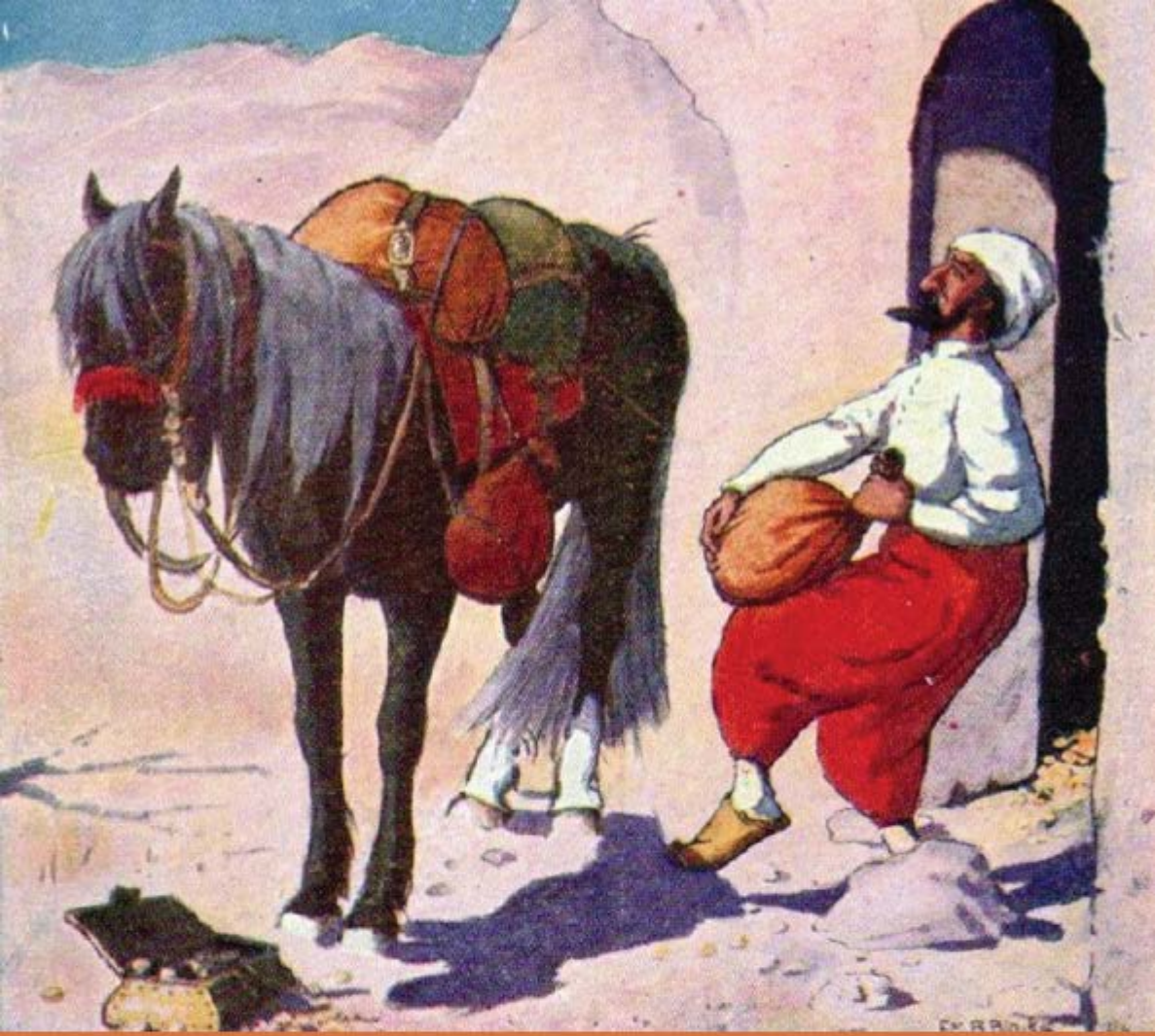


Stories from
The Arabian Nights

CLASSIC LIT FOR YOUNG READERS

AMY STEEDMAN

Stories from
The Arabian Nights

Amy Steedman

Libraries of Hope

Stories from the Arabian Nights
Classic Literature for Young Readers

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Stories from
The Arabian Nights

Told to the Children by
AMY STEEDMAN

With Pictures by
F.M.B. Blaikie

About This Book

There was, once upon a time, a Sultan of Arabia who thought all women were bad. Every day he married a new wife, and every morning he ordered that she should be beheaded. So there was much sorrow in all that land, until a brave woman thought of a clever plan which would put an end to this cruel custom. She went to the palace, and offered to marry the Sultan, and that night she began to tell him such wonderful stories, that when morning came he still wished to hear more, and commanded that she should not be beheaded until all the stories were finished. So, night after night, for a thousand and one nights, she told him

new stories, and by that time the Sultan had grown to love and trust her, and they lived happily together ever after.

Now the stories in this book are some of those which the Sultan loved to hear, and I have told them again to you, because I think they will charm you now quite as much as they once charmed the Sultan of Arabia, in the happy days of Long Ago.

AMY STEEDMAN.

CHAPTER 1
Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves

In a certain town in Persia there lived, once upon a time, two brothers. Their names were Cassim and Ali Baba, and when their father died all he had was divided between them, so they both started life with the same fortune.

But before very long Cassim married a rich wife, and Ali Baba married a poor one; so while Cassim lived like a lord and did nothing, Ali Baba had to work hard for his living. Every day he went to cut wood in the forest, loaded his three horses with it, and then brought it back to sell in the town.

Now one day, while All Baba was in the forest, he noticed, far off, a great

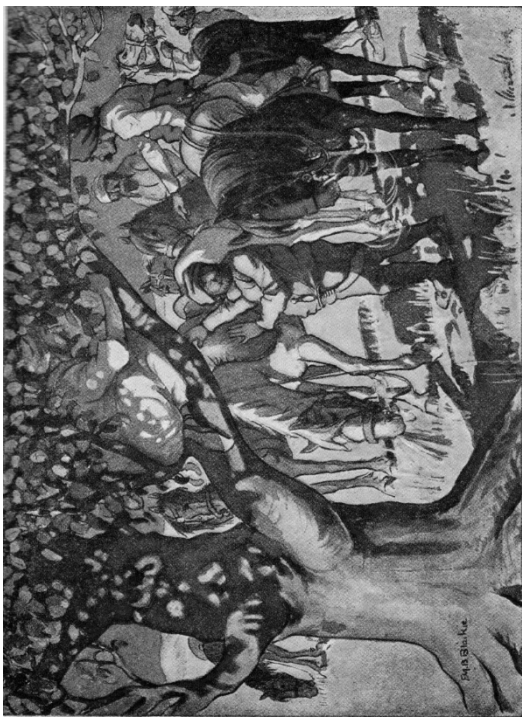
cloud of dust, and as it came nearer he saw that the dust was made by a company of men galloping along.

"These must be robbers," said Ali Baba to himself, trembling.

Quick as thought, he hid his horses and climbed into a tree to see what would happen. The tree into which he had climbed stood near a great rock, and when the robbers came under this tree they all dismounted and began to take off their saddle-bags. These were so heavy that Ali Baba guessed that they must be filled with gold.

Then the Captain of the band went up to the rock, and in a loud voice said, "Open Sesame."

To Ali Baba's surprise, a door which was hidden in the rock slowly swung open, and the whole band of robbers marched in. In a few minutes they came out again, and the Captain shouted,



He climbed into a tree to see what would happen.

Shut Sesame." The door at once closed behind them, and no one could have guessed that there was any opening in the solid rock.

As soon as the robbers had mounted and ridden off, All Baba climbed quickly down, and as he remembered the words he had heard, he too went up to the rock and cried, "Open Sesame."

The door swung open, just as it had done before, and Ali Baba walked in. He found himself in a huge cave piled up with rich wares and great bags of gold and silver, which must have taken hundreds of years to collect. With great care he chose six bags full of gold, and with these he loaded his horses, covering the bags with bundles of wood to hide them. Then he cried aloud, "Shut Sesame," and the door closed without a sound, and there was no trace of the opening left.

Now when Ali Baba arrived home, and his wife saw the bags of gold she looked at him most sorrowfully. "O my husband," she cried, "can it be that thou hast become a—"

"No, I am not a thief," interrupted Ali Baba, "although these are indeed stolen goods." And he told her of his adventure in the cave, and how he had found the gold.

Then the poor woman was joyful indeed, and began to try to count the gold which Ali Baba had poured out of the bags.

"That is but a foolish thing to do," said Ali Baba, "it would take weeks to count. Leave it alone, and I will dig a hole in the garden and hide it."

"But it would surely be wiser to know how much we have," persisted his wife. "I will go and borrow a measure from thy brother Cassim, and then I can weigh the

gold while thou art digging the hole."

So she went to Cassim's house, and as he was out she begged his wife to lend her a measure.

"Thou shalt have it in a moment," answered the wife. But she wondered why Ali Baba should want a measure. So she rubbed the bottom of the measure with a little lard, hoping that some of whatever was put into it might stick to the bottom.

Very hastily Ali Baba's wife went home, and having measured out the gold, carried the measure back again. But she never noticed that a piece of gold had stuck in the lard at the bottom of the measure.

"What is this?" cried Cassim's wife, when she discovered it. "So Ali Baba is too rich to count his gold, and is obliged to measure it!"

When Cassim came home and heard

the story he was filled with rage, and went over at once to his brother's house.

"What dost thou mean by deceiving me?" he cried. "My wife has found out that thou hast so much gold that thou canst not even count it. Tell me this moment how thou camest by it."

Ali Baba saw at once how his secret had been discovered, and so he told his brother the whole story, and even repeated to him the magic words, begging him to keep the secret well.

Then Cassim went home, and taking twelve donkeys, set out to find the cave which Ali Baba had described. When he came to it, he tied his donkeys outside, and then said, "Open Sesame," and behold the secret door was open!

Now Cassim was a very greedy man, and he was so delighted and excited when he saw all the robbers' treasure that he danced with joy. He gathered

together twenty-four of the largest bags of gold and dragged them to the door. Then he tried to remember the magic words. "Open Barley," he cried.

But the door remained shut. You must know that Sesame is a kind of grain in Persia, and Cassim thought Barley would do as well. Then he tried to remember every kind of grain he had ever heard of, but it was no use, the door never opened an inch.

Just then the robber band came riding up, and when the Captain shouted "Open Sesame, and walked in, he found Cassim there with all the bags of gold which he was trying to carry off.

Great was the rage of the robbers when they found that their secret hiding-place was discovered. They fell upon Cassim and cut him up into pieces, and hung the pieces just inside the cave as a warning to any one who should try to

steal their gold.

When night came and Cassim did not return home, his wife was much alarmed, and went to Ali Baba to beg him to find out what had become of her husband. So Ali Baba took his three horses very early in the morning, and went off to the robbers' cave.

"Open Sesame," he cried, and when the door opened he walked in.

Alas! it was as he had feared. His brother had been surprised by the robbers and cut into pieces. Ali Baba took the pieces down and put them carefully together, and then loaded two of the horses with them. But he loaded his strong little black horse with two more bags of gold.

Then he returned home, and when he knocked at the door of Cassim's house it was opened by a slave called Morgiana, who was the cleverest and best of all his

brother's servants.

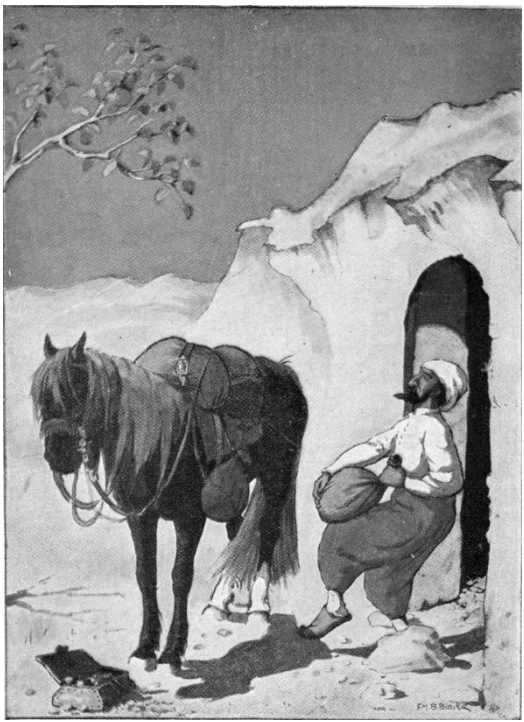
Ali Baba took her aside and spoke secretly to her. "Thy master has been killed by robbers and cut into pieces," he said, "but no one must know about it. Think therefore of some plan to keep it secret." For he knew what a clever girl Morgiana was.

