteenth birthday her wise father made up his mind to look at the stars in the heavens and to read therein the fate of his beloved child. That night he gazed at the constellations in the sky and discovered that the lovely princess was destined to become the wife of a beggar whose poverty was to be greater than that of any one in his kingdom. He also read in the stars that his daughter and her future husband would be blessed with children. King Solomon turned his eyes from the heavens in shame and anger. This outlook for his daughter's future happiness was not at all to his liking. "I wish I had not been so inquisitive," said he to himself. "Why did I try to read the future? Now I know what is her destiny I am wretched and unhappy. I will take steps to prevent such an unfortunate marriage. It's not fair that marriages should be arranged in heaven."

That same night he went to his study and rubbed his magic ring on which the Holy Name of God was engraved. Before him stood Ashmodai, King of the Genii. "Gracious Master, command and I will obey thy will."

"Listen then, Ashmodai. Near the sea-coast opposite Joppa is a small rock in the sea. I wish to have a very lofty tower built on this rock. The base of the tower must cover the entire surface of the rock except where the steps lead to the entrance."

"Before sundown to-morrow, O son of David! thy wish shall be fulfilled." The next moment the demon had vanished.

On the next day the King sent for the beautiful princess

and told her that she would in three days time go with him to one of his castles near the sea and reside there for some time. "Thy will is my pleasure, dearest of fathers," said the princess when she heard her father's wish. At the appointed time the King and the princess with a retinue of seventy servants set out for the port of Joppa. When they arrived there they embarked on the King's ship and sailed to the rocky shore where the tower stood. The rooms were furnished in a most princely manner. There was everything that one could wish for. Of course there was also a sufficient store of food in the tower for all the needs of the princess and her attendants. The King told the attendants that they were to watch by day and night and see to it that no stranger set foot within the tower. "As soon as the princess and you are all in the tower I will have the only door, which is at the entrance, removed and replaced by brickwork. You are to prevent any communication whatsoever reaching her. If you disobey, your lives will be forfeit." The King kissed his daughter and warned her not to try to escape. "In good time I will fetch thee and then thou shalt live in my palace on Mount Lebanon. Now farewell." She promised her father to obey and waved her hand as she saw him embark on the royal ship. "Good-by," she cried with a sad voice, standing on the roof. She did not quite like the idea of being shut up in the lonely tower.

While the King was embarking, his servants were removing the door of the tower and bricking up the doorway. It was now impossible for any one to enter or leave and the only means of exit was through a skylight on the roof.

On his journey home King Solomon smiled and said to himself: "I will now see if my plan will be a success. I think I shall for once in a while have my own way. After all this lovely girl is my child and I can surely arrange her marriage as I like. I am not satisfied with the choice of the bridegroom made by the stars. A beggar should marry the daughter of a beggar but not the daughter of a king. I shall wait and see. Whatever

happens will, I hope, be for the best."

About three years later it happened that on a certain day a beggar left his home in Acco, a seaport north of Mount Carmel. He could not find even a crust of dry bread in his town and he determined to seek his fortune whithersoever his Heavenly Father might direct his steps. He had spent all his time since childhood in studying the Holy Law. His beggarly clothes were all in tatters. On and on he went, hungry and thirsty. He had no idea where he would be able to find a night's lodging. "Ah!" said he to himself, "what a funny world we are in. Rich and poor, wise and foolish, happy and unhappy people live according to the will of God. He it is who bringeth low and raiseth up, who maketh poor and maketh rich. What is my fate? God alone knows." On and on he tramped. The sun was beginning to set and the air grew cold. He then saw something that attracted his attention. It was in a field just off the highway. He went to see what it was. He found that it was the hide of an ox. This is lucky," cried he in delight; "God has now provided me with a night's lodging. I will roll myself in this skin and escape the cold wind. I will sleep as happily as though I were in a warm cozy bed." He said his night prayers and asked God to send his good angels to watch around him and to take charge over him. In a minute he was tightly rolled up in the skin and in the twinkling of an eye he slept the sweet sleep of the weary.

The moon was shining brightly. A mountain eagle flew near by and seeing the skin rolled up mistook it for the dead body of an ox. He pounced upon it and seized it with his talons and bore it high up in the air. On and on he flew, across hill and dale, over river and sea, till he reached the tower on the rock in the sea near Joppa. He dropped the heavy hide on the roof of the tower at the break of day. The eagle flew away to his nest on the hills, intending to return later in the day with his family and to dine off the flesh of the ox which he thought was beneath the hide.

No sooner had the eagle dropped his burden than the beggar awoke and held his breath, for he knew neither where he was nor what had befallen him. Hearing the flapping of the eagle in his flight to his nest, the poor man ventured to get out of the hide to see where he was. He was more than amazed to find himself on the roof of the huge tower surrounded by the sea. He said to himself: "How shall I ever escape from this lonely place? Hark! Who's that opening the skylight? See, here's a strange sight, the like of which I have never seen. Is it a fairy yonder? Who has ever seen such a lovely face, such eyes as blue as the sky, such hair like gold in the sunshine? It must be a fairy princess or I am still dreaming. Look, she is coming nearer and nearer to me. She is going to speak"

"I am in the habit of taking a little exercise out here every morning before breakfast. Little did I ever expect to see a stranger here. Please excuse the liberty I take in speaking first, but this is my home. I like to know the names of all who come here. Now tell me, please, who art thou and how didst thou get here!"

"Gracious lady! I am a Jew, a student of the Holy Law of Israel. My home is in Acco, in the land ruled by the wisest of kings, Solomon. My father and mother are no longer on this earth. I am very poor and I left home yesterday to seek my bread whithersoever God might lead me. After sun set I went to sleep in a field, wrapping myself in the hide of an ox. I was so happy in my sleep, dreaming sweet dreams. All of a sudden I awoke by falling heavily on this roof. When I opened the hide and came out I saw a huge eagle flying over the sea. I am sure that this bird brought me here. Now I pray thee, good lady, forgive me for being here uninvited. Pray let me descend and depart."

"That is impossible."

"Why?"

"There is no door to this tower."

"Am I bewitched?"

"I do not think so."

"Art thou a fairy?"

"Of course not."

"Why is there no door to the tower?"

"So that no one shall enter or depart. And even if there were a door, escape is impossible. We are on a rock in the middle of the sea. Boatmen are not allowed to come near to the tower unless it be by the King's order."

"Do not look at me. I am so ashamed of my rags."

"That is easily put right. Come with me and I will show thee a nice room where new clothes are at thy disposal. There thou wilt also be able to have a good wash and make thyself comfortable. Then we will have breakfast together."

"This is all too lovely. Is it all true? Am I still dreaming?"

"Not at all."

"I am most grateful for all thy kindness. I shall be most happy to be thy guest for the present."

The princess led the beggar to the room and left him at the door, after telling where he was to find her for breakfast. When he had washed and changed his clothes he came to the princess. He was the most handsome man she had ever seen. There and then she fell in love with him. She asked him whether he would like to marry her. He at once consented. In his great joy he said to her: "I will now write out our marriage contract."

She gave him parchment and a quill, saying, "I am very sorry to tell thee that I cannot find any ink."

"That matters not. I can supply a good substitute."

"What will it be?"

"See, I will just open this little vein in my arm and with a few drops of blood I will write the deed."

He did so. Then taking her right hand he slipped on her forefinger a golden ring which his dying mother had given him and which he had on his little finger. "Behold," he cried, "with this ring do I betroth thee unto me and marry thee according

to the Law of Moses and Israel, God and His angels Michael and Gabriel being our witnesses."

In time they had a sweet little daughter. News of this unexpected event was duly reported by Ashmodai to King Solomon. He at once set out to visit the princess. When he reached the rock on which the tower stood, he carefully examined the brick work which had replaced the doorway. It had not been touched. The King now ordered his servants to remove the bricks and to replace the door. He then entered the tower. All the attendants were summoned to meet King Solomon. They were in mortal dread, fearing that their lord would punish them with death on account of what had happened. When the King saw them he said:—

"Do ye know anything about the marriage of the princess? Were ye present at the ceremony?"

"No, your gracious Majesty."

"I will go and ask the princess to tell me the truth, wait ye here till I return."

The King went to the room of the princess and after greeting her he asked her:

"Is it true that thou art married?"

"Of course, dearest father."

"Who is thy husband?"

"A noble Jew. God sent him to me. He is the most handsome man in the kingdom. I fell in love with him at first sight. I asked him to have me for his wife. He agreed most kindly and I am glad he was good enough to fulfill my wish. I hope, father dear, that thou art come to bless our darling baby, my husband and me. My husband is a great scholar. He knows the Holy Law by heart. He is a noble and good man."

"I can see, my child, that thou dost love him."

"That indeed I do."

"Call him and let us see one another."

The princess went to fetch him. When he saw the King, he fell on his face to the ground and cried:—

"Long live King Solomon!"

"I understand from my daughter here that thou art her husband."

"Even as thou sayest, lord King."

"Hast thou a marriage contract?"

"Here it is."

"Tell me all about thy family and thy history."

When he had told the King all that he desired to know, Solomon embraced him and blessed him. He saw that this poor youth was the very man destined to be his daughter's husband. After all, marriages are made in Heaven. Solomon rejoiced when he found his son-in-law to be a learned and good man, fit to be married to the most beautiful princess in the whole world. They lived very happily all the days of their life, leaving several sons and daughters to mourn their loss when they slept into death in a ripe old age.

## The Castle in the Air

Long, long ago there lived two famous kings. One was Pharaoh, king of Egypt. The other was Sennacherib, king of Assyria. Pharaoh was a very warlike ruler. He had an enormous army. His soldiers were very brave and most skillful with their bows and battle-axes. Their King delighted to see them daily on parade in the sandy desert near the royal palace. He watched them in summer and in winter. His object in having his fine men constantly drilled was to have them ready for battle, which he would have gladly welcomed should occasion arise to wage war. He often wished, as he rode home to his palace after drill, that he had a palace or castle in the desert. But he knew that the sand of the desert would never do for a foundation and therefore it was useless to build his residence there.

One day a rumor reached him that the King of Assyria had caused his wise Minister of State, named Achikar, to be killed. Pharaoh had always been afraid of having a quarrel with this man, who knew so well how to advise his master King Sennacherib. Now that he was supposed to be dead there was nothing to fear. Therefore Pharaoh wrote a very rude letter to the king of Assyria as follows: "Health be to thee. It is good for kings to pay tribute to those who are wiser and stronger than they are. Thou must either pay tribute to me or I must give thee tribute. Be it known to thee that I desire to have a castle built in the air over the desert of Egypt. I know that it is not a very easy thing to have a castle between heaven and earth. It is very good for kings to learn how to do difficult tasks. I therefore order thee to send me within six

months a clever man who is a skilled architect, that is to say, a man who can draw the plans of the castle and guide the workmen. He must also bring with him builders for the work. When thou hast sent me such men I will collect and send thee the taxes of Egypt for three years. If, however, thou shouldst neglect this my request and fail to send me such men of whom I have written above, then shalt thou collect and send me as tribute the taxes of Assyria for three years. Failing this, I will gather my mighty army and come to fight thee. I will lay waste thy land and take away thy kingdom. From thy over lord, Pharaoh, King of Egypt."

As soon as this letter reached Sennacherib, he read it and handed it to his Ministers of State. They advised him to summon all his nobles and to ask their advice, saying, "What shall we do!" He followed this plan. When the nobles had heard the letter read, they held their peace. Their silence distressed Sennacherib, who did not know what was to be done. He then called together all the old and learned men, including the star-gazers and magicians. As soon as they were all seated in the royal council room the King told them what the King of Egypt had dared to write. "How shall I act, what advice do ye give?"

"O Lord, great King!" said one of the star-gazers, "know that there is none in thy kingdom who could deal with King Pharaoh except the wise Achikar, the royal secretary. Alas! he was put to death at thy command. Why ask us to advise thee? Who is able to build a castle in the air between heaven and earth? We cannot help thee." Now as a matter of fact it was unknown to the King Sennacherib that Achikar was not dead at all. He had been condemned to death on a false charge of betraying his king and country. On the day when he was supposed to suffer death, he had recognized in the public executioner a friend, whose life he had once saved. In return the kind-hearted friend spared his life and a condemned criminal took Achikar's place at the public execution.

When King Sennacherib found that there was no one in his kingdom to help him, he began to lament over Achikar's death. In the hearing of all his courtiers he said: "Alas for thee, noble and wise Achikar! How well didst thou manage the affairs of our kingdom! All the secrets and thoughts of men didst thou know. Woe is me for thee! how did I destroy thee. I listened to the tittle-tattle of evil men and in consequence thou art no more. Ah! who can give thee to me just for once, or bring me word that thou art alive? I would give him half of my kingdom. Moreover, I would also give him thy weight in gold."

With tears in his sad eyes the King sat on his throne of gold after he had spoken these words. Then one of the courtiers present came near to the king and said: "O king! live forever. I was the public executioner when Achikar was sentenced to death. Now command thy servants to cut off my head."

"Why should I do this?"

"O my lord! every one that doeth not the order of the king is worthy of death."

"That is right. What hast thou failed to do?"

"I have disobeyed the king's command."

"When and how?"

"Thou didst command me to put Achikar to death. I knew that one day thou wouldst repent thee concerning him. I was also aware that he had been very greatly wronged. He was, indeed, not guilty of any crime. I therefore saved his precious life and I hid him."

"Stay! I command thee. If it really be as thou sayest and thou wilt show me Achikar alive, then will I give thee great wealth and make thy rank above that of all thy friends. Thou shalt not die, but thou shalt live as the king's friend in honor and happiness. Fetch Achikar quickly and my heart will rejoice."

After a brief interval Achikar came before the astonished

king and all his courtiers. When Sennacherib saw him he wept and was mightily ashamed to look him in the face. He knew that he had wronged him. He cried aloud: "Praise be to God Who hath brought thee back!"

Achikar turned to the King and said: "Because I have seen thy face, my lord, no evil is in my heart."

"Hast thou heard of the letter which I have received from Pharaoh, King of Egypt?"

"No, my lord King!"

"Read it, noble Achikar! Give me advice how to answer it."

Achikar took it from the king's hand and read it. He then said to the king: "My lord! concerning this matter which Pharaoh demands, be not anxious. I will go to Egypt and build thee a castle in the air. I will then bring back with me the three years tribute of Egypt."

When the King Sennacherib heard Achikar's words he rejoiced very heartily. Then Achikar said: "Grant me, I beseech thee, a delay of forty days. I need time to consider this matter so as to arrange it successfully."

The King most readily agreed to this. Achikar went to his home in the country and told his huntsmen to capture two young eagles for him. When this had been done, he ordered the workers in flax to weave two strong ropes, each to be two thousand cubits long and one ell in thickness. He also caused his carpenters to make two large cages for the eagles. He then took two little lads, making them sit every day on the backs of the eagles. The feet of the birds were bound by the long ropes to prevent them flying away. After a while the lads were quite accustomed to their morning ride on the eagles. By means of the ropes the birds could be drawn down to the ground when necessary. Achikar also taught the boys to shout when high up in the air: "Bring bricks, bring clay, that we may build the king's castle up here, for we are sitting still doing nothing." After many days training everything was in order

just as Achikar desired. He went to the King's palace to tell him that he was ready to go to Pharaoh and to say "Farewell." Sennacherib embraced him and wished him a happy and prosperous journey. He then set out for Egypt, taking with him a company of soldiers, the eagles in their cages, the long ropes and the two boys.

At last he came to the land of Egypt. He went at once to visit Pharaoh in his palace. When he was brought before the king he bowed his face to the ground and said: "O my lord, king! My master Sennacherib sends thee greetings of peace. He has read the letter written by thy Majesty and thanks thee mightily for the honor thou dost confer upon him by promising to give him three years tribute if thy castle in the air is built. I have therefore come to Egypt, thy land, to build thee here a castle between the heavens and the earth. By the help of the Most High God and thy noble favor I will build it for thee as thou desirest. Please provide lime, stone, clay and workmen. I have brought with me from the land of Assyria skilled builders to complete thy castle."

The words of Achikar were heard by Pharaoh and his courtiers with great surprise. In fact, they could hardly believe their ears. The King gave orders to have all that Achikar demanded at once prepared and taken to that part of the desert where the royal soldiers were accustomed to drill. Thither came Achikar with his lads, the eagles and the ropes. The King and his courtiers also went there to see how the wonderful castle would be built.