Then he went into the house and told Cassim's wife the sad news.

"Do not grieve," he said; "thou shalt come and live with me and my wife and share all our treasure. Only we must be careful that no one guesses our secret."

So they unloaded the pieces of poor Cassim, and told all the neighbours that he had died suddenly in the night.

Then Morgiana went to an old cobbler who lived some distance off, and begged him to come with her, and bring his needles and thread with him. "Thy work must be secret," she said, "and I



He loaded his strong little black horse
with two more bags of gold.

must blindfold thee before I lead thee to the house."

At first the old cobbler refused, but when Morgiana slipped a piece of gold into his hand, he let himself be blindfolded and led to Cassim's house. There Morgiana bade him sew together the pieces of her master's body, and he did it so neatly that no one could see the joins. Then she again blindfolded him and led him home.

So it seemed as if the secret was safe, and Ali Baba and his wife went to live with Cassim's wife.

But when the robbers returned to the cave and found the body gone, as well as two bags of gold, they were filled with rage and fury.

"Some one else knows our secret," they cried. "We must discover at once who this some one is."

So it was agreed that one of the

robbers should disguise, go into the town, and try to find out who the man was whom they had found in their cave, and whose body had been stolen away. For thus they felt sure they would then know who had carried off the pieces and stolen their gold.

Now it so happened that entered the town very early next morning, the first shop he saw open belonged to the old cobbler who had sewed Cassim's body together.

"Good morning, honest man," said the robber; "thou dost begin work early. Surely thy eyes are too old to see well in this light?"

"My eyes are better than most," answered the cobbler. "Why, only yesterday I sewed four pieces of a man's body together, so that nobody could see the joints."

"Indeed," said the robber, "and who

might the man be?"

"That I could not tell thee if I would," answered the cobbler, "for I was led blindfold to his house, and brought back the same way."

Then the robber slipped a piece of gold into the cobbler's hand, and begged him to try to show him the house.

"I will blindfold thee," said he, "and thou canst lead me the same way as thou wert taken yesterday. If thou canst show me the house thou shalt have more gold."

So at last the cobbler consented, and when he was blindfolded he walked slowly until he came to Cassim's house and there he stopped. "This must be the place," he said, "as far as I can remember."

Then the robber took a piece of chalk out of his pocket and marked the door with a white mark so that he might know

it again. When he had done this he returned in great spirits to his companions in the forest.

Not long after, as Morgiana was carrying water into the house, her sharp eyes noticed a strange mark upon the door. "This is some evil sign which may work mischief against my master," she said.

So she fetched a piece of chalk and marked all the houses in the street with the same mark.

Now when the robbers heard that their companion had discovered the house belonging to the man they had cut into pieces, they were delighted, and that very night they set out to be revenged on every one who lived in the house with the white mark upon its door. But when the robber led them to the street, behold every door had the same mark upon it, and it was impossible to tell which house was the one they sought.

"Fool," cried the robber chief angrily, "is this thy clever work? Thou shalt be put to death instantly, and I myself will discover where this thief dwells."

So next day the Captain disguised himself, and went to the old cobbler, who again led the way to Cassim's house. But the Captain was too clever to mark the house with chalk this time. He looked carefully at it until he was sure he would know it again, and then he went back to prepare for the night's work.

First he bought twenty mules and then thirty-nine large jars for holding oil. One of these jars he filled with oil, but in each of the other empty jars a robber hid himself, and the Captain loaded the mules with the jars and set out for the town.

When they came to the house which the Captain had so carefully noted, he found Ali Baba standing outside enjoying

the evening air.

"Good evening," said the Captain, with a low bow, "may I lodge with thee this night, and wilt thou allow me to leave my oil jars in thy courtyard? I am an oil merchant and have come from afar."

"Come in, come in," said Ali Baba kindly, and he opened the gate for the mules to go into the yard. Then he ordered Morgiana to get ready a hot supper for the guest.

Now the Captain had told each of the robbers that the moment he threw a pebble into the yard they were to cut through the covers of the jars and come out to help him. So they sat patiently waiting in the jars, until the signal should be given.

Meanwhile Morgiana was busily cooking the supper, but was obliged to stop because her lamp went out suddenly, and

she found there was no oil in the house. "I can easily take a little from the great jars in the yard," she said to herself. So she took her lamp and went to fill it, but as she came near the first jar a voice whispered, "Is it time?"

"Not yet," she said, going to the next jar. From each jar came the same question, and to each she gave the same answer, until she came to the last jar, and this one she saw was really filled with oil.

"Aha!" said Morgiana, "a pretty oil merchant this is! It is a plot to rob and murder my master."

Then she quickly filled a great pot with oil out of the last jar, and set it to boil on the fire. And when the oil was boiling she poured some of it into each of the jars in which the robbers were hidden and killed them all.

Thus, when the Captain threw his pebble into the yard not a robber

appeared, and when he came down and looked into the jars he found that all his men were dead. His plan was discovered, and he fled for his life.

The next morning Morgiana led Ali Baba into the yard and showed him the jars. He started with terror when he looked into the first and saw a man inside, but Morgiana quickly told him the whole story, and showed him that all the robbers were dead.

Great indeed was the joy and thankfulness of Ali Baba when he saw what a danger he had escaped.

"From this moment thou art no longer a slave," he said to Morgiana; "I set thee free, and thou shalt have other rewards as well."

The Captain meanwhile had returned to the cave, but he was so lonely and miserable without his men that he could not stay there. Besides, he was

more eager than ever to be revenged on Ali Baba, and so he thought of another plan. He disguised himself as a great merchant, and took a shop exactly opposite to the one belonging to Ali Baba's son.

This great merchant was so rich and so friendly that Ali Baba's son soon became very fond of him and invited him to his father's house to supper, wishing to pay him great honour.

But when the false merchant arrived, he said to Ali Baba, "Much as I should like to sup with thee, I fear I cannot. I have made a vow never to taste salt, and thus my food has specially prepared."

"That is an easy matter," said Ali Baba; "I will order that no salt be put into any of the food to-night."

When Morgiana heard the order she thought there was something very strange about it, and she looked

attentively at the guest when she carried in the dishes.

What was her horror when she recognised the Captain of the robbers, and saw that he had a dagger hidden in his sleeve!

"No wonder the wretch would not eat salt with the man he means to kill," she said.

Then she dressed herself as a dancer, and when supper was finished she took a dagger in her hand, and went to dance before Ali Baba and the company.

She danced so wonderfully that every one was delighted, and the false merchant took out his purse to drop a piece of gold into her tambourine. But as she held the tambourine out to him, with the other hand she plunged the dagger into his heart.

"Unhappy wretch," cried Ali Baba, "what hast thou done to my guest?"

"I have saved thy life," cried Morgiana. "See here," and she showed them the dagger hidden in the merchant's sleeve, and then told them who he really was.

Then Ali Baba embraced Morgiana, for he was grateful indeed.

"Thou shalt marry my son," he cried, "and become my daughter, for well dost thou deserve the greatest reward that I can bestow."

For a long time after this Ali Baba was afraid to return to the wonderful cave, but at the end of a year he went back once more, and found that everything had been left untouched since the death of the robbers. There was nothing now to fear. So Ali Baba became richer than any one else in all that land, for the cave never failed to open its secret door to him when he uttered the magic words, "Open Sesame."

CHAPTER 2
Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp

Far away on the other side of the world, in one of the great wealthy cities of China, there once lived a poor tailor called Mustapha. He had a wife whom he loved dearly and an only son whose name was Aladdin.

But, sad to say, although the tailor was good and industrious, his son was so idle and bad that his father and mother did not know what to do with him. All day long he played in the streets with other idle boys, and when he grew big enough to learn a trade he said he did not mean to work at all. His poor father was very much troubled, and ordered Aladdin to come to the workshop to learn to

be a tailor, but Aladdin only laughed, and ran away so swiftly that neither his father nor mother could catch him.

"Alas!" said Mustapha sadly, "I can do nothing with this idle boy."

And he grew so sad about it, that at last he fell ill and died.

Then the poor widow was obliged to sell the little workshop, and try to make enough money for herself and Aladdin by spinning.

Now it happened that one day when Aladdin was playing as usual with the idle street boys, a tall dark old man stood watching him, and when the game was finished he made a sign to Aladdin to come to him.

"What is thy name, my boy?" asked this old man, who, though he appeared so kind, was really an African Magician.

"My name is Aladdin," answered the boy, wondering who this stranger could

be.

"And what is thy father's name?" asked the Magician.

"My father was Mustapha the tailor, but he has been dead a long time now," answered Aladdin.

"Alas!" cried the wicked old Magician, pretending to weep, "he was my brother, and thou must be my nephew. I am thy long lost uncle!" and he threw his arms round Aladdin's neck and embraced him.

"Tell thy dear mother that I will come and see her this very day," he cried, "and give her this small present." And he placed in Aladdin's hands five gold pieces.

Aladdin ran home in great haste to tell his mother the story of the long lost uncle.

"It must be a mistake," she said, "thou hast no uncle."

But when she saw the gold she began to think that this stranger must be a relation, and so she prepared a grand supper to welcome him when he came.

They had not long to wait before the African Magician appeared, bringing with him all sorts of fruits and delicious sweets for desert.

"Tell me about my poor brother," he said, as he embraced Aladdin and his mother. "Show me exactly where he used to sit."

Then the widow pointed to a seat on the sofa, and the Magician knelt down and began to kiss the place and weep over it.

The poor widow was quite touched, and began to believe that this really must be her husband's brother, especially when he began to show the kindest interest in Aladdin.

"What is thy trade?" he asked the

boy.

"Alas!" said the widow, "he will do nothing but play in the streets."

Aladdin hung his head with shame as his uncle gravely shook his head.

"He must begin to work at once," he said. "How would it please thee to have a shop of thy own? I could buy one for thee, and stock it with silks and rich stuffs."

Aladdin danced with joy at the very idea, and next day set out with his supposed uncle, who bought him a splendid suit of clothes, and took him all over the city to show him the sights.

The day after, the Magician again took Aladdin out with him, but this time they went outside the city, through beautiful gardens, into the open country. They walked so far that Aladdin began to grow weary, but the Magician gave him a cake and some delicious fruit and

told him such wonderful tales that he scarcely noticed how far they had gone. At last they came to a deep valley between two mountains, and there the Magician paused.

"Stop!" he cried, "this is the very place I am in search of. Gather some sticks that we may make a fire."

Aladdin quickly did as he was bid, and had soon gathered together a great heap of dry sticks. The Magician then set fire to them, and the heap blazed up merrily. With great care the old man now sprinkled some curious-looking powder on the flames, and muttered strange words. In an instant the earth beneath their feet trembled, and they heard a rumbling like distant thunder. Then the ground opened in front of them, and showed a great square slab of stone with a ring in it.

By this time Aladdin was so

frightened that he turned to run home as fast as he could, but the Magician caught him, and gave him such a blow that he fell to the earth.

"Why dost thou strike me, uncle?" sobbed Aladdin.

"Do as I bid thee," said the Magician, "and then thou shalt be well treated. Dost thou see that stone? Beneath it is a treasure which I will share with thee. Only obey me, and it will soon be ours."

As soon as Aladdin heard of a treasure, he jumped up and forgot all his fears. He seized the ring as the Magician directed, and easily pulled up the stone.

"Now," said the old man, "look in and thou wilt see stone steps leading downwards. Thou shalt descend those steps until thou comest to three great halls. Pass through them, but take care to wrap thy coat well round thee that thou mayest touch nothing, for if thou dost,

thou wilt die instantly. When thou hast passed through the halls thou wilt come into a garden of fruit trees. Go through it until thou seest a niche with a lighted lamp in it. Put the light out, pour forth the oil, and bring the lamp to me." So saying the Magician placed a magic ring upon Aladdin's finger to guard him, and bade the boy begin his search.

Aladdin did exactly as he was told and found everything just as the Magician had said. He went through the halls and the garden until he came to the lamp, and when he had poured out the oil and placed the lamp carefully inside his coat he began to look about him.

He had never seen such a lovely garden before, even in his dreams. The fruits that hung upon the trees were of every colour of the rainbow. Some were clear and shining like crystal, some sparkled with a crimson light and others

were green, blue, violet, and orange, while the leaves that shaded them were silver and gold. Aladdin did not guess that these fruits were precious stones, diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and sapphires, but they looked so pretty that he filled all his pockets with them as he passed back through the garden.