Achikar let the eagles out of their cages. He tied the lads on their backs and also tied the ropes to the feet of the eagles and let them go in the air. They soared upwards, till they remained between heaven and earth. Then the boys began to shout, saying: "Bring bricks, bring clay, that we may build the King's castle in the air. We are sitting up here doing nothing."

The crowd below around the King were mightily astonished at all that they saw. They wondered what it all meant

and what was going to happen. Achikar took a rod in his hand and began to beat the King's workmen who were standing still with gaping mouths, surprised beyond measure at seeing the boys on the eagles high up in the air. He shouted for Pharaoh's soldiers, saying to them: "Bring up to my skilled workmen what they require, bricks and clay. Do not hinder them from their work."

Pharaoh turned to him and said: "Tell me thy name."

"I am Achikar, the secretary of State to the King of Assyria."

"Did I not certainly hear that thy lord and king had caused thee to be slain?"

"Be that as it may. I am yet alive, for God saved me to build thy castle in the air."

"Thou art indeed mad, Achikar. Who, can bring up sand, bricks and clay to thy builders up there between heaven and earth?" said the King in a temper.

"How then, my lord King! shall we build a castle in the air? I have prepared all the plans and yonder in the air are the special builders. All they need is the material. I can also tell thee this—if my lord Sennacherib, the mighty King of the Assyrian Empire, were here, he would have built several castles in the air in a single day."

"Have done with the castle, Achikar. Get thee to thy King and I will send with thee three years tribute. Would that I had never written my foolish letter to thy lord. Give him my greetings and tell him I shall never again ask for such an impossible thing as a castle in the air. We must learn to be satisfied with such things as are possible and right. Farewell, wise Achikar."

Straightway he returned to his lord, King Sennacherib. When the news reached the King of Assyria that the trusty Achikar was returning, he went out to meet him and rejoiced over him exceedingly. When they met the King cried: "Welcome home, dear Achikar, the strength of my kingdom, the prince of my realm. Achikar told him how he had fared in

Egypt, and with pride showed him the three years' tribute sent by Pharaoh. King Sennacherib was delighted and said: "Take of this tribute as much as thou dost desire."

"I desire naught but the safety of my lord the King. I am happy to know that I have been able to serve thee. Continue to trust me and I will do all I can to help thee to increase in honor and greatness."

Achikar lived to be a very old man. To his last day Sennacherib honored and loved him as the wisest man in his kingdom.

## The Citizen of the World

The Holy One gathered the dust for the creation of the first man from the four corners of the earth. The Spirit of Life asked God why did He do this. The Holy One replied: "If a man should chance to come from the East to the West, or from the West to the East or to any place on the face of the earth, and his time comes to depart from this world, then the dust of the earth which is in that place where he dies shall not say to him: 'The dust of thy body is not mine. Thou wast not born here in this land. Return to the place whence thy dust was gathered at thy birth.' It is for this reason that I have taken the dust to form man from the four corners of the earth. Every place on earth is man's home. Wheresoever he happens to be when he dies there is the resting-place for the dust of his body and there it returns to Mother-Earth." The Spirit of Life praised the Lord whose mercies are over all His works.

## The Snake's Thanks

The following story was told at the court of David, King of Israel. It happened in those good times that an old man was walking along the road on a bitterly cold winter's day. He was feeble and had to support his old body upon a thick stick. On the side of the road he saw a snake, frozen with the cold. He felt very sorry to see one of God's creatures in pain. He went up to it and saw its eyes open and close. "Poor thing," said he, "it will soon die if it remain here much longer. Do we not read in God's Holy Bible that we must be merciful to all things which He has made? I will pick up the poor snake and try to revive it."

He hastened to take it up, and in order to give it a little warmth he put it under his coat close to his chest. It did not take very many minutes to warm it. The man was soon aware of the snake's recovery, for it began to coil its slimy body around him. Its pressure became gradually greater and greater till the man cried out in alarm: "Hold on! What art thou doing? Why dost thou squeeze me to death! Had it not been for my kindness and sympathy them wouldst by now have perished on the roadside. When I picked thee up thou wast almost frozen to death. I have given thee back thy life and in return thou seekest to kill me. Is it right to return evil for good? Is this thy way of thanking those who help thee?"

"Thou art a very nice old man. But thou dost not seem to remember what I am. Tell me that first."

"Thou art a snake."

"Exactly. I am therefore quite in order in killing thee and any man. Snakes are made to kill the children of men."

"Come, Master Snake. Let us put our case before a judge and let us hear what he has to say."

"Very well, I agree to do this. Before whom shall we state our case?"

"Before the first creature that we meet on the road."

On and on they went till at last they saw an ox coming along. The old man was pleased and called out:—

"Please, Master Ox, oblige this snake on my neck and me by standing here for a few minutes."

"What do ye want?"

"We wish thee to judge between us."

"What's the matter?"

"I found this snake perishing with cold. To save its life I put it on my chest under my coat."

"That was indeed most kind," said the ox.

"I then found that as soon as the snake revived it wanted to strangle me. Please decide whether that was right, and if not kindly order the snake to release its hold on me and to depart in peace."

"Now, Master Snake, what hast thou to say for thyself?"

"Yes, I admit that this good man speaks the truth. But I am quite right in trying to kill him."

"How so?"

"Because it is written in God's Book: 'I will put hatred between mankind and the serpent.'"

"Now," said the ox, "I have duly heard both sides. I find that the snake is in the right. It makes no difference that thou hast done it a good service and in return it kills thee. The world always returns evil for good. That is the way of life as far as I know it. Just see how I fare at the hands of my master. I work for him in his field from sunrise to sunset. At night I am shut up in a cold shed with a little hay and some oats for my food. My master sits in his cozy room with a lovely bright fire to warm him. He has a nice supper of fine fish and good meat. He even drinks sweet wine whereas I only get cold

water. He sleeps in a clean soft bed whilst I have not even a coverlet over my back. In a year or two when I am no longer able to work in the field he will sell me to the butcher who will kill me."

These words grieved the poor old man very much. "I am not satisfied with this judge," he cried aloud.

Leaving the ox behind he went on his way with the snake coiled around his neck.

"Let us try again, if it please thee," said the snake. "We will ask the next creature that we meet. I am sure I will win the case."

"Wait and see, Master Snake. Ah! here comes thy friend the ass. We will ask him to be the judge."

"By all means."

They both told their story in turn to the ass, just as they had told the ox. The ass also quoted the same words of the Bible as the ox. After a long tale of his own sorrows at the hands of ungrateful man, the ass decided that the snake was in the right.

"See!" cried the snake, "did I not say that I should win? I shall now kill thee and know that I am doing the right thing."

"Stay, Master Snake, let us be fair. We have asked two animals to judge between us. Let us also put the case before a man. It is natural that animals should judge in thy favor, for they are thy kinsmen. Come before David, King of Israel. He is a good man and will speak as is right."

"Very good, I agree."

When they came before the King, he listened very attentively to both of them. Turning to the old man, David said: "Why hast thou not kept the Holy Law! It tells us that God has put hatred between thee and the serpent. Thou hast forgotten this and now I fear I cannot help thee."

"Ah!" cried the snake in a spiteful voice, "I am in the right."

The poor man left the King's presence with a very sad

heart, for the snake was beginning to squeeze him more tightly than ever. He had now given up all hope. He feared that the snake would kill him before nightfall. On and on he wandered with a heavy step, leaning heavily on his stick. At last he felt so wretched that he sat down by the side of a well saying to himself, "I will die here and the snake may fall into the well and get drowned." He saw a handsome lad near by who came running up to him and said: "Peace be unto thee."

"Peace be also unto thee, my son."

"What aileth thee, for thy face is as white as a sheet!"

"I am nigh unto death."

"Can I fetch thee a little water!"

"Nay, dear son, many thanks. I have just left King David. Alas! he cannot save my life and I must die."

"Tell me thy trouble. Perhaps I can help thee."

The old man then told him all about the snake and showed him how it had entwined itself around his neck.

"Just wait here for a few minutes and then I will go with thee to King David. Thy case shall be retried and justice will be done. I must just stay a little while here by the well. My stick fell into it and I told my attendants to dig up the ground yonder where the source of the well lies. This will cause the water in the well to increase. My stick, of course, floats on the surface. As soon as the water rises near the top of the well I can reach it and as soon as I get it we will go to the King."

This action of the lad seemed very clever in the eyes of the old man. He therefore resolved to return with him to the King. At last they came before David. The lad, who was Solomon, the king's son, fell on his face to the ground. His father told him to rise up. He did so and kissed the king's hand.

"May I speak, dear father?"

"Speak, my son."

"Why didst thou not decide this man's case in his favor?"

"Because it serves him right to find himself in his present

unfortunate state."

"How so, father dear?"

"Because he did not act according to the teaching of the Holy Law."

"O father, give me, I beseech thee, permission to sit in judgment in this case."

"Most gladly will I do so, if thou wilt be able to prove to me that I have not done justice to this unlucky man. Come, beloved son, and sit on my chair of state. I will listen to thy words of wisdom. May the God of my fathers be with thee in judgment!"

Solomon sat on his father's chair and began to say to the snake: "Tell me, why dost thou do evil to one who has dealt kindly with thee?"

"God has commanded me to do so."

"Where?"

"In his Law."

"Dost thou agree to abide by the teaching of the Law?"

"Of course I do."

"Now at once get off this man and stand on the ground even as he does."

"Why should I?"

"Because the Holy Law demands that those who have a quarrel shall stand before the judge."

"I quite agree to do this. Now wilt thou judge between me and this man." The snake uncoiled its body and placed itself beside the old man. Solomon then turned to the old man and said: "The Holy Law has also a command for thee. It tells thee that thou shalt bruise the serpent's head. Do now according to the word of thy God." The old man no sooner heard Solomon's words than he raised his stick on which he was leaning and smote the snake a deadly blow on its head. The next second it was dead. King David and his courtiers were mightily astonished at the wonderful wisdom of Solomon, whose fame soon spread throughout the land. The old man

thanked the prince and the King for saving his life and went his way in peace.

## The Rebellious Waters

On the third day of the week of creation the mighty waters covered the face of all the earth. Then the Holy One commanded the waters to be gathered together so that the dry land might appear. The prince of the sea forced back the rolling waves, whereupon the mountains and hills scattered over the surface of all the earth rose beneath the blue sky. Now the prince of the sea brought the waters into the deep oceans. When the waters saw this they became proud and attempted once again to cover the face of the earth. The prince of the sea rebuked them and warned them not to disobey the great Creator. They refused to listen and were about to submerge the earth when the Holy One blamed them for being disobedient. He at once subdued them and placed them beneath the level of the earth. In order to restrain the sea He put the sand as their boundary. Whenever the water is tempted to rebel and to pass over its bounds, it sees the sand and returns to its proper place.

When the sea saw the sand for the first time it said: "What need have I to be afraid of the sand? Is it likely that its tiny grains can hold me in check?"

The tiny grains of sand heard these proud words of the sea. They whispered to one another: "Let us not be frightened by the big talk of the waves. It is quite true that each one of us is very small. What of that? If we be friendly to one another and remain united we shall be able to do what the good Creator intends us to do. We all know what that is. We were made to hold the great sea in check. This we certainly shall not be able to do if we quarrel and stand apart. Then each

one of us will be very easily washed away by the waves. Now let us all promise one another to remain always united. Union is strength. Then we need have no fear of the raging waters. Their roaring and foam will not frighten us."

The Holy One blessed their union and to this day the golden sand holds the proud waves in check.

## The Goblin and the Princess

About seventeen hundred years ago there lived a very famous Rabbi named Simeon ben Yochai. His home was in Palestine. He spent all his time in teaching the word of God to the Jews who came to listen to him. In those days the Romans were the rulers of the Holy Land, for they had conquered the Jews. At that time the Roman Emperor disliked the Jewish religion because it taught its believers that there was only one God, the great Creator of all things. The Romans did not understand this simple belief. They had ever so many gods and goddesses, a god of the sea, a god of the sky, and so on. The Emperor even believed that he was also a god. All his subjects, except the Jews, prayed to his image. He thought that the only way to make the Jews worship him and the Roman gods would be to forbid them to keep their holy ceremonies. He therefore made a law telling the Jews that they must no longer keep their Sabbath as a holy day of rest. All the other Jewish laws were also forbidden to be kept by them. When the Jews in the Holy Land heard of the Emperor's law they were deeply grieved. In their distress they cried to God for help. They also turned to their great teacher, Rabbi Simeon ben Yochai, and begged him to go to Rome to ask the Emperor to withdraw his cruel and unjust law, so that they might worship God as their fathers had taught them to do. They knew that God had so often worked miracles on behalf of Rabbi Simeon. Had he not indeed deserved this Divine mark of favor? Did he not spend day after day in reading the Holy Word of God and in teaching its great lessons? The good Rabbi consented to go to Rome if one of

the teachers, named Eleazar ben Jose, would be his companion. The latter agreed to do as Rabbi Simeon desired.

Without any delay they set out on their journey to Rome. They prayed to God for His protection and blessing. At last they reached the great city of Rome, when Rabbi Simeon said to his companion: "Let us well consider what we have to do here. First of all we must see the Emperor. Then we must try, with the help of God, to persuade him to withdraw his harsh law. Let us face our difficulties and overcome them. When we get to the palace we may not be admitted. In that case we shall not be able to do anything. Again, if we should be brought before the Emperor, how do we know that he will listen to us and consider our petition? Is it likely that he will consent to cancel his own law? To do such a thing is unheard of in mighty Rome. Well do we know how the Romans rule the world. They rule according to their own ideas and not according to the wishes of their subjects."

"True, indeed," replied Eleazar, "are thy words. Perhaps the good God will help us. Whenever Israel is in distress He also grieves with them. Their sorrows are also His. Come what may, we will present ourselves, if God will, at noon to-morrow at Cæsar's palace. The rest we will leave in the hands of our Heavenly Father. Now let us look for the Jewish quarter of this great city and find a lodging for the night."

They found what they required and sat down together to eat a very modest supper. They were alone. Suddenly they were startled to see in their room a little Goblin. It came near to Rabbi Simeon and said to him with a bow of its body: "Peace be with you, masters of the Law. Ye know me not. My name is Ben Temalion. You will probably not believe me when I tell you why I am here. The purpose of my visit is to help you. I know you have a most difficult task to perform. I think you know that this task is almost an impossible one. Is it not so?"

"It is as thou sayest," replied Simeon.

"Do you care to employ my services?"

"I do not like to make use of thy evil power."

"Stay, Master!" cried Eleazar. "Who knows whether the Heavenly Father has not sent this goblin to help us!" Turning to the Goblin, he cried:—

"Speak, Ben Temalion."

"Command me, and I will try to obey."

"Tell us how thou art able to help us."

"I have all my plans fully prepared."

"What are thy plans?"

"I cannot tell you unless you both agree to let me be of service to you."

"We agree," they both exclaimed.

"Well, my plan is as follows. Know that the mighty Cæsar here in Rome has an only daughter, whom he loves more than his own life. She is, indeed, the most beautiful princess in the world. Her mother died when she was a little girl. Perhaps on account of this fact her father never refuses to fulfill her least wish. Now I intend this very night to go to the palace."

"What for?" they cried.

"I will tell you. I propose to enter her body. The princess will at once become mad. She will continue in this sad condition as long as I am in her body. When her father learns of her terrible misfortune he will do anything to have her restored to health. You two men must play the part of physicians. Go to the palace to-morrow at noon and demand to see the Cæsar."

"The guard may refuse to admit us."

"Not so. Say that you have heard that the lovely Princess has suddenly become mad. This knowledge of a Court secret will impress the guard. You must then say that you undertake to cure the princess there and then. You will at once be admitted and taken to the presence of the Emperor."

"But I am not a physician," says Rabbi Simeon. "I have never heard that my friend here is skilled in the art of

healing."

"That matters not."

"How can we cure the princess?"

"Listen, Rabbi Simeon. I will now give thee the power of healing her disordered mind. All that thou hast to do is to go to her and whisper in her ear my name, Ben Temalion. I will then leave her body, and moreover, I will give a sign that I have done so."

"What sign wilt thou give?"

"Of course the madness will disappear. But to convince you that I have really left the body of the princess, I will cause all the glass in the palace to break in pieces."

"Now, Ben Temalion, how shall we be able to see the princess!"