The Magician was eagerly peering down the stone steps when Aladdin began to climb up.

"Give me the lamp," he cried, stretching out his hand for it.

"Wait until I get out," answered Aladdin, and then I will give it thee."

"Hand it up to me at once," screamed the old man angrily.

"Not till I am safely out," repeated Aladdin.

Then the Magician stamped with rage, and rushing to the fire threw on it some more of the curious powder,

uttered the same strange words as before, and instantly the stone slipped back into its place, the earth closed over it, and Aladdin was left in darkness.

This showed indeed that the wicked old man was not Aladdin's uncle. By his magic arts in Africa he had found out all about the lamp, which was a wonderful treasure, as you will see. But he knew that he could not get it himself, that another hand must fetch it to him. This was the reason why he had fixed upon Aladdin to help him, and had meant, as soon as the lamp was safely in his hand, to kill the boy.

As his plan had failed he went back to Africa, and was not seen again for a long, long time.

But there was poor Aladdin, shut up underground, with no way of getting out! He tried to find his way back to the great halls and the beautiful garden of shining

fruits, but the walls had closed up, and there was no escape that way either. For two days the poor boy sat crying and moaning in his despair, and just as he had made up his mind that he must die, he clasped his hands together, and in doing so rubbed the ring, which the Magician had put upon his finger.

In an instant a huge figure rose out of the earth and stood before him.

"What is thy will, my master?" it said. "I am the Slave of the Ring, and must obey him who wears the ring."

"Whoever or whatever you are," cried Aladdin, "take me out of this dreadful place."

Scarcely had he said these words when the earth opened, and the next moment Aladdin found himself lying at his mother's door. He was so weak for want of food, and his joy at seeing his mother was so great, that he fainted

away, but when he came to himself he promised to tell her all that had happened.

"But first give me something to eat," he cried, "for I am dying of hunger."

"Alas!" said his mother, "I have nothing in the house except a little cotton, which I will go out and sell."

"Stop a moment," cried Aladdin, "rather let us sell this old lamp which I have brought back with me!"

Now the lamp looked so old and dirty that Aladdin's mother began to rub it, wishing to brighten it a little that it might fetch a higher price.

But no sooner had she given it the first rub than a huge dark figure slowly rose from the floor like a wreath of smoke until it reached the ceiling, towering above them.

"What is thy will?" it asked. "I am the Slave of the Lamp, and must do the



A huge dark figure slowly rose
from the floor.

bidding of him who holds the lamp."

The moment the figure began to rise from the ground Aladdin's mother was so terrified that she fainted away, but Aladdin managed to snatch the lamp from her, although he could scarcely hold it in his own shaking hand.

"Fetch me something to eat," he said in a trembling voice, for the terrible Genie was glaring down upon him.

The Slave of the Lamp disappeared in a cloud of smoke, but in an instant he was back again, bringing with him a most delicious breakfast, served upon plates and dishes of pure gold.

By this time Aladdin's mother had recovered, but she was almost too frightened to eat, and begged Aladdin to sell the lamp at once, for she was sure it had something to do with evil spirits. But Aladdin only laughed at her fears, and said he meant to make use of the magic

lamp and wonderful ring, now that he knew their worth.

As soon as they again wanted money they sold the golden plates and dishes, and when these were all gone Aladdin ordered the Genie to bring more, and so they lived in comfort for several years.

Now Aladdin had heard a great deal about the beauty of the Sultan's daughter, and he began to long so greatly to see her that he could not rest. He thought of a great many plans, but they all seemed impossible, for the Princess never went out without a veil, which covered her entirely. At last, however, he managed to enter the palace and hide himself behind a door, peeping through a chink when the Princess passed to go to her bath.

The moment Aladdin's eyes rested upon the beautiful Princess he loved her with all his heart, for she was as fair as

the dawn of a summer morning.

"Mother," he cried when he reached home, "I have seen the Princess, and I have made up my mind to marry her. Thou shalt go at once to the Sultan, and beg him to give me his daughter."

Aladdin's mother stared at her son, and then began to laugh at such a wild idea. She was almost afraid that Aladdin must be mad, but he gave her no peace until she did as he wished.

So the next day she very unwillingly set out for the palace, carrying the magic fruit wrapped up in a napkin, to present to the Sultan. There were many other people offering their petitions that day, and the poor woman was so frightened that she dared not go forward, and so no one paid any attention to her as she stood there patiently holding her bundle. For a whole week she had gone every day to the palace, before the Sultan noticed

her.

Who is that poor woman who comes every day carrying a white bundle?" he asked.

Then the Grand Vizier ordered that she should be brought forward, and she came bowing herself to the ground.

She was almost too terrified to speak, but when the Sultan spoke so kindly to her she took courage, and told him of Aladdin's love for the Princess, and of his bold request. "He sends you this gift," she continued, and opening the bundle she presented the magic fruit.

A cry of wonder went up from all those who stood around, for never had they beheld such exquisite jewels before. They shone and sparkled with a thousand lights and colours, and dazzled the eyes that gazed upon them.

The Sultan was astounded, and spoke to the Grand Vizier apart.

"Surely it is fit that I should give my daughter to one who can present such a wondrous gift?" he said.

But the Grand Vizier wanted the Princess to marry his own son, so he advised the Sultan to promise nothing in a hurry, but to wait for three months. This the Sultan thought was good advice, so he told Aladdin's mother to return when three months had passed, and then her son should marry the Princess.

Aladdin was so happy when he heard what the Sultan had promised that the days slipped quickly past. But when only two months were gone, he noticed one evening that there were signs of rejoicing throughout the town, and that there was a great stir about the palace. He asked the reason of all this, and was promptly told that the Princess was, that night, to wed the son of the Grand Vizier.

Aladdin was very angry, and as soon as he reached home he took down the magic lamp and rubbed it as he had done before. Immediately the Genie appeared, and asked what was his will.

"Go to the palace," said Aladdin, "and bring me here the Princess and the Grand Vizier's son."

It was no sooner said than done, and the Genie carried in the royal bed and set it down before Aladdin.

"Now take the Vizier's son out of bed and keep him safely until morning," ordered Aladdin.

The Princess was terrified, but Aladdin told her that she need have no fear, for he himself was her real bridegroom.

Early in the morning the Genie brought back the Vizier's son, as Aladdin had directed, and then carried the royal bed back to the palace.

But when the Sultan came to say "Good morning" to his daughter, he found her in tears, and the Vizier's son shivering and shaking.

"What has happened?" asked the Sultan. But the Princess would do nothing but weep.

That night the same thing happened, for again Aladdin ordered the Genie to fetch the royal bed, and once more the Vizier's son was shut out into the cold.

The Sultan was very angry with his daughter when he found her weeping the next day. He was still more angry when she refused to answer any of his questions.

"Cease thy tears," he cried, "and speak instantly, or I will have thy head cut off."

Then the Princess told all that had happened, and the Vizier's son, shaking and miserable, begged to be separated

from the Princess at once, that he might not spend such another night of misery.

So all the rejoicings came to an end, the marriage was stopped, and the Princess was once more free.

Now when the three months were ended, Aladdin's mother again presented herself before the Sultan, and reminded him of his promise, that the Princess should wed her son.

"I ever abide by my royal word," said the Sultan; "but he who marries my daughter must first send me forty golden basins filled to the brim with precious stones. These basins must be carried by forty black slaves, each led by a white slave dressed as befits the servants of the Sultan."

Aladdin's mother returned home in great distress when she heard this, and told Aladdin what the Sultan had said.

"Alas, my son!" she cried, "thy hopes

are ended."

"Not so, mother," answered Aladdin. "The Sultan shall not have long to wait for his answer."

Then he rubbed the magic lamp, and when the Genie appeared, he bade him provide the forty golden basins filled with jewels, and all the slaves which the Sultan had demanded.

Now when this splendid procession passed through the streets on its way to the palace, all the people came out to see the sight, and stood amazed when they saw the golden basins filled with sparkling gems carried on the heads of the great black slaves. And when the palace was reached, and the slaves presented the jewels to the Sultan, he was so surprised and delighted that he was more than willing that Aladdin should marry the Princess at once.

"Go, fetch thy son," he said to

Aladdin's mother, who was waiting near. "Tell him that this day he shall wed my daughter."

But when Aladdin heard the news he refused to hasten at once to the palace, as his mother advised. First he called the Genie, and told him to bring a scented bath, and a robe worked in gold, such as a king might wear.

After this he called for forty slaves to attend him, and six to walk before his mother, and a horse more beautiful than the Sultan's, and lastly, for ten thousand pieces of gold put up in ten purses.

When all these things were ready, and Aladdin was dressed in his royal robe, he set out for the palace. As he rode along on his beautiful horse, attended by his forty slaves, he scattered the golden pieces out of the ten purses among the crowd, and all the people shouted with joy and delight. No one knew that this

was the idle boy who used to play about the streets, but they thought he was some great foreign Prince.

Thus Aladdin arrived at the palace in great state, and when the Sultan had embraced him, he ordered that the wedding feast should be prepared at once, and that the marriage should take place that day.

"Not so, your Majesty," said Aladdin; "I will not marry the Princess until I have built a palace fit for the daughter of the Sultan."

Then he returned home, and once more called up the Slave of the Lamp.

"Build me the fairest palace ever beheld by mortal eye," ordered Aladdin. "Let it be built of marble and jasper and precious stones. In the midst I would have a great hall, whose walls shall be of gold and silver, lighted by four-and-twenty windows. These windows shall all

be set with diamonds, rubies, and other precious stones, and one only shall be left unfinished. There must also be stables with horses, and slaves to serve in the palace. Begone, and do thy work quickly."

And lo! in the morning when Aladdin looked out, there stood the most wonderful palace that ever was built. Its marble walls were flushed a delicate pink in the morning light, and the jewels flashed from every window.

Then Aladdin and his mother set off for the Sultan's palace, and the wedding took place that day. The Princess loved Aladdin as soon as she saw him, and great were the rejoicings throughout the city.

The next day Aladdin invited the Sultan to visit the new palace, and when he entered the great hall, whose walls were of gold and silver and whose

windows were set with jewels, he was filled with admiration and astonishment.

"It is the wonder of the world," he cried. "Never before have mortal eyes beheld such a beautiful palace. One thing alone surprises me. Why is there one window left unfinished?"

"Your Majesty," answered Aladdin, "this has been done with a purpose, for I wished that thine own royal hand should have the honour of putting the finishing touch to my palace."

The Sultan was so pleased when he heard this, that he sent at once for all the court jewelers and ordered them to finish the window like the rest.

The court jewelers worked for many days, and then sent to tell the Sultan that they had used up all the jewels they possessed, and still the window was not half finished. The Sultan commanded that his own jewels should be given to

complete the work; but even when these were used the window was not finished.

Then Aladdin ordered the jewelers to stop their work, and to take back all the Sultan's jewels as well as their own. And that night he called up the Slave of the Lamp once more, and bade him finish the window. This was done before the morning, and great was the surprise of the Sultan and all his workmen.

Now Aladdin did not grow proud of his great riches but was gentle and courteous to all, and kind to the poor, so that the people all loved him dearly. He fought and won many battles for the Sultan, and was the greatest favourite in the land.

But far away in Africa there was trouble brewing for Aladdin. The wicked old Magician who had pretended to be Aladdin's uncle found out by his magic powers that the boy had not perished

when he left him underground, but had somehow managed to escape and become rich and powerful.

"He must have discovered the secret of the lamp," shrieked the Magician, tearing his hair with rage. "I will not rest day or night until I shall have found some way of taking it from him."

So he journeyed from Africa to China, and when he came to the city where Aladdin lived and saw the wonderful palace, he nearly choked with fury to see all its splendour and richness. Then he disguised himself as a merchant, and bought a number of copper lamps, and with these went from street to street, crying, "New lamps for old."

As soon as the people heard his cry, they crowded round him, laughing and jeering, for they thought he must be mad to make such an offer.

Now it happened that Aladdin was

out hunting, and the Princess sat alone in the hall of the jewelled windows. When, therefore, she heard the noise that was going on in the street outside, she called to her slaves to ask what it meant.

Presently one of the slaves came back, laughing so much that she could scarcely speak.

"It is a curious old man who offers to give new lamps for old," she cried. "Did any one ever hear before of such a strange way of trading?"

The Princess laughed too, and pointed to an old lamp which hung in a niche close by. "There is an old enough lamp," she said. "Take it and see if the old man will really give a new one for it."