"When ye come before Cæsar to cure his daughter, he will cause the girl to be brought before you. She will call for thee, Rabbi Simeon."

"Why?"

"She will fall in love with thee at first sight."

"Mad indeed will she be to do such folly. I am an old man, nearly eighty years old. My white beard is enough to frighten any girl and to make her look elsewhere for love and admiration."

"Now remember all I have said. You must ask the Emperor to reward you for healing his child by granting a petition you will present to him when the princess has been restored to health."

"To be sure, that is the object of our mission. What reward dost thou ask, Ben Temalion, for thy service?"

"To help the children of men is reward enough for a goblin. Now let us wait till to-morrow and all will be well." The next instant the goblin vanished.

Next day the two Rabbis betook themselves to the Emperor's palace and demanded to be taken to the presence of the Cæsar.

"What is your business?" asked the guard at the palace gate.

"We know that the princess is dangerously ill. In fact she has lost her reason in the last twenty-four hours."

"How do you know this?"

"Never mind how. We do know it. Do not waste precious time. We have come to heal the Princess. We are physicians staying overnight in this city. Now wilt thou lead us to the Emperor's presence?"

"Wait here, and I will have your message sent to my mighty lord, the Emperor."

After a brief delay the order came to admit the two strangers. When the Emperor saw the Rabbis he cried in a voice full of contempt: "How now! Do ye Jews dare to enter our palace and to come before our divine presence? Think ye that ye can work miracles better than the Roman physicians?"

"Tell us, mighty Cæsar, have the imperial physicians been able to cure the beautiful princess?"

"Thus far they have not been successful."

"We shall be successful even this very day. Know indeed that life and death are not in the hands of man, but only in the power of God in whom we believe. He has sent us, this is our belief, to heal the princess. Was not your Majesty's daughter so happy and well but yesterday? Was she not like a ray of warm sunshine on a cold winter's day? Did she not rejoice your heart with her bright and cheery smile?"

"Ye speak truly indeed. Come now, what do you demand as your reward if ye heal my beloved child?"

"Grant but one petition which we will put before your Majesty."

"I swear by all the gods to do this. Know ye that the oath of a Roman Emperor is never broken."

"So let it be according to your imperial word," said Rabbi Simeon.

"Stay. Mark ye well, ye wise men of Israel, if ye fail to heal

my daughter, ye shall be thrown this very day into the arena. The famished lions will enjoy their meal when they devour your bodies."

"We hear your Majesty's warning. Have no fear. We will heal the sweet princess. Now let us see Her Imperial Highness, if it please your Majesty; otherwise of course we cannot cure her."

"Let the princess be brought before us at once," cried the Emperor.

After a few minutes had passed, she was brought before her father and the Rabbis. She was deadly pale and seemed to be terribly frightened. Her eyes were staring at the two strangers. Then she stretched out her hands towards Rabbi Simeon and in an excited voice cried aloud: "Happy am I to see thee at last, my beloved! Of thee did I dream last night. Come quickly and save me, for I am nigh unto death's door."

"Hush! my beloved child," said the distressed Emperor with deep emotion. "Come to me and take my hand."

"Go away, I know thee not, stranger!"

"I am thy father."

"I say I know thee not. Never have I seen thee before."

"Speak not thus, dearest child."

"I want to go to my beloved yonder. He is mine and I am his."

Rabbi Simeon gave the Emperor a knowing wink and went close to the princess. He laid his hand very gently on her arm and whispered in her ear the magic name "Ben Temalion." The spell was broken. She was once again the smiling princess. Turning to the Emperor she cried in a happy voice: "O dearest Father, how glad I am to see thy face. I have had a most horrible nightmare. I have only just awoke. Who are these venerable old men? Where do they come from and why are they here?"

Before the Emperor could speak there was a terrific crash. Every piece of glass in the palace was smashed into atoms.

"What is that?" cried the Emperor in alarm.

The imperial servants ran hither and thither. They seemed to be dazed, fearing some fresh surprise. They came to the Emperor and said: "There is no one to be seen."

"Never mind," said the Emperor, "about the glass. It will be replaced. Now let us rejoice. My happiness in seeing my darling daughter restored to health knows no bounds." Turning to the princess he said: "These learned men have cured thee. I am now about to grant them any petition they may desire to make."

"I also," said the princess, "will give them precious jewels."

"Nay, gracious princess!" cried the Rabbis, "we will only accept thy noble father's favor. We ask for neither gold nor gems. We seek neither honor nor worldly goods."

"What do ye then require?"

"As your Majesty knows, we are Jews from the imperial province of Palestine. Your Majesty has recently issued a law prohibiting the observance of the Sabbath, Festivals and other sacred rites of the Jewish religion. We desire to serve our God in our own way. If we are true to God we will also be loyal to Cæsar, for it is God who raises up kings to rule the children of men. We teach our people to fear God and the King. We now put our petition before your Majesty; it is this —pray cancel the imperial law dealing with the Jewish observances."

"I have promised to grant your petition. Ye have done your part in restoring my dear daughter's health. I will at once do my share by ordering the law to which ye have referred to be canceled. Go back to your brethren in Palestine and tell them that as long as I live I will give them my favor and protection. Farewell."

With bowed heads the two Rabbis withdrew. Their hearts were full of gratitude to their Heavenly Father for His love and mercy.

## Iron and the Trees

On the same day when the Holy One formed the trees He also made iron and other metals. Now the trees were very proud to find that they were taller than any creatures made by God. They looked at the hills and mountains and said: "They are of course very big, but we shall grow taller and taller and one day we shall be able to look down upon them." The cedars even boasted saying: "We shall soon grow as high as the heavens and our roots will stretch from one end of the earth to the other. Then shall we be kings of the earth."

At that moment the Spirit of Meekness passed by and heard the foolish boast of the trees. In a very gentle voice the Spirit said to the cedars:—

"Why don't you look at your roots; do you know what is hidden beneath them?"

"No. We cannot see what is hidden deep down in the earth. Our heads are too high up in the sky."

"Well, just let me look for you. Shall I tell you what I see?"

"Please do look and tell us what is hidden beneath our roots."

"I see a lot of metal ore, called iron."

"Why dost thou tell us about the iron metal! It is not in our way the least bit."

"No, it is not in your way now."

"Why then bother about it!"

"Listen, ye cedars and all ye trees! In days to come men will dig in the earth and find the iron ore. They will use it for very many purposes. They will make ax-heads and then you will remember my words."

"What will then happen to us?"

"If men get wood for the handle of the ax they will cut down your fine tall trees."

When the trees heard this they began to tremble and to weep.

The Spirit asked: "Why do ye weep?"

"We are afraid."

"Why are ye afraid?"

"Because now we see that thou art right. The iron at our roots will one day cut down our tall trunks which will then lie in shame on the earth. We shall never reach the sky and we shall never be kings at all. People will burn our wood in the fire once we are cut down."

"Have no fear, ye trees! All the trouble ye foresee need not arise if ye desire to prevent it."

"How so?"

"Let none of your wood be put into the iron to make the handle of the ax and then not one of you will be touched."

## David and the Insects

It happened one day that David the son of Jesse was sitting in the lovely garden of his father's house in Bethlehem, not far from Jerusalem. He was resting after a long day's hard work. He loved to gaze at the beautiful flowers painted with the golden tints of the setting sun. Their sweet perfume also made his heart glad and he felt so happy to be alive in such a glorious world. Hark! The pretty birds were singing so grandly. They were surely praising God. He also would join in their song of praise, thanking the great Creator for having made this perfect world with its countless beautiful things.

His happy thoughts were suddenly disturbed by seeing a large wasp attacking a spider. The latter had woven its web between two twigs of a rose-bush near by. At that moment one of Jesse's servants who was ofttimes mad came along with a large stick in his hand. As soon as he saw the wasp stinging the unfortunate spider he drove them away by striking at them with his stick. He then went his way, knocking off the heads of the little daisies and buttercups along his path.

"Well, I never," cried David in surprise, "thought that the world was as funny as I now see it is. I was delighted but a minute or two before with all the wonderful and beautiful things made by God. Now I find that in this lovely world there are also such useless creatures as I have just seen. What earthly use is there in a madman who knows not what he is doing, ever bent on destroying whatever he sees? Lord of the Universe! Tell me, I beseech Thee, why hast thou created wasps and spiders? The wasp eats honey and destroys the spiders. Of what use is it? It is not good for any thing except

to breed maggots. As for the spider, it spins all the year round and never garbs itself with its fine web it has woven."

The Holy One, blessed be He, answered saying:—

"O David! Why dost thou despise the little creatures which I have made for the welfare of the world. An occasion will surely arise when thou wilt have great need of their wonderful help. Then in deed wilt thou know why they have been created by Me. Everything in My universe has its great purpose; even the madman whom thou mockest has also his part to play. Despise naught in the world. I love all things that are the work of My hand. I hate none of the things which I have made. I spare all things because they are Mine. To everything there is a time and a place. All My creatures praise Me."

David heard no more, for the Divine voice grew silent. There was a hush. The sun had set and the golden tints vanished. The cool wind of the twilight reminded David that it was time to get back to his father's flock and to secure the sheep for the night.

Years passed by. David was no longer the shepherd of Jesse's flock. He was now the champion of Israel. His wonderful victory over the giant Goliath made him the hero and favorite of the people. He was now the King's son-in-law, for he had married the daughter of King Saul. The princess was his reward for slaying the mighty giant. Unfortunately David's popularity brought him the envy of King Saul. At last the King sought to kill poor David. To save his life he was forced to escape and hide in the mountains. Saul and his men followed in pursuit. David was finally forced to take refuge in a small cave. "Alas!" he cried, "my enemy will now surely find me and slay me. Help me, God! save my life."

The Holy One, blessed be He, heard his prayer and sent a spider to weave its web across the mouth of the cave. Later when Saul and his followers came along the latter saw the spider's web. They pointed it out to the King, who said: "Truly no man has entered this cave, for had he done so he would

have rent the web. Let us not waste our precious time here, but rather let us hurry along the road where we may overtake our enemy."

When they had departed David came forth from the cave. He saw the little spider hanging to part of its broken web. He took it in his hand very gently and caressed it, saying to it: "Blessed is thy Creator and thou also art blessed." He then praised the Heavenly Father, exclaiming: "Lord of the Universe! Who can do according to Thy works and according to Thy mighty deeds? Verily all Thy works and deeds are wonderful."

David then continued his flight and went on his way until he came to the land of the Philistines. He thought that he would be quite safe there. At all events, Saul would leave him alone. Now the king of the Philistines, Achish by name, was a good and pious man. As soon as David's presence in his land was discovered, he ordered his servants to bring the Hebrew hero before him. He greeted him kindly and asked him why he had run the risk of venturing into the territory of the Philistines.

"I ventured to come here for I am not safe in the land of Israel."

"Thou art mad. Thou hast saved Israel. Had it not been for thee all thy people with King Saul would now be our slaves. Dost thou tell us that thy life is not safe in thine own land?"

"O lord King! It is even as I have spoken. I am persecuted by King Saul. He seeks my life and I am safer here than in the Holy Land."

"Why does Saul persecute thee?"

"Because I slew Goliath."

It happened that the brothers of Goliath were the bodyguard of King Achish. They told the king that David was worthy of death for having slain their brother. Achish asked them:—

"Did he not kill Goliath in a fair combat!"

"Have a care, your Majesty! David is entitled then to be the ruler of all the Philistines. Did not Goliath boast that if he slew the Hebrew champion the children of Israel were to be the slaves of the Philistines, and vice versa?"

David now saw that he was in a very dangerous position. It was almost certain that the brothers of Goliath would kill him if he remained in their land. How could he escape? All of a sudden the idea flashed through his mind that he might escape death if he pretended to be a madman. They might pity him and spare his life. He sat down on the steps of the palace and began to scribble in the dust. He also entirely changed his behavior. This strange conduct puzzled the Philistines.

Now King Achish happened to have a most beautiful daughter who was unfortunately mad. When he saw David's foolish pranks he said to his body guard: "Why do ye mock me? Is it because my dear daughter is mad that ye think I like to see idiots? Is it for this reason that ye have brought before me this raving madman? Do I then lack lunatics in my kingdom? Send him back to his friend, King Saul. I have no need of such a hero." The body-guard told David to go away. He went away with a merry heart. He thanked God that he had been fortunate enough to escape from the power of the brothers of Goliath. "Now I know," cried he, "that even a madman has a useful part to play in this most wonderful world."

When he came back to the Holy Land, King Saul gave him no rest. He was forced to live the wretched life of a fugitive. On one occasion God delivered his enemy into his hand. He chanced to enter a large cave where he found King Saul and his attendants asleep. At the entrance sat the giant Abner also fast asleep. David and his followers had to be very careful how they entered. Fortunately the legs of Abner were drawn up. David's followers urged him to kill his enemy, now that he had the chance. This he refused to do. "I will return

good for evil," cried he. To prove to the King that his life had been spared, David cut off a piece of the King's robe and took hold of his cruse of water. David's men went out and he followed. They had all left the cave except David, who found himself caught beneath Abner's huge legs. The giant had just stretched himself as David wished to get out of the cave. "Dear me!" said David to himself, "Abner's legs are like two massive pillars and I am now caught between them as in a trap. Lord! save me and answer me. My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?"

The Lord heard his cry. At that moment the Holy One, blessed be He, worked a miracle by sending there and then a wasp to sting Abner. The pain caused the giant in his sleep to pull up his legs sharply. Thus David was released. He skipped over the feet of Abner and escaped. At once he praised God for His mercy in creating wasps. Never again did he have any doubt of God's wisdom in creating insects, which at first had seemed to him to be useless and even harmful. Never should we despise anything which seemed worthy to be created by the Holy One, blessed be He.

## The First Vineyard

On the same day when old Father Noah came out of the Ark, he found close to the spot where it rested a large vine. It had been carried away from the Garden of Eden by the rain which came with the Flood. The vine still had its clusters of grapes and its roots. Noah tasted the grapes and rejoiced in his heart whilst eating the wonderful fruit. "This is so lovely," cried he in delight, "I will plant a vineyard and have plenty of grapes and golden wine." He found a fine hill for his vineyard and began to plant the roots. After an hour's work he rested a while. He saw a strange-looking fellow coming along the road and when he came to the hill he called aloud:—

"Good-morning, Father Noah, what art thou doing?"

"First tell me, whence comest thou?"

"From walking up and down the earth."

"How didst thou escape the Flood?"

"I was in the Holy Land, where the waters of the Flood did not come."

"Thou dost ask what am I doing. I am planting a vineyard."

"What dost thou expect to get therefrom?"

"Why, grapes, of course. Out of the grapes I shall get wine which makes the heart merry."

"Come, Father Noah, this hill is very large. Let me also help thee in thy work and we will become partners of the vineyard. Thou art old and thy sons do not help thee. Thou wilt be glad of my help, for I know how to plant a vineyard."

"That's more than I do."

"So I can see."

"Very well, I agree."

The stranger was none other than Satan. He left Noah for a few minutes and when he returned he brought with him a lamb. He killed it beneath the vine which Noah had planted. He then went away and brought back a lion. He slew it also beneath the vine. He then fetched a swine and killed it. Finally he brought an ape and slew it also. He mixed the blood of these four animals and poured it over the ground of the vineyard. Meanwhile Father Noah was looking on with surprise. He turned to his partner and asked:—

"Why hast thou done this strange performance? What does it all mean?"

"What I have done points to the different effects which wine has upon all who drink it."

"Please explain, I do not understand thy meaning."

"Before a man drinks wine he is like a lamb, without evil desire. He is harmless and tame. Now let a man drink one glass of good wine. He feels strong like a lion and thinks that there is no man on all the earth like himself. Now let this man take a second glass of wine. What then? He has taken more than he ought to have done. He is then like a swine in the mire. If then he take a third glass he will become drunk. He then behaves like the ape. He jumps about and dances, he plays the fool and speaks nonsense. In fact he does not know what he is doing. Dost thou understand, Father Noah?"

"I hear what thou sayest and shall bear it well in mind."

Noah and Satan then went their different ways. Noah is long dead, nevertheless Satan continues to be the partner of every one who plants a vineyard to this day.