The slave took it down and ran out to the street once more, and when the Magician saw that it was indeed what he wanted, he seized the Magic Lamp with

both his hands.

"Choose any lamp you like," he said, showing her those of bright new copper. He did not care now what happened. She might have all the new lamps if she wanted them.

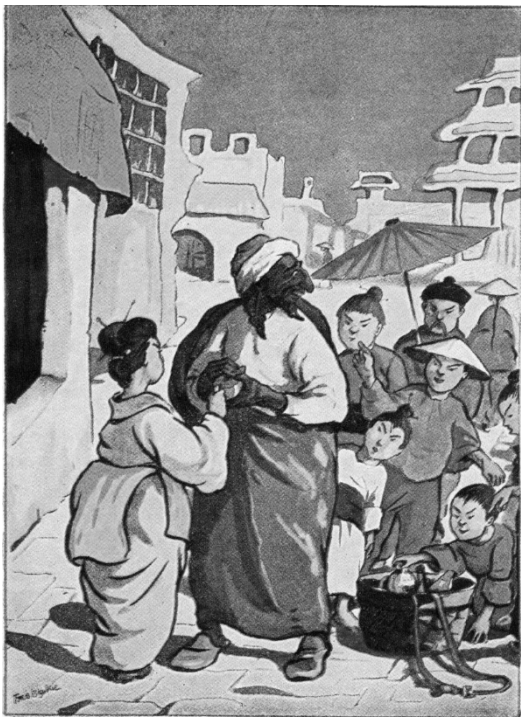
Then he went a little way outside the city, and when he was quite alone he took out the Magic Lamp and rubbed it gently. Immediately the Genie stood before him and asked what was his will.

"I order thee to carry off the palace of Aladdin, with the Princess inside, and set it down in a lonely spot in Africa."

And in an instant the palace, with every one in it, had disappeared, and when the Sultan happened to look out of his window, lo! there was no longer a palace to be seen.

"This must be enchantment," he cried.

Then he ordered his men to set out



He seized the Magic Lamp with
both his hands.

and bring Aladdin to him in chains.

The officers met Aladdin as he was returning from the hunt, and they immediately seized him, loaded him with chains, and carried him off to the Sultan. But as he was borne along, the people gathered around him, for they loved him dearly, and vowed that no harm should befall him.

The Sultan was beside himself with rage when he saw Aladdin, and gave orders that his head should be cut off at once. But the people had begun to crowd into the palace, and they were so fierce and threatening that he dared not do as he wished. He was obliged to order the chains to be taken off, and Aladdin to be set free.

As soon as Aladdin was allowed to speak he asked why all this was done to him.

"Wretch!" explained the Sultan,

"come hither, and I will show thee."

Then he led Aladdin to the window and showed him the empty space where his palace had once stood.

"Think not that I care for thy vanished palace," he said, "But where is the Princess, my daughter?"

So astonished was Aladdin that for some time he could only stand speechless, staring at the place where his palace ought to have been.

At last he turned to the Sultan.

"Your Majesty," he said, "grant me grace for one month, and if by that time I have not brought back thy daughter to thee, then put me to death as I deserve."

So Aladdin was set free, and for three days he went about like a madman, asking every one he met where his palace was. But no one could tell him, and all laughed at his misery. Then he went to the river to drown himself; but as he

knelt on the bank and clasped his hands to say his prayers before throwing himself in, he once more rubbed the Magic Ring. Instantly the Genie of the Ring stood before him.

"What is thy will, O master?" it asked. "Bring back my Princess and my palace," cried Aladdin, "and save my life."

"That I cannot do," said the Slave of the Ring. "Only the Slave of the Lamp has power to bring back thy palace."

"Then take me to the place where my palace now stands," said Aladdin, "and put me down beneath the window of the Princess."

And almost before Aladdin had done speaking he found himself in Africa, beneath the windows of his own palace.

He was so weary that he lay down and fell fast asleep; but before long, when day dawned, he was awakened by the

song of the birds, and as he looked around his courage returned. He was now sure that all his misfortunes must have been caused by the loss of the Magic Lamp, and he determined to find out as soon as possible who had stolen it.

That same morning the Princess awoke feeling happier than she had felt since she had been carried off. The sun was shining so brightly, and the birds were singing so gaily, that she went to the window to greet the opening day. And who should she see standing beneath her window but Aladdin!

With a cry of joy she threw open the casement and the sound made Aladdin look up. It was not long before he made his way through a secret door and held her in his arms.

"Tell me, Princess," said Aladdin, when they had joyfully embraced each other many times, "what has become of

the old lamp which hung in a niche of the great hall?"

"Alas! my husband," answered the Princess, "I fear my carelessness has been the cause of all our misfortunes."

Then she told him how the wicked old Magician had pretended to be a merchant, and had offered new lamps for old, and how he had thus managed to secure the Magic Lamp.

"He has it still," she added, "for I know that he carries it always, hidden in his robe."

"Princess," said Aladdin, "I must recover this lamp, and thou shalt help me. To-night when the Magician dines with thee, dress thyself in thy costliest robes, and be kind and gracious to him. Then bid him fetch some of the wines of Africa, and when he is gone, I will tell thee what thou shalt do."

So that night the Princess put on her

most beautiful robes, and looked so lovely and was so kind when the Magician came in, that he could scarcely believe his eyes. For she had been sad and angry ever since he had carried her off.

"I believe now that Aladdin must be dead, she said, "and I have made up my mind to mourn no longer. Let us begin our feast. But see! I grow weary of these wines of China, fetch me instead the wine of thy own country."

Now Aladdin had meanwhile prepared a powder which he directed the Princess to place in her own wine-cup. So when the Magician returned with the African wine, she filled her cup and offered it to him in token of friendship. The Magician drank it up eagerly, and scarcely had he finished when he dropped down dead.

Then Aladdin came out of the next

chamber where he had hidden himself, and searched in the Magician's robe until he found the Magic Lamp. He rubbed it joyfully, and when the Genie appeared, ordered that the palace should be carried back to China, and set down in its own place.

The following morning, when the Sultan rose early, for he was too sad to take much rest, he went to the window to gaze on the place where Aladdin's palace had once stood. He rubbed his eyes, and stared wildly about.

"This must be a dream," he cried, for there stood the palace in all its beauty, looking fairer than ever in the morning light.

Not a moment did the Sultan lose, but he rode over to the palace at once, and when he had embraced Aladdin and his daughter, they told him the whole story of the African Magician. Then

Aladdin showed him the dead body of the wicked old man, and there was peace between them once more.

But there was still trouble in store for Aladdin. The African Magician had a younger brother who also dealt in magic, and who was, if possible, even more wicked than his elder brother.

Full of revenge, this younger brother started for China, determined to punish Aladdin and steal the Magic Lamp for himself. As soon as he arrived he went in secret to the cell of a holy woman called Fatima, and obliged her to give him her robe and veil as a disguise. Then to keep the secret safe he killed the poor woman.

Dressed in the robe and veil, the wicked Magician walked through the streets near Aladdin's palace, and all the people as he passed by knelt and kissed his robe, for they thought he was indeed the holy woman.

As soon as the Princess heard that Fatima was passing by in the street, she sent and commanded her to be brought into the hall, and she treated the supposed holy woman with great respect and kindness, for she had often longed to see her.

"Is not this a fine hall?" she asked, as they sat together in the hall of the jewelled windows.

"It is indeed most beautiful," answered the Magician, who kept his veil carefully down, "but to my mind there is one thing wanting. If only thou couldst have a roc's egg hung in the dome it would be perfect."

As soon as the Princess heard these words she became discontented and miserable, and when Aladdin came in, she looked so sad that he at once asked what was the matter.

"I can never be happy until I have a

roc's egg hanging from the dome of the great hall," she answered.

"In that case thou shalt soon be happy," said Aladdin gaily, and taking down the lamp, he summoned the Genie.

But when the Slave of the Lamp heard the order his face grew terrible with rage, and his eyes gleamed like burning coals.

"Vile wretch!" he shrieked, "have I not given thee all thy wishes, and now dost thou ask me to kill my master, and hang him as an ornament in thy palace? Thou deservest truly to die; but I know that the request cometh not from thine own heart, but was the suggestion of that wicked Magician who pretends to be a holy woman."

With these words the Genie vanished, and Aladdin went at once to the room where the Princess was awaiting him.

"I have a headache," he said. "Call the holy woman, that she may place her hand upon my forehead and ease the pain."

But the moment that the false Fatima appeared Aladdin sprang up and plunged his dagger into that evil heart.

"What hast thou done?" cried the Princess, "Alas! thou hast slain the holy woman."

"This is no holy woman," answered Aladdin, "but an evil Magician whose purpose was to destroy us both."

So Aladdin was saved from the wicked designs of the two Magicians, and there was no one left to disturb his peace. He and the Princess lived together in great happiness for many years, and when the Sultan died they succeeded to the throne, and ruled both wisely and well. And so there was great peace throughout the land.

CHAPTER 3
The Enchanted Horse

It was New Year's day in Persia, the most splendid feast-day of all the year, and the King had been entertained, hour after hour, by the wonderful shows prepared for him by his people. Evening was drawing on and the court was just about to retire, when an Indian appeared, leading a horse which he wished to show to the King. It was not a real horse, but it was so wonderfully made that it looked exactly as if it were alive.

"Your Majesty," cried the Indian, as he bowed himself to the ground, "I beg thou wilt look upon this wonder. Nothing thou hast seen to-day can equal this horse of mine. I have only to mount

upon its back and wish myself in any part of the world, and it carries me there in a few minutes." Now the King of Persia was very fond of curious and clever things, so he looked at the horse with great interest.

"It seems only a common horse," he said, "but thou shalt show us what it can do."

Then he pointed to a distant mountain, and bade the Indian fetch a branch from the palm trees which grew near its foot.

The Indian vaulted into the saddle, turned a little peg in the horse's neck, and in a moment was flying so swiftly through the air that he soon disappeared from sight. In less than a quarter of an hour he reappeared, and laid the palm branch at the King's feet.

"Thou art right," cried the King, "thy enchanted horse is the most wonderful

thing I have yet seen. What is its price? I must have it for my own."

The Indian shook his head.

"Your Majesty," he said, "this horse can never be sold for money, but can only be exchanged for something of equal value. It shall be thine only if thou wilt give me instead the Princess, your daughter, for my wife."

At these words the King's son sprang to his feet.

"Sire," he cried, "thou wilt never dream of granting such a request."

"My son," answered the King, "at whatever cost I must have this wonderful horse. But before I agree to the exchange, I would wish thee to try the horse, and tell me what thou thinkest of it."

The Indian, who stood listening to what they said, was quite willing that the Prince should try the Enchanted Horse,

and began to give him directions how to guide it. But as soon as the Prince was in the saddle and saw the peg which made the horse start, he never waited to hear more. He turned the screw at once, and went flying off through the air.

"Alas!" cried the Indian, "he has gone off without learning how to come back. Never will he be able to stop the horse unless he finds the second peg."

The King was terribly frightened when he heard the Indian's words, for, by this time, the Prince had disappeared from sight.

"Wretch," he cried, "thou shalt be cast into prison, and unless my son returns in safety, thou shalt be put to death."

Meanwhile the Prince had gone gaily sailing up into the air until he reached the clouds, and could no longer see the earth below. This was very pleasant, and

he felt that he had never had such a delicious ride in his life before. But presently he began to think it was time to descend. He screwed the peg round and round, backwards and forwards, but it seemed to make no difference. Instead of coming down he sailed higher and higher, until he thought he was going to knock his head against the blue sky.

What was to be done? The Prince began to grow a little nervous, and he felt over the horse's neck to see if there was another peg to be found anywhere. To his joy, just behind the ear, he touched a small screw, and when he turned it, he felt he was going slower and slower, and gently turning round. Then he shouted with joy as the Enchanted Horse flew downwards through the starry night, and he saw, stretched out before him a beautiful city gleaming white through the purple mantle of the night.

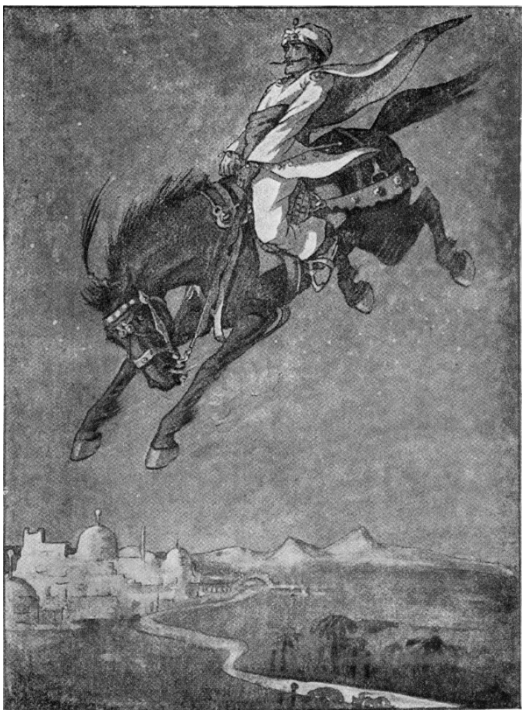
Everything was strange to him, and he did not know in what direction to guide the horse, so he let it go where it would, and presently it stopped on the roof of a great marble palace. There was a gallery running round the roof, and at the end of the gallery there was a door leading down some white marble steps.

The Prince began at once to descend the steps, and found himself in a great hall where a row of black slaves were sleeping soundly, guarding the entrance to a room beyond.

Very softly the Prince crept past the guards, and lifting the curtain from the door, looked in.

And there he saw a splendid room lighted by a thousand lights and filled with sleeping slaves, and in the middle, upon a sofa, was the most beautiful Princess his eyes had ever gazed upon.

She was so lovely that the Prince



The Enchanted Horse flew downward.

held his breath with admiration as he looked at her. Then he went softly to her side, and, kneeling by the sofa, gently touched her hand. The Princess sighed and opened her eyes, but before she could cry out, he begged her in a whisper to be silent and fear nothing.

"I am a Prince" he said, "the son of the King of Persia. I am in danger of my life here, and crave thy protection."

Now this Princess was no other than the daughter of the King of Bengal, who happened to be staying alone in her summer palace outside the city.

"I will protect thee," said the Princess kindly, giving him her hand. Then she awoke her slaves and bade them give the stranger food and prepare a sleeping-room for him.

"I long to hear thy adventures and how thou camest here," she said to the Prince, "but first thou must rest and

refresh thyself."

Never before had the Princess seen any one so gallant and handsome as this strange young Prince. She dressed herself in her loveliest robes, and twined her hair with her most precious jewels, that she might appear as beautiful as possible in his eyes. And when the Prince saw her again, he thought her the most charming Princess in all the world, and he loved her with all his heart. But when he had told her all his adventures she sighed to think that he must now leave her and return to his father's court.

"Do not grieve," he said, "I will return in state as befits a Prince, and demand thy hand in marriage from the King thy father."

"Stay but a few days ere thou goest," replied the Princess. "I cannot part with thee so soon."

The Prince was only too willing to

wait a while, and the Princess entertained him so well with feasts and hunting-parties that day after day slipped by, and still he lingered.

At last, however, the thought of his home and his father's grief made him decide to return at once.

"My Princess," he said, "since it is so hard to part, wilt thou not ride with me upon the Enchanted Horse? When we are once more in Persia our marriage shall take place, and then we will return to the King thy father."

So together they mounted the Enchanted Horse and the Prince placed his arm around the Princess and turned the magic peg. Up and up they flew over land and sea, and then the Prince turned the other screw, and they landed just outside his father's city. He guided the horse to a palace outside the gates, and there he left the Princess, for he wished

to go alone to prepare his father.

Now when the Prince reached the court he found every one was dressed in brown, and all the bells of the city were tolling mournfully.

"Why is every one so sad?" he asked of one of the guards.

"The Prince, the Prince!" cried the man. "The Prince has come back!"

And soon the joyful news spread over the town, and the bells stopped tolling and rang a joyful peal.

"My beloved son!" cried the King, as he embraced him. "We thought thou wert lost for ever, and we have mourned for thee day and night."

Without waiting to hear more, the Prince began to tell the King all his adventures, and how the Princess of Bengal awaited him in the palace outside the gates.

"Let her be brought here instantly,"

cried the King, "and the marriage shall take place to-day."

Then he ordered that the Indian should be set free at once and allowed to depart with the Enchanted Horse.

Great was the surprise of the Indian when, instead of having his head cut off as he had expected, he was allowed to go free with his wonderful horse. He asked what adventures had befallen the Prince, and when he heard of the Princess who was waiting in the palace outside the gates, a wicked plan came into his head.

He took the Enchanted Horse, and went straight to the palace before the King's messengers could reach it.

"Tell the Princess," he said to the slaves, "that the Prince of Persia has sent me to bring her to his father's palace upon the Enchanted Horse."

The Princess was very glad when she heard this message, and she quickly

made herself ready to go with the messenger.

But alas! as soon as the Indian turned the peg and the horse flew through the air, she found she was being carried off, far away from Persia and her beloved Prince.

All her prayers and entreaties were in vain. The Indian only mocked at her, and told her he meant to marry her himself.

Meanwhile the Prince and his attendants had arrived at the palace outside the gates, only to find that the Indian had been there before them and had carried off the Princess.

The Prince was nearly beside himself with grief, but he still hoped to find his bride. He disguised himself as a dervish and set off to seek for her, vowing that he would find her, or perish in the attempt.

By this time the Enchanted Horse

had travelled many hundreds of miles. Then, as the Indian was hungry, it was made to descend into a wood close to a town of Cashmere.

Here the Indian went in search of food, and when he returned with some fruit he shared it with the Princess, who was faint and weary.

As soon as the Princess had eaten a little she felt stronger and braver, and as she heard horses galloping past, she called out loudly for help.

The men on horseback came riding at once to her aid, and she quickly told them who she was, and how the Indian had carried her off against her will. Then the leader of the horsemen, who was the Sultan of Cashmere, ordered his men to cut off the Indian's head. But he placed the Princess upon his horse and led her to his palace.

Now the Princess thought that her

troubles were all at an end, but she was much mistaken. The Sultan had no sooner seen her than he made up his mind to marry her, and he ordered the wedding preparations to be begun without loss of time.

In vain the Princess begged to be sent back to Persia. The Sultan only smiled and fixed the wedding-day. Then when she saw that nothing would turn him from his purpose, she thought of a plan to save herself. She began talking all the nonsense she could think of and behaving as if she were mad, and so well did she pretend, that the wedding was put off, and all the doctors were called in to see if they could cure her.

But whenever a doctor came near the Princess she became so wild and violent that he dared not even feel her pulse, so none of them discovered that she was only pretending.

The Sultan was in great distress, and sent far and near for the cleverest doctors. But none of them seemed to be able to cure the Princess of her madness.

All this time the Prince of Persia was wandering about in search of his Princess, and when he came to one of the great cities of India, he heard every one talking about the sad illness of the Princess of Bengal who was to have married the Sultan. He at once disguised himself as a doctor and went to the palace, saying he had come to cure the Princess.

The Sultan received the new doctor with joy, and led him at once to the room where the Princess sat alone, weeping and wringing her hands.

"Your Majesty," said the disguised Prince, "no one else must enter the room with me, or the cure will fail."

So the Sultan left him, and the

Prince went close to the Princess, and gently touched her hand.

"My beloved Princess," he said, "dost thou not know me?"

As soon as the Princess heard that dear voice she threw herself into the Prince's arms, and her joy was so great that she could not speak.

"We must at once plan our escape," said the Prince. "Canst thou tell me what has become of the Enchanted Horse?"

"Naught can I tell thee of it, dear Prince," answered the Princess, "but since the Sultan knows its value, no doubt he has kept it in some safe place."

"Then first we must persuade the Sultan that thou art almost cured," said the Prince. "Put on thy costliest robes and dine with him to-night, and I will do the rest."

The Sultan was charmed to find the Princess so much better, and his joy

knew no bounds when the new doctor told him that he hoped by the next day to complete the cure.

"I find that the Princess has somehow been infected by the magic of the Enchanted Horse," he said. "If thou wilt have the horse brought out into the great square, and place the Princess upon its back, I will prepare some magic perfumes which will dispel the enchantment. Let all the people be gathered together to see the sight, and let the Princess be arrayed in her richest dress and decked with all her jewels."

So next morning the Enchanted Horse was brought out into the crowded square, and the Princess was mounted upon its back. Then the disguised Prince placed four braziers of burning coals round the horse and threw into them a perfume of a most delicious scent. The smoke of the perfume rose in thick

clouds, almost hiding the Princess, and at that moment the Prince leaped into the saddle behind her, turned the peg, and sailed away into the blue sky.

But as he swept past the Sultan, he cried aloud, "Sultan of Cashmere, next time thou dost wish to wed a Princess, ask her first if she be willing to wed thee."

So this was the manner in which the Prince of Persia carried off the Princess of Bengal for the second time. The Enchanted Horse never stopped until it had carried them safely back to Persia, and there they were married amid great rejoicings.

But what became of the Enchanted Horse? Ah! that is a question which no one can answer.

CHAPTER 4
Sindbad the Sailor

In the city of Bagdad, far away in Persia, there lived a poor man called Hindbad. He was a porter, and one hot afternoon as he was carrying a very heavy load, he stopped to rest in a quiet street near a beautiful house which he had never seen before. The pavement outside was sprinkled with rose-water, which felt very cool and pleasant to his hot, weary feet, and from the open windows came the most delicious scents which perfumed all the air.

Hindbad wondered who lived in this beautiful house, and presently he went up to one of the splendidly-dressed servants, who was standing at the door, and



He carried a very heavy load.

asked to whom it belonged. The servant stared in amazement.

Dost thou indeed live in Bagdad and knowest not my master's name?" he said. "He is the great Sindbad the Sailor, the man who has sailed all round the world, and who has had the most wonderful adventures under the sun."

Now Hindbad had often heard of this wonderful man and of his great riches, and as he looked at the beautiful palace and saw the splendidly dressed servants it made him feel sad and envious. As he turned away sighing, to take up his load again, he looked up into the blue sky, and said aloud, "What a difference there is between this man's lot and mine. He has all that he wants, and nothing to do but to spend money and enjoy a pleasant life, while I have to work hard to get dry bread enough to keep myself and my children alive. What has he done that he

should be so lucky, and what have I done that I should be so miserable?"

Just then one of the servants touched him on the shoulder, and said to him: "My noble master wishes to see thee, and has bidden me fetch thee to him."

The poor porter was frightened at first, for he thought some one might have overheard what he had been saying, but the servant took his arm and led him into the great dining-hall. There were many guests seated round the table, on which was spread a most delicious feast, and at the head of the table sat a grave, stately old man with a long white beard. This was Sindbad the Sailor. He smiled kindly on poor frightened Hindbad, and made a sign that he should come and sit at his right hand. There all the most delicious things on the table were offered by the servants to Hindbad, and his glass was filled with the choicest wine, so that he

began to feel it must all be a dream.

But when the feast was over Sindbad turned to him and asked him what it was he had been saying outside the window just before he came in.

Then Hindbad was very much ashamed, and hung his head as he answered: "My lord, I was tired and ill-tempered. and I said foolish words, which I trust thou wilt now pardon."

"Oh," replied Sindbad, "I am not so unjust as to blame thee. I am indeed only sorry for thee. But thou wert wrong in thinking that I have always led an easy life, and that these riches came to me without trouble or suffering. I have won them by years of toil and danger."

Then turning to his other guests he said, "Yes, my friends, the tale of my adventures is enough to warn every one of you never to go in search of wealth. I have never told you the story of my seven

voyages, but if you will listen I will begin this very night."

So the servants were ordered to carry home the porter's load, that he might stay in Sindbad's palace that evening and listen to the story of the first voyage.

CHAPTER 5
The First Voyage

"My father left me a great deal of money when I was a young man, but I spent it so quickly and foolishly that I began to see it would soon all be gone. This made me stop and think, for I did not like the idea of being poor. So I counted up all the money that remained, and made up my mind that I would trade with it. I joined a company of merchants, and we set sail in a good ship, meaning to go from place to place, and sell or exchange our goods at whatever towns we stopped. And so began my first voyage.

"For the first few days I could think of nothing but the heaving of the waves;

but by and by I began to feel better, and never again was I at all unhappy upon the sea. One afternoon, when the wind had suddenly dropped and we were lying becalmed, we found ourselves near a little low green island, which looked like a meadow, and only just showed above the sea. The captain of the ship gave us permission to land, and presently we were all enjoying ourselves on the green meadow. We walked about for some time and then sat down to rest, and some of us set to work to light a fire, that we might make our evening meal.

"But scarcely had the fire begun to burn, when we heard loud shouts from the ship warning us to come back at once, for what we had taken to be an island was indeed the back of a sleeping whale. My companions all rushed to the boats, but before I could follow them the great monster dived down and

disappeared, leaving me struggling in the water.

"I clung to a piece of wood which we had brought from the ship to make the fire, and I could only hope that I would soon be picked up by my companions. But alas! there was so much confusion on board that no one missed me, and as a wind sprang up the captain set sail, and I was left alone at the mercy of the waves.

"All night long I floated, and when morning came I was so tired and weak that I thought I must die. But just then a great wave lifted me up and threw me against the steep side of an island, and to my joy I managed to climb the cliff and rest on the green grass above.

"Soon I began to feel better, and as I was very hungry I went to look for something to eat. I found some plants which tasted good, and a spring of clear water, and having made a good meal, I walked

about the island to see what I would find next.

"Before long I came to a great meadow where a horse was tied, and as I stood looking at it, I heard men's voices which sounded as if they came from under the earth. Then from an underground cave a man appeared, who asked me who I was and where I came from. He took me into the cave where his companions were, and they told me they were the grooms belonging to the king of the island, whose horses they brought to feed in the meadow. They gave me a good meal, and told me it was very lucky that I had come just then, for next day they meant to return to their master, and would show me the wall which I could never have found for myself.

"So we set off together early next morning, and when we reached the city I was very kindly received by the King. He

listened to the story of my adventures, and then bade his servants see that I wanted for nothing.

"As I was a merchant I took great interest in the shipping, and often went down to the quay to see the boats unload. One day when I was looking over a cargo which had just been landed, what was my astonishment to see a number of bales with my own name marked on them. I went at once to captain and asked him who was the owner of these bales of goods.

"'Ah!' replied the captain, 'they belonged to a merchant of Bagdad called Sindbad. But he, alas! perished in a dreadful way soon after we sailed, for with a number of people belonging to my ship he landed on what looked like a green island, but which was really the back of a great sleeping whale. As soon as the monster felt the warmth of the fire

which they had lighted on his back, he woke up and dived below the sea. Many of my men were drowned, and amongst them poor Sindbad. Now I mean to sell his goods that I may give the money to his relations when I find them.'

"'Captain,' said I, 'these bales are mine, for I am that Sindbad who thou sayest was drowned.'

"'What wickedness there is in the world,' cried the captain. 'How canst thou pretend to be Sindbad when I saw him drowned before my eyes?'

"But presently, when I had told him all that had happened to me, and when the other merchants from the ship knew me to be the true Sindbad, he was overjoyed, and ordered that the bales should be at once given to me.

"Now I was able to give the King a handsome present, and after I had traded with my goods for sandal-wood, nutmegs,

ginger, pepper and cloves, I set sail once more with the kind old captain. On the way home I was able to sell all my spices at a good price, so that when I landed I found I had a hundred thousand sequins.

"My family were delighted to see me again, and I soon bought some land and built a splendid house, in which I meant to live happily and forget all the troubles through which I had passed."

Here Sindbad ended the story of his First Voyage. He ordered the music to strike up and the feast to go on, and when it was over he gave the poor porter Hindbad a hundred gold pieces, and told him to come back at the same time next evening if he wished to hear the tale of the Second Voyage.

Hindbad went joyfully home, and you can imagine how happy the poor family were that night.

Next evening he set out once more

for Sindbad's house, dressed in his best clothes. There he enjoyed a splendid supper as before, and when it was over Sindbad said, "My friends, I will now tell you the story of my Second Voyage, which I think you will find even more wonderful than that of my first."

CHAPTER 6
The Second Voyage

"I was very happy for some time at home, but before long I began to grow weary of leading an idle life. I longed to be upon the sea again, to feel the good ship bounding over the waves, and to hear the wind whistling through the rigging.

"So I set to work at once and bought all kinds of goods that I might sell again in foreign lands, and then, having found a suitable ship, I set sail with other merchants, and so began my second voyage.

"We stopped at many places, and sold our goods at a great profit, and all went well until one day when we landed on a new island. It was a most beautiful

place, fair as the garden of Eden, where exquisite flowers made a perfect rainbow of colour, and delicious fruits hung in ripe clusters above.

"Here, under the shadow of a tree, I sat down to rest and to feast my eyes upon all the loveliness around. I ate the food I had brought with me, drank my wine, and then closed my eyes. The soft music of the stream which flowed close by was like a song in my ears, and, before I knew what I was doing, I fell asleep.

"I cannot tell how long I slept, but when at last I opened my eyes, I could not see my companions anywhere, and when I looked towards the sea, to my horror I found the ship was gone. It was sailing away, a white speck in the distance, and here was I, left alone upon this desert island. I cried aloud and wrung my hands with grief, and wished with all my heart that I had stayed safely

at home. But what was the use of wishing that now?

"So I climbed into a high tree, and looked around to see if I could by any means find a way of escape from the island. First I looked towards the sea, but there was no hope for me there, and then I turned and looked inland. The first thing that caught my eye was a huge white dome, that seemed to rise from the centre of the island, unlike anything I had ever seen before.

"I climbed down the tree, and made my way towards the white dome as quickly as I could, but when I reached it, it puzzled me more than ever. It was like a great smooth ball, much too slippery to climb, and into it there was no door or entrance of any sort. I walked round and round it, wondering what it could be, when suddenly a dark shadow fell upon everything and it grew black as night.

"I gazed upwards in great fear, and knew that the shadow was cast by a great bird with outspread wings hovering over the place where I stood and shutting out heaven's light. As I looked, it suddenly came swooping down, and sat upon the white dome.

"Then it flashed into my mind that this must be the bird which I had heard sailors talk of, called a roc, and the smooth white ball must be its egg.

"Quick as thought, I unbound my turban, and twisted it into a rope. Then I wound it round and round my waist, and tied the two ends tightly round the roc's leg, which was close to where I stood.

"'It will fly away soon, and carry me away with it off this desert island,' I said to myself joyfully.

"And sure enough, before very long I felt myself lifted off the ground, and

carried up and up until it seemed as if we had reached the clouds. Then the huge bird began to sink down again, and when it reached the ground I quickly untied my, turban, and set myself free.

"I was so small, compared to the roc, that it had never even noticed me, but darted off towards a great black object lying near, which it seized with its beak and carried off. Imagine my horror when I looked again and saw other dark objects, and discovered that they were great black snakes.

"Here was I, in a deep valley, with mountains rising sheer up on every side, and nothing to be seen among the rocks but those terrible black snakes.

"'Oh!' I cried, 'why did I ever try to leave the desert island? I have indeed only come into worse misfortune.'

"As I looked around, I noticed that the ground was strewn with sparkling

stones, which seemed to quiver with light, and when I looked nearer, I found they were diamonds of extraordinary size, although lying about like common pebbles. At first I was delighted, but they soon ceased to please me, for I feared each moment I might be seized by one of the terrible snakes.

"These snakes were so large that they could easily have swallowed an elephant, and although they lay quiet during the day, and hid themselves for fear of the roc, at night they came out in search of food. I managed to find a cave among the rocks before nightfall, and there I sat in fear and trembling until morning, when I once more went out into the valley.

"As I sat thinking what I should do next, I saw a great piece of raw meat come bounding down into the valley, from rock to rock. Then another piece followed, and another, until several large

pieces lay at my feet.

"Then I remembered a tale which travellers had told me about the famous Diamond Valley. They said that every year, when the young eagles were hatched, merchants went to the heights above, and rolled down great pieces of raw meat into the valley. The diamonds on which the meat fell would often stick into the soft flesh, and then when the eagles came, and carried off the meat to feed their young ones, the merchants would beat them off their nests, and take the diamonds out of the meat.

"I had never believed this wonderful tale, but now indeed I knew it to be true, and felt sure that I was in the famous Diamond Valley.

"I had quite given up all hope of escape, for there was no possible way of climbing out of the valley, but as I watched the eagles carry off the lumps of

raw meat, I thought of a plan, and hope revived.

"First of all I searched around, and filled all my pockets with the biggest diamonds I could find. Then I chose out the largest piece of meat and fastened myself securely to it, with the rope made out of my turban. I knew that the eagles would soon come for more food, so I lay flat on the ground, with the meat uppermost, and holding on tightly, I waited for what would happen next. I had not long to wait before a gigantic eagle came swooping down. It seized the meat and carried it and me swiftly up, until it reached its nest high among the mountain rocks. And no sooner had it dropped me into the nest, than a man climbed out from behind the rock, and with loud cries frightened the eagle away. Then this man, who was the merchant to whom the nest belonged, came eagerly to look for

his piece of meat. When he saw me, he started back in surprise and anger.

"'What doest thou here?' he asked roughly. 'How dost thou dare to try and steal my diamonds?'

"'Have patience,' I answered calmly, 'I am no thief, and when thou hast heard my story thou wilt pity and not blame me. As for diamonds, I have some here which will more than make up to thee for thy disappointment.'

"Then I told him and the other merchants all my adventures, and they cast up their eyes to heaven in surprise at my courage, and the wonderful manner in which I had managed to escape so many dangers. Pulling out a handful of diamonds, I then passed the precious stones round among them, and they all declared them to be the finest they had ever seen.

"'Thou shalt chose one, to make up

for thy disappointment,' I said to the merchant who had found me.

"'I will choose this small one,' he replied, picking out one of the least of the glistening heap.

"I urged him to take a larger one, but he only shook his head.

"'This one will bring me all the wealth I can desire,' he said 'and I need no longer risk my life seeking for more.'

"Then we all set off for the nearest port, where we found a ship ready to carry us home. We had many adventures on the way, but at last we reached our journey's end, and when I had sold my diamonds I had so much money that I gave a great deal to the poor, and lived in even greater splendour than before."

Here Sindbad paused, and ordered that another hundred gold pieces should be given to Hindbad, and that he should depart. But next evening when the

guests had all assembled again and Hindbad had also returned, Sindbad began once more to tell them a story of his adventures, and this he called, the Story of the Third Voyage.

CHAPTER 7
The Third Voyage

"I spent such a peaceful time at home that the memory of all the hardships which I had endured faded from my mind, and I began to long for fresh adventures. I felt I was too young to sit quietly at home in idleness, so I made up my mind to buy more goods and set out on another voyage to trade, as I had done before.

"The voyage began most prosperously. I sold my goods at every port, and I fancied I had escaped misfortune, when one day a terrible storm began to rage. We were driven out of our course, and the captain could not tell where we were until we came to the lee side of an island.

Here we were forced to seek shelter from the storm and to cast anchor, but when the captain looked earnestly at the island, he wrung his hands and tore his hair.

"'We are lost!' he cried, 'for this is no other than the Mountain of Apes.'

"Then he explained to us that no one had ever escaped alive from this island, for the people who lived here were more like apes than men, and there were so many of them that it was useless to try to fight them.

"And even as he spoke a crowd of small creatures appeared on the shore and began to swim out towards the ship. As they came nearer we could see that they were dwarfs, as ugly as apes, being covered with hair like red fur, and having little gleaming yellow eyes. There were so many of them that they seized the ship at once and dragged it to the shore, and

when they had landed us there, they sailed off to another island.

"Very sorrowfully we wandered about, searching for fruit or roots to eat, and when evening came on we saw a towering palace before us, where we hoped to find shelter and safety.

"The palace had a great ebony door, which we pushed open, and we then entered the courtyard. Now it surprised us greatly to find no one there, and as we gazed around all that we could see was a large heap of bones, and a great many spits for roasting.

"We were still looking curiously about, when a loud thundering noise made our eyes turn towards the ebony door which was slowly opening, and there, outlined against the crimson and gold of the sunset sky, we saw the most horrible black monster words can describe. He was pitch black and as tall

as a palm tree, and in the middle of his forehead was one red eye, which gleamed like a burning coal. His mouth, which was like the opening into a dark well, had lips like a camel's, which hung down over his chest, while his ears, huge as an elephant's, flapped back over his shoulders, and his nails were like the sharp talons of a bird of prey.

"As soon as we saw this terrible giant we all fainted with terror, but when our senses returned we saw him watching us carefully with his one red shining eye. Presently he stooped down and seized me by the back of my neck and held me high in the air, turning me round and round, and pinching me to feel how fat I was. Finding I was little else than skin and bone, he set me down and caught up each of my companions in turn, pinching and prodding them, until he came to the captain, who was the fattest of us all.

Then a horrible smile spread itself over his face, and he thrust a spit through him and set him down to roast.

"After the giant had finished his supper he lay down to sleep, and his snores all night long were like thunder. Then early in the morning he arose and went out, leaving us alone.

"As soon as he was gone we began to moan and wring our hands over our great misfortune. We left the palace at once to seek for some hiding-place, but could find no shelter anywhere on the island and were obliged to return to the palace at night. When he came home the giant seized another of our company and supped off him, as he had supped off our poor captain the night before.

"Next morning, when the giant went out, we rushed from the palace, determined rather to throw ourselves into the sea than return to be roasted and eaten.

But when we reached the shore one of our number stopped us. 'Is it not forbidden by Allah,' he asked, 'to take away one's own life? Rather let us band together to put to death this dreadful monster.'

"'Thou speakest fairly,' I answered. 'Now, O my brothers, listen to my words. Let us make rafts of this driftwood and set them ready to launch upon the sea, so that if our plan of killing the giant be not successful, we may yet escape.'

"To this they all agreed, and by nightfall we had finished the rafts and left them ready on the seashore.

"Then, with heavy hearts, we returned to the palace, knowing that again one of us must be sacrificed. But after the giant had finished his meal, and his thundering snores shook the solid ground, we crept quickly to the fire and seized two of the great iron spits. These we thrust into

the heart of the glowing coals and waited until they were red hot. Then we carried them noiselessly over to where the giant lay asleep, and, with all our might, we plunged the red-hot spits into his great red eye.

"With a terrible howl of pain and rage, the giant awoke. He sprang to his feet and threw out his arms to catch us, but as he could not see where we were, we managed to escape, and lay down flat in corners where he could not find us.

"Bellowing with rage, he reached the ebony door, and disappeared into the darkness, and the night air was filled with the sound of his roaring.

"Without losing a moment we set out for the beach where we had left our rafts, and sat there waiting to know if the giant was dead, or if we had still more to fear from him.

"Alas! with the opening day we heard

sounds of thundering steps, and saw the wounded giant coming towards us, led by two other giants, as tall and hideous as himself.

"Casting our rafts loose we tried to escape, but the giants caught up great rocks and hurled them after us into the sea, so that all the rafts were swamped, except the one on which I and two of my companions were floating. We, however, managed to escape, and rowing with all our might, landed ere long upon another island.

"Here we found the most delicious fruits, and we were resting happily after our terrible danger, eating and enjoying ourselves, when suddenly a horrible hissing sound fell upon our ears. We sat spellbound with terror, and before we could move a huge serpent glided upon us, and seizing one of my two companions, swallowed him whole.

"'Ah!' we cried, as we fled from the spot, 'we have but escaped one horror to meet with another more terrible. How shall we now escape this horrible serpent?'

"On and on we ran until we came to a tall tree, and into it we climbed, having gathered enough fruit to satisfy our hunger.

"But that night as I sat on the highest possible bough of the tree, the hiss of the serpent woke me from my sleep, and I saw him coiling around the tree until he reached my poor companion, whom he seized and carried off.

"'Alas!' I said to myself, 'there is indeed no way of escape. Let me now throw myself off the cliffs and drown in the sea rather than be swallowed alive.'

"But when I reached the shore I once more remembered that I had no right to take my own life, so I returned and

gathered together all the brushwood, reeds, and thorns which I could find. These I tied into strong fagots, and with great care built a kind of round hut under the tree. I tied the top of it firmly together and took care to leave no hole through which the serpent might find an entrance.

"All night long that dreadful hissing sounded in my ears, and I could hear the serpent gliding round and round my hut, where I lay trembling and half dead with fear. Then, when day broke, and I was once more safe, I fled to the seashore, quite determined this time to drown myself rather than face such another night of fear.

"But, Allah be thanked! what should I see as I reached the shore, but a ship sailing close to the island. I shouted and waved my turban, and, to my joy, I saw that a boat was being put off to rescue

me.

"As soon as I got aboard I told my story, and every one was filled with pity, and treated me with the greatest kindness. They gave me new clothes, for mine were in rags, and did everything they could for my comfort. We sailed away, and presently we came to an island which is covered with trees of sandalwood. Here we cast anchor, and as the merchants were landing to trade with the people of the island, the captain called me to film.

"'Listen to my words,' he began; 'thou art poor and a stranger, and I would help thee. Seest thou here these goods? They belonged to a merchant of Bagdad who sailed in my ship, but who, alas! was left by mistake upon a desert island. I desire to do the best I can with his goods, that I may restore the money to his relations. Therefore thou shalt take them

and trade well with them, and a share of the profits shall be thine.'

"So be it," I answered, "but what was the name of this merchant?'

"'His name,' answered the captain, 'was Sindbad the Sailor.'

"Then I saw that the bales were marked with my own private mark, and turning to the captain I asked, 'Is the merchant indeed dead?'

"'Alas! I fear that there is no hope that he can have escaped,' answered the captain.

"'Look well at me,' I cried. 'Hast thou not seen my face before? I am that Sindbad who was left behind on the Island of the Roc.'

"Then I told him all my adventures, and as he listened he began to know me again, and, with great joy, gave me all my goods and all the money he had made for me by trading in other islands.

"Ere long we arrived at Bagdad, and my gains were so great that I could not count them. So I bought more land and gave much money to the poor, and soon forgot all the dangers and difficulties through which I had passed."

So ended the story of the Third Voyage, and Sindbad again ordered that Hindbad should receive a hundred gold pieces, and that he should return next night to hear the tale of the Fourth Voyage.

CHAPTER 8
The Fourth Voyage

"I was so rich and happy after my third voyage that you will wonder that I was not content to stay at home and enjoy my riches. But my love for travel and adventures would not suffer me to rest.

"I again purchased much merchandise, and once more set sail, with many other merchants, to trade with foreign lands.

"We had visited many places, and made great gains, when one day a terrible storm arose, and although the captain did all he could to save the ship, he was powerless in the great hurricane. The wind tore the sails into ribands, and the

waves washed over the deck until the ship was swamped and began to sink. Most of the crew and passengers were drowned, but a few of us managed to cling to some planks, and after a dreadful night of peril we were cast ashore upon an island.

"More dead than alive, we lay there until morning, and then we went inland, hoping to find some sort of food. We had not gone far when we were met by a crowd of black savages, who surrounded us, and led us to their huts.

"First of all they prepared for us a meal, of which my companions ate eagerly, but I, being more cautious, only pretended to eat. For I had watched the savages, and noticed that they ate none of the food themselves.

"Allah be thanked that I had been so careful! No sooner had my companions swallowed the food than they seemed to

lose their senses, and became as madmen. This was evidently what the savages expected, for they next prepared a great meal of rice and cocoanut oil, which my companions ate greedily, and I soon saw that the savages meant to fatten them, and then kill and eat them.

"This frightened me so much, that I would scarcely eat anything, and I became so thin that no one took any notice of me, and one day, when I was left in charge of an old savage, I easily managed to escape. I made my way with all speed into the forest, and for seven days I scarcely stopped to rest, but ran on and on, until I arrived at the opposite side of the island. There, to my joy, upon the seashore I found a party of white men gathering pepper. Their astonishment was great when they saw me, and greater still when I told them of my adventure.

"'These savages kill and eat every

man who falls into their hands,' they said, 'thou alone hast lived to escape from them.'

"Then they took me aboard their ship, and carried me off with them to their own country, where they presented me to their King.

"I was treated with great kindness, and as the King showed me special favour, I was considered a person of great importance. The island was a very rich one, and there was much trade carried on in the capital, so that I soon grew happy and contented. One thing astonished me a good deal, and this was that although the people all rode well, and had splendid horses, no one used a saddle, stirrup, or bridle.

"'Your Majesty,' I ventured to say one day to the King, 'why is it that no one in thy kingdom uses a saddle?'

"'What may that be?' asked the King

with interest. 'I have never even heard the word.'

"Then I sought out a clever workman in leather, and directed him how to make a splendid saddle. I also had stirrups, spurs, and a bridle made, and when they were all ready, I presented them to the King, and showed him how to use them. As soon as he had tried them, he was delighted with them, and all the nobles begged that I would make saddles for them also.

"So I became more and more important and rich, until one day the King told me that it was his wish that I should marry a beautiful maiden, and settle down to stay always in the island.

"When I had seen the maiden, I willingly did as the King commanded, and we lived so happily and contentedly together that I began to forget that I had any other home. But one day came a rude

awakening.

"I had made great friends with one of my neighbours, and was much distressed one day to hear that his wife was dead. I went to him at once, and tried to comfort him in his sorrow.

"'May Allah preserve thee, and grant thee a long life!' I began when I saw him.

"But he never raised his eyes from the ground.

"'Alas!' he replied, 'how canst thou wish me a long life, when in a few hours I shall be buried with my wife. Dost thou not know it is a law in this country, that when a wife dies her husband is buried with her, and if he should die first, then his wife is buried with him?'

"'How terrible!' I cried, 'I cannot believe this.' I spoke to the King about it, but he only told me that it had always been the law of the land, and no one seemed to think it strange.

"Judge then of my feelings, when one day my own wife fell ill, and after a short illness she, also, died.

"They dressed her in all her most costly garments, and decked her with jewels, and then we all set out towards a high mountain. When we reached it, a stone was rolled away from the mouth of a deep pit, and into this pit the body of my wife was lowered.

"I begged and prayed for my life, but no one paid any heed to what I said. They were busy preparing seven small loaves of bread and a jug of water, and these they lowered with me into the dark pit. Then the stone was rolled back and I was left alone.

"I sat and wailed, and bemoaned my fate, but that of course did me no good. For seven days I lived on the loaves, and drank sparingly of the water; and when it was all done, I made up my mind that I

must die. Then suddenly I saw something moving in the far side of the cavern, and a small grey object flitted past me.

"In an instant I jumped to my feet, and followed it, until it disappeared into a crevice of the rock. Still I followed it, squeezing myself into the narrow passage, and when I had gone some distance, I felt the fresh sea-air fanning my hot cheeks, and in another moment I was upon the seashore under the blue sky, free from the horrible cavern. The thing I had followed must have been some little animal that had found its way in, and so showed me the way of escape.

"I then made up my mind to return along the passage and gather up the jewels which were strewn over the floor of the cave. This I did, and having fastened them into bales, I sat upon the shore, waiting for a ship to pass.

"All that day I sat and watched, and

next morning, to my joy, I saw a sail. I waved my turban, and did all I could to make them see me, and soon a boat was put off to fetch me.

"'How camest thou here?' asked the sailors in astonishment. 'We have never seen living man on this shore before.'

"Now I did not care to tell them where I had really come from, in case they should decide to carry me back.

"'I was shipwrecked here some time ago,' I said, 'and these bales are my goods which I managed to save.'

"To my great relief the sailors asked no more questions, and quickly rowed me and my bales back to the ship.

"So I returned home in safety with more riches than ever, and with great thankfulness in my heart for having escaped such dreadful dangers."

Here Sindbad paused, and Hindbad was again dismissed with a hundred gold

pieces, and bidden to return next night, this time to hear the story of the Fifth Voyage.

CHAPTER 9
The Fifth Voyage

"Listen, O my brothers," began Sindbad, when they were all seated round the table, "and I will now relate to you the adventures of my Fifth Voyage.

"I was not yet cured of my love of adventure, and I had not been long at home when I again became restless and filled with a desire to be upon the sea.

"This time I did not trust to a strange ship, but had one built for myself, that I could sail where I would, and trade wherever I cared to land. But as the ship was a large one, I invited several other merchants to try their fortune with mine, and so together we set sail.

"We had landed at several places and

done good business, when one day we came to a desert island with a curious white dome upon it. This I knew at once to be a roc's egg, but as no one else had ever seen one, my companions begged to be allowed to land, so that they might go near and behold this wonder.

"Now the young roc inside the egg was so nearly hatched that its bill had already broken through the shell, and before I could prevent it, my companions had dragged it out and begun to cut it up in pieces. I warned them that trouble would be in store for us, but they were determined to have a feast. Even as I spoke the sun was darkened, and great black wings cast their shadow over us as the parent rocs came flying home.

"'Lose not a moment!' I cried. 'Let us all embark at once and try to escape from the fury of the rocs.'

"We returned to the ship with all

speed and the captain set sail at once, hoping soon to be out of reach of the angry birds. But ere long the terrible black shadow again crept between us and the sun, and in the dim light we could see the parent rocs hovering over head, holding in their talons great stones, or rather rocks, of tremendous size.

"When the rocs were exactly over the ship, one of them dropped his stone, which, however, missed the ship as it came whistling through the air, and clove the waters with such awful force that for a moment we saw a wall of water on each side of it and the sandy bottom of the sea.

"But almost before we could again look up the other bird dropped her stone with a surer aim, and our ship was dashed to pieces. Those of us who were not killed were hurled far and near into the sea and disappeared in the waters.

"By the goodness of Allah I, however, managed to cling to a floating plank, and so, paddling with my feet, I reached a distant island.

"'Surely,' said I, as I wandered about this island, 'surely this is the most beautiful spot in all the world.'

"Never had I seen such luscious fruit, such exquisite flowers and such clear running streams. My fears and weariness were forgotten, and I rested and refreshed myself in the cool shade of the green trees.

"Next morning as I strolled along, gathering fruit as I went, I came upon a poor old man sitting by the bank of a stream. He looked so very old, and feeble and weary, that my heart was filled with pity for him.

"'What dost thou here?' I asked. 'Art thou one of the shipwrecked sailors?'

"But the old man only shook his head

mournfully, and asked me by signs to help him across the stream. This I willingly prepared to do, and I leaned down and helped him to mount upon my shoulders. He was much heavier than I expected, but I stepped across the stream and then stopped to allow the old man to get down. But instead of doing that, the old wretch wound his sinewy legs tighter and tighter round my neck until I could not breathe, and with a choking cry I fell forward and fainted for want of breath.

"When I came to myself the wicked old monster was still sitting tight upon my shoulders, and he began to prod me with his sharp knees in so painful a manner that I was forced to rise and go whichever way he chose to drive me.

"There are no words to describe the misery I endured day after day. Not for one moment did the old man loosen his hold, even when we slept, and so sharp

and painful were his methods of driving me, that I could do nothing but obey his wishes. He gathered fruit as he went and allowed me also to gather it, or I should have died of hunger.

"One day we came to a place where gourds were growing in great abundance, and there I found one that was sun-dried and empty. I took it and squeezed into it the juice of several bunches of grapes, and then left it in the sun to ferment. When we returned to the same place some days after, I found the gourd filled with the most delicious wine. I drank the wine eagerly, and felt at once so much stronger and happier that I began to dance and sing. This seemed to astonish the old monster who sat on my back, and he made signs that he, too, would like to taste the wine. I dared not refuse him, and so was obliged to hand him the gourd.



The old wretch wound his sinewy legs round my neck.

"It was a very large gourd and held a great deal of wine, and the old man never stopped until he had drunk every drop. By that time he had begun to shout and make strange noises, and gradually his legs unloosened. With one great effort I was able to hurl him from my shoulders to the ground, and there he lay, never to rise again.

"Great indeed was my delight to be rid of my burden, and I walked on rejoicing and free until I came to the seashore. There I met a company of sailors who had just landed to fill their casks with fresh water.

"'Who art thou?' they cried in surprise, when they saw me, 'and how camest thou upon this desert island?'

"Then I told all my adventures since I had been shipwrecked, and their surprise became greater.

"'Know, O fortunate man,' they

cried, 'that thou hast escaped a terrible danger. The old man who sat upon your back was none other than the Old Man of the Sea, and never before has any one escaped who once fell into his clutches.'

"Then they took me with them to their ship, and we sailed away until we came to a great city whose houses were built of stone. Here one of the merchants, who had shown me great kindness, advised me to join a company of people who were going out to gather cocoanuts.

"'Take this bag,' said he, handing me a large sack, 'and do not wander away from your companions, but do exactly as they do.'

"Now, when we had gone a great distance we came to the forest of cocoanut trees. They were so tall and straight and smooth that I saw at once that it was impossible to climb them, and I waited,

wondering to know how my companions meant to secure the cocoanuts.

"As we came nearer I noticed a great many monkeys playing among the trees, which, as soon as they saw us, began to climb swiftly to the topmost boughs. Then my companions took stones and began to throw them at the monkeys, which I thought most cruel.

"'They have done us no harm,' I said, 'why should we seek to harm them?'

"But in a few moments I saw the reason of what was done, for the monkeys began to pelt us in return with cocoanuts, and these we gathered up and put into our sacks. And the more stones we threw at them the more cocoanuts they flung at us.

"When we had filled our sacks we returned to the city and sold our cocoanuts to the merchants; and so I made enough money for all my wants, and

before long I set sail once more for home. On the way we stopped at various islands, where I traded for pepper and aloe-wood and pearls, so that when I reached home I was able to sell my goods for more money than I knew what to do with."

Here Sindbad made a sign that the feasting should continue, and ordered that Hindbad should be given another hundred pieces of gold before leaving. All this was done as he commanded. And the next night when the guests and the porter were seated in their usual places, Sindbad told them the story of his Sixth Voyage.

CHAPTER 10
The Sixth Voyage

"This time," began Sindbad, "I stayed at home for the space of a whole year, and then I prepared to set out on another voyage. My friends and relations did all in their power to prevent my going, but I could not be persuaded, and before long I set sail in a ship which was about to make a very long voyage.

"Nothing went well with us from the beginning. We were driven out of our course by storms and tempests, and the captain and pilot knew not where we were. When at last they found out in which direction we had drifted, things seemed in a worse state than ever. We were alarmed to see the captain suddenly

pull off his turban, tear the hair from his beard, and beat his head as if he were mad.

"'What is the matter?' we asked, gathering round him.

"'Alas!' he cried, 'we are lost. The ship is now caught in a dangerous current from which nothing can save her and us. In a very few moments we shall all be dashed to pieces.'

"No sooner had he spoken than the ship was carried along at a tremendous speed straight on to a rocky shore which lay at the foot of a steep mountain.

"But although the ship was dashed to pieces, we all managed to escape, and were thrown with our goods and some provisions high on to the rocky strip of shore. Here we found the scattered remains of many wrecks, and quantities of bones bleached white in the sun.

"'We may prepare ourselves for

death,' said the captain mournfully. 'No man has ever escaped from this shore, for it is impossible to climb the mountain behind us, and no ship dare approach to save us.'

"But nevertheless he divided the provisions amongst us, that we might live as long as possible.

"One thing that surprised me greatly was a river of fresh water which flowed out of the mountain, and, instead of running into the sea, disappeared into a rocky cavern on the other side of the shore. As I gazed into the mouth of this cavern I saw that it was lined with sparkling gems, and that the bed of the river was studded with rubies and diamonds and all manner of precious stones. Great quantities of these were also scattered around, and treasures from the wrecked ships lay in every corner of the shore.

"One by one my companions died as they came to the end of their food, and one by one I buried them, until at last I was left quite alone. I was able to live on very little, and so my food had lasted longer.

"'Woe is me!' I cried, 'who shall bury me when I die? Why, oh! why was I not content to remain safe and happy at home?'

"As I bemoaned my evil fate I wandered to the banks of the river, and as I watched it disappear into the rocky cave a happy thought came to me. Surely if this stream entered the mountain it must have an opening somewhere, and if I could only follow its course I might yet escape.

"Eagerly I began to make a strong raft of the wood and planks which were scattered all over the shore. Then I collected as many diamonds and rubies

and as much wrecked treasure as my raft would hold, and took my last little store of food. I launched the raft with great care, and soon found myself floating swiftly along until I disappeared into the dark passage of the cavern.

"On and on I went through the thick darkness, the passage seeming to grow smaller and narrower until I was obliged to lie flat on the raft for fear of striking my head. My food was now all gone, and I gave myself up for lost, and then mercifully I fell into a deep sleep which must have lasted many hours. I was awakened by the sound of strange voices, and jumping up, what was my joy to find I was once more in heaven's sunshine.

"The river was flowing gently through a green, pleasant land, and the sounds I had heard were the voices of a company of negroes who were gently guiding my raft to the bank.

"I could not understand the language these negroes spoke, until at last one of their number began to speak to me in Arabic.

"'Peace be to thee!' he said. 'Who art thou, and whence hast thou come? We are the people of this country, and were working in our fields when we found thee asleep upon the raft. Tell us, then, how thou hast come to this place.'

"'I pray thee, by Allah!' I cried, 'give me food, and then I will tell thee all.'

"Then the men gave me food, and I ate until my strength returned and my soul was refreshed, and I could tell them of all my adventures.

"'We must take him to the King,' they cried with one voice.

"Then they told me that the King of Serendib was the richest and greatest king on earth, and I went with them willingly, taking with me my bales and

treasures.

"Never had I seen such splendour and richness as at the court of the King of Serendib, and great was his kindness towards me. He listened to the tale of my adventures with interest, and when I begged to be allowed to return home, he ordered that a ship should be made ready at once. Then he wrote a letter with his own hand to the Caliph, our sovereign lord, and loaded me with costly gifts.

"Thus, when I arrived at Bagdad, I went at once to the court of the Caliph, and presented the letter and the gift which the King had sent.

"This gift was a cup made out of a single ruby lined inside with precious stones, also a skin of the serpent that swallows elephants, which had spots upon its back like pieces of gold, and which could cure all illnesses.

"The Caliph was delighted with the

letter and the gift.

"'Tell me, O Sindbad,' he said, 'is this King as great and rich as it is reported of him?'

"'O my Lord,' I said, 'no words can give you an idea of his riches. His throne is set upon a huge elephant and a thousand horsemen ride around him, clad in cloth of gold. His mace is of gold studded with emeralds, and indeed his splendour is as great as that of King Solomon.'

"The Caliph listened attentively to my words, and then, giving me a present, he allowed me to depart. I returned home swiftly to my family and friends, and when I had sold my treasures and given much to the poor, I lived in such peace and happiness that my evil adventures soon seemed like a far-off dream."

So Sindbad finished the story of his Sixth Voyage, and bade his guests return the next evening as usual. And next day,

when all the guests were once more seated at the table and had finished their feasting, Sindbad began the story of his Last Voyage.

CHAPTER 11
The Last Voyage

"I had now made up my mind that nothing would tempt me to leave my home again, and that I would seek for no more adventures.

"One day, however, as I was feasting with my friends, one of my servants came to tell me that a messenger from the Caliph awaited my pleasure.

"'What is thy errand?' I asked when the messenger was presented to me.

"'The Caliph desires thy presence at once,' answered the messenger.

"Thus was I obliged to set out immediately for the palace.

"'Sindbad,' said the Caliph, when I had bowed myself to the ground before

him, 'I have need of thy services. I desire to send a letter and a gift to the King of Serendib, and thou shalt be the bearer of them.'

"Then indeed did my face fall, and I became pale as death.

"'Commander of the Faithful,' I cried, 'do with me as thou wilt, but I have made a vow never to leave my home again.'

"Then I told him all my adventures, which caused him much astonishment. Nevertheless, he urged me to do as he wished, and seeing that there was no escape, I consented.

"I set sail at the Caliph's command, and after a good voyage I at last reached the island of Serendib, where I received a hearty welcome. I told the officers of the court what my errand was, and they led me to the palace, where I bowed myself to the ground before the great

King.

"'Sindbad,' he said kindly, 'thou art welcome. I have often thought of thee, and wished to see thy face again.'

"So I presented the Caliph's letter, and the rich present he had sent, which pleased the King well. When a few days had passed, I begged to be allowed to depart, and after receiving many gifts I once more set sail for home.

"But alas! the return journey began badly. We had not sailed many days, when we were pursued by pirates, who captured the ship, and took prisoners all those who were not killed. I, amongst others, was carried ashore and sold by a pirate to a rich merchant.

"'What is thy trade?' asked the merchant when he had bought me.

"'I am a merchant,' I answered, 'and know no trade.'

"'Canst thou shoot with a bow and

arrow?' asked my master.

"This I said I could do, and putting one in my hand he led me out to a great forest and bade me climb into a high tree.

"'Watch there,' he said, 'until thou shalt see a herd of elephants pass by. Then try to shoot one, and if thou art fortunate, come at once and tell me.'

"All night I watched, and saw nothing, but in the morning a great number of elephants came thundering by, and I shot several arrows among them. One big elephant fell to the ground, and lay there while the rest passed on; so, as soon as it was safe, I climbed down and carried the news to my master. Together we buried the huge animal and marked the place, so that we might return to fetch the tusks.

"I continued this work for some time, and killed many elephants, until one night I saw to my horror that the

elephants, instead of passing on, had surrounded the tree in which I sat, and were stamping and trumpeting, until the very earth shook. Then one of them seized the tree with his trunk, and tore it up by the roots, laying it flat on the ground.

"I was almost senseless with terror, but the next moment I felt myself gently lifted up by an elephant's trunk, and placed on his back. I clung on with all my might, as