## Abraham's Tree

From the time when the Holy One told Abraham to leave his father's house in Ur of the Chaldees, he planted the seed of a tree in every place where he stayed. In vain was all his labor. The seed never took root and nothing grew. At last he came to the Holy Land. Here also he planted the seed, and strange to say, not only did the seed take root but the most beautiful tree ever seen by men grew in Abraham's garden. Its green foliage was the talk of the land. Never before had such leaves been seen. Nor was this all. The fruit of this tree was the sweetest ever tasted. Moreover its blossoms and fruit were to be seen in summer and winter alike.

Abraham made it known throughout the land that this wonderful tree was for the benefit of all the children of men. When the weary traveler, scorched by the glare of the sun, came to sit beneath the boughs of Abraham's tree, he immediately felt refreshed. The shade cast by the tree was as cool as a mountain stream. The fragrance of the fruit was so marvelous that the thirsty and hungry who came near to it needed neither drink nor food. This was the good fortune of all who believed in God. If, however, some one came near the tree and refused to believe in the Holy One, the wonderful tree seemed to be about to wither. The shade was no longer cool, the fragrance ceased to be refreshing. Then Abraham would come and teach the disbeliever that there was one God in Heaven and on earth, ever near to all who seek Him in truth. When at last the guest of Abraham had found the truth and looked up to the heavens with faith in his heart, lo! the tree was beautiful again in all its glory. The birds hastened to sit

on its branches and to join in the hymn of praise to the Lord of the world.

## Joseph, the Sabbath Lover

In Ascalon in the Holy Land there once lived a poor peddler named Joseph. His greatest pleasure was to keep the Sabbath Day holy. He was a good Jew, loving God and man. The precepts of the Law were his delight and by them did he live. He was not ashamed of his religion. In fact he was very proud of being a Jew. He had a neighbor who was a heathen, very wealthy and selfish. They often met and conversed with one another. This was especially the case on Saturday when Joseph abstained from his business. They would talk about religion, especially about the Sabbath. Joseph would dwell on the value of the Holy Day, pointing out that of all the gifts bestowed by God upon humanity the most precious was the weekly day of rest. Man is not a mere machine, he needs rest and recreation. To those who observe the Sabbath and call it a delight, its weekly advent is like the arrival of a dear and intimate friend.

Joseph was wont to put by part of his daily earnings in order to spend the Sabbath Day in a festive manner. He often would stint himself and forego necessities on week days so as to have better garments than his working clothes for the Sabbath and a fine spread of food on his table in order to pay honor to the Sabbath. The poor were always welcome guests at his table on Friday nights and Saturdays. He not only honored the Sabbath, he also sanctified it. People called him "Mokir Shabbe," Sabbath Lover. He seemed to forget all his cares and troubles as soon as the Sabbath came. He never omitted to have a spotless white table cloth spread over his table. Then there was the Sabbath light burning in a beautiful

silver lamp. Fresh bread and sweet wine were at hand for the Kiddush or Sanctification. Meat and fish were abundantly provided. Joseph imagined himself to be a king and his fancy turned the Sabbath into a lovely princess, his bride. "Welcome! Queen Sabbath," he cried, "come, my beloved." What a delight it must have been to hear the Sabbath hymns sung at Joseph's table. He and his guests thanked their Heavenly Father for the Holy Day, the day of peace and repose. A gracious gift it was, leading the children of men to their Father in Heaven. It is a day for man whereby he can rise above material things and see something of the Divine vision.

One Sabbath Day the heathen neighbor, who was a miser, lacking nothing in the way of worldly material things, reproached the Jew for keeping his Sabbath. "How could any one," said he, "waste a valuable day by abstaining from work? No wonder you are poor. See, I am rich and possess more than I need. I am not only prosperous but I am also happy, for my motto is Live to-day and let tomorrow take care of itself. You, and I suppose all the Jews are like you, think otherwise. You slave all the week for the sake of your Sabbath Day. I know you are kindhearted. Personally I don t believe in that sort of thing. I daresay you judge me to be callous and coldhearted, without any love for the poor. I certainly despise the poor, for it is generally their own fault if they do not get on in life. They are idle, foolish and careless."

"Good neighbor," replied Joseph, "I do not quite see the point of your lengthy remarks. You begin by blaming me for keeping the Sabbath Day holy, and you then say that because I do this I am poor. You are rich because you do not keep the Sabbath. Now I admit that I am a poor man, but what of that? I am as happy to-day as a king. I have feasted well and I am resting. What more could I desire? You seem to think that the only pleasure in life is hoarding money. I differ and believe the best pleasures can be obtained when we spend money in a wise and good way. Perhaps you will always be rich and

perhaps I shall always be poor, but if the question were asked: 'Who is the happier of the two?' I doubt whether you would be the one. Good-day, my friend! I must attend Synagogue for Sabbath prayer."

Joseph went his way trusting in God and loving to do His holy will, well knowing that the Sabbath was more precious than all the money in the world. "No man liveth by bread alone," thought he. Whilst Joseph was in the Synagogue his neighbor had fallen in with a brother heathen who was well known in Ascalon as a famous astrologer. They greeted one another and Joseph's neighbor asked him: "What dost thou read in the stars?"

"I read that thy fortune is on the wane."

"What dost thou mean?"

"Thy wealth will pass from thine hand to the hand of thy neighbor. This will happen within thirty days."

"Dost thou know why this must be?"

"Well do I know. The gods are very fickle in dealing with wealth. The poor man of to-day may be the rich man of the morrow. What use dost thou make of thy enormous fortune? I fear thou dost neither enjoy its benefits now nor wilt thou do so in the future. Tell me, who is thy neighbor?"

"Joseph the Sabbath lover, a Jew very poor and industrious."

"Of him have I heard. He will, so the stars seem to indicate, own all thy wealth."

"Here is a silver coin for thy evil prognostication. I fervently hope it will not come true. Now, fare well." They parted and went in opposite directions.

Fear took hold of the miser, and as he sat in his room that night staring at his gold and silver he cried: "Never shall the Jew Joseph have this money. I could not bear to see him rich and proud—and I should be poor. Horrible thought. It shall not be. I will defy fate and prevent my fortune going to the beggar Jew. He is a mean hypocrite; he deserves to be poor all

the days of his life. I told him so this morning and now I am told that he is to have my money. This is ridiculous and far-fetched. The old Jew would say if he could read my thoughts: 'Man proposes but God disposes.' Well, I am going to propose and also dispose. Without delay I shall to-morrow sell all my property and buy precious pearls. I shall then leave Ascalon for good and settle in the fair lands of Italy."

Next day the miser converted all his wealth into a number of very beautiful pearls. He had them strung on a silken cord which he sewed on to his turban. That same day he left Ascalon and boarded a boat leaving the port for foreign parts. "I shall soon forget all about Joseph and the foolish astrologer," said he whilst walking on deck. At that moment a gale arose and his turban was lifted off his head and carried out to sea. At one fell blow all his fortune was gone forever. He cried and tore his hair out of his head, but all in vain. He was now a beggar.

Meanwhile Joseph was leading his usual life. On the next Friday he went, as was his wont, to purchase the best food for the Sabbath meals. He came to the fish-market and saw a very large turbot on the dealer's counter. Its price was very high and there was no one who would buy it. As soon as Joseph saw it he gave the full price without any discussion. In fact he felt very happy, for he did not remember ever having seen such a large fish. "It will not be wasted," he said to himself; "the poor will help me to consume it." He thought that it would be a sin to eat such a splendid fish on a week day, but for the Sabbath nothing was too good. He hurried home in intense happiness and gave it with a happy smile to his dear wife. "Here, my love, we have a fish fit for a king," said he. "Yes, it shall be for a king, for you, dear husband." He kissed his wife and went to his bedroom to change his garments and to prepare himself for the Sabbath. He had barely reached the bedroom when he heard his wife's voice calling: "Come, dear Joseph, come quickly."

He hastened to her side and asked her: "Why have you called me back?"

"Look, Joseph, see what I have found inside this turbot."

"It is a string of lovely pearls," he cried in delight.

"What a lucky fish!" she said.

He rubbed his eyes to make sure that he was not dreaming.

"See, my love! God has blessed us. He has given us wealth and we shall no longer slave during the six days of toil."

"Did you hear anything about our heathen neighbor with whom you were speaking on Sabbath last?"

"I heard that he had left Ascalon after having sold all his property here. I have also heard a rumor that he bought pearls with his money. How do we know whether these very pearls of our neighbor are not the same you have taken out of the fish?"

"It matters not, good Joseph, to whom they formerly belonged. It is quite evident that God in His love has sent this fortune to us. We shall know how to use His gifts even as we know how to love and appreciate His gift of the holy Sabbath."

# The Magic Sword of Kenaz

After the death of Joshua, the son of Nun, the children of Israel had peace in their land for some time. Their leader and judge was Kenaz, the son of Caleb. He was a very brave man even as his father before him. Joshua and Caleb were two of the twelve spies sent by Moses to spy out the land of Canaan. They alone gave a truthful report, while the other ten spies frightened the people by telling them that they would never be able to conquer the Holy Land. They told the people of all they had seen, especially about the cities with walls up to the sky. They also spoke of the giants who would think that the Israelites were but tiny grasshoppers. Joshua and Caleb told their brethren not to listen to this false report, for the Canaanites were faint hearted. As a reward for being truthful Joshua and Caleb were the only two of the spies who lived to enter the promised land of Canaan.

After the death of Moses, Joshua in his turn also sent two men to spy out Jericho before he attempted to capture it. The two spies were Kenaz and his brother. When Joshua died the people chose Kenaz as their judge and ruler. The peace of the land did not last long. The Amorites, a fierce tribe of Canaan, came to attack the Israelites. Kenaz armed his people to fight against the foe. He gave an Army order that his men were to begin the attack on the morrow. He noticed, however, that a score of his men began to grumble, saying: "Lo! to-morrow when we go forth to battle our leader Kenaz will stay at home and enjoy himself. Is it fair that he should send us to fight the mighty Amorites who will kill us to a man?"

The words pained Kenaz very much. He made up his mind

to teach them a lesson which they would never forget. He sent for his chief captain to whom he gave a new order, saying: "Let three hundred of my servants and as many horses be chosen to go with me this night on a secret expedition. Let only such men be taken who really desire to serve under me for the love of adventure. Let them meet me at sunset outside my tent. Moreover, let no man of the people know of this matter. Only when I am ready to start will I tell thee. Therefore go now and prepare my men that they be ready in time."

"Thy order, Kenaz, shall be obeyed," said the captain in retiring.

He then sent spies to see what the Amorites were doing. The spies went and saw the enemy moving among the hills so as to come and fight against Israel. The spies returned and told him all that they had seen. At sunset Kenaz left his tent and went away at the head of his three hundred horsemen. In his hand he held his magic sword. All who saw it trembled like a leaf when moved by the wind. At his side he carried a trumpet. When he was about a mile from the camp of the Amorites, he turned round to his followers and said to them: "Abide ye here and I will go alone and view the camp of the enemy. As soon as I blow with my trumpet ye shall come to help me, but if I do not sound the alarm wait ye here for me."

Away he went. It was almost night and he turned his heart and thoughts to God, praying: "O Lord! God of our fathers! I beseech Thee, do a miracle now. Let me, Thy servant, be chosen to defeat the enemy. With Thy help one man can defeat a million. Then will I be able to teach Israel and all men that the Lord delivereth neither by the number of men nor by the strength of horsemen, but by Thy power. Let it come to pass when I draw my sword that it shall glitter and send forth sparks in the eyes of the Amorites who refuse to worship Thee as the only true God. Let it also be a sign unto me that Thy spirit is on me, so that when the Amorites see me they will say 'It is Kenaz.' Be with me, Lord, and save Thy people."

At last he reached the camp of the enemy and he heard them saying to one another: "Let us arise this very night and attack the Israelites unawares. Our gods will surely deliver them into our hands."

Then Kenaz felt the spirit of God coming upon him and he drew his sword out of its scabbard. When the light of it shone upon the Amorites like lightning and sparks, the terrified foes cried out: "Is not this the magic sword of Kenaz which hath slain so many of the Canaanites? Now unless we arise to kill him he will slay us. Let every one gird on his sword and begin the battle. See, he is alone."

Kenaz rejoiced when he heard these words, for he knew now that God was with him. The spirit of the Lord was like armor around his body. Without fear he went into the camp of the enemy and began to smite them. As soon as they saw his sword they trembled and fell on their faces to the ground. To help him God sent two invisible angels who went before him. One, named Gethel, smote the Amorites with blindness so that they began to kill one another, thinking that they were smiting their enemies. The other angel Zernel bare up the arms of Kenaz, for his strength was beginning to fail him. He smote forty-five thousand men and they themselves smote about the same number among themselves. When he saw that he had slain so many he wished to end the battle. He tried to loosen his hand from his wonderful sword but he could not, for its handle clave to his palm. His right hand had taken unto it the strength of the sword.

The few Amorites that had not been killed fled into the mountains. Now Kenaz wished to find out how he might loose his hand from his sword. He looked about him and saw one of the enemy running away. He pursued and caught him. He said to him: "I know that the Amorites are very cunning. Now I will let thee go and spare thy life if thou wilt show me how I may loose my hand from this sword."

"That indeed I can do. Go and take a man of the Hebrews

and kill him. While his blood is yet warm hold thine hand with the sword beneath it and receive his blood on thine hand; so shall it be loosed."

"As the Lord liveth, if thou hadst said, 'Take a man of the Amorites,' I would have done so and saved thee alive. Since, however, thou hast said, 'Take a man of the Hebrews,' that thou mightest show thine hatred, thy mouth shall be thy judge. As thou hast said, so will I do unto thee."

When he had thus spoken he slew the Amorite, and while his blood was yet warm he held his hand holding the sword beneath and received it thereon. The next moment it was loosed. Kenaz said to himself: "Surely the blood of one man is as good as that of another. What the blood of the Hebrew was supposed to do has now been done by the blood of the Amorite."

The warrior now sheathed his magic sword and returned to his men. On the way he saw a stream. Quickly putting off his garments he dived into the water and washed his weary body. The cool stream refreshed him and he came out feeling quite strong and well. He dressed and hurried along to find his troops.

Now when Kenaz had gone down alone to fight the Amorites an angel had cast upon his three hundred horsemen a heavy sleep. They slept soundly and knew not anything of all that Kenaz had done. Finding them on his return fast asleep, he put his trumpet to his lips and blew a loud blast. In a second the horsemen awoke. They stared at him with wondering eyes for they were mightily surprised to see the first streaks of dawn. "What of the night?" they asked one another.

"Tell us, Kenaz, what happened during the past night?" they cried.

"Come ye with me and see with your own eyes what God has done for us through my hand."

He led on and they followed him. When they came to the camp of the Amorites, lo! the ground was covered with

thousands of dead bodies. The horsemen of Kenaz were greatly astonished at what they saw and looked every man on his neighbor. Their leader saw their surprise and asked them:—

"Why do ye marvel? Are then the ways of God as the ways of men? With man a large number is a matter of importance, but with God numbers do not count. If God willed to give victory unto Israel through me His servant, wherefore marvel ye? Now arise and let us go home to our brethren."

When all Israel heard of the mighty victory gained during the night, all the people came out to meet Kenaz and his horsemen. When they saw him they said: "Blessed be the Lord who hath made thee ruler over His people and hath shown that He can save by the hands of the few and defeat the many."

Kenaz said unto them: "Ask now your brethren here with me and let them tell you how greatly they helped to win the victory."

Then his horsemen cried aloud: "As the Lord liveth, we fought not, neither knew we anything of what Kenaz did, for we all fell asleep and we did not awake till we heard his trumpet blast at dawn this day. He then led us to the camp of the Amorites. We could hardly believe our eyes when we saw a wonderful sight. We seemed to be dreaming and we rubbed our eyes to make sure that we were really awake."

"What did ye see?" asked the people.

"We saw the ground covered with tens of thousands of slain Amorites."

When the people heard this wonderful tale they began to marvel how it all happened. At last they said: "Now know we indeed that when the mighty God wisheth to give victory He hath no need of a multitude but only of holiness and trust in Him. Alas! it was very wrong of some of us to have grumbled yesterday, speaking evil against Kenaz, saying that on the day of battle he would stay at home whilst he sent the people to be slain in battle. We have stayed at home whilst he alone

risked his life last night in going to battle. Now we are ashamed of all those who spoke slander. Let them be punished according to the law."

Kenaz hearkened unto them and did unto the men who had spoken evil words against him even as the people had demanded. He ruled over Israel fifty and four years and there was a mighty fear upon all his enemies all his days.

# References

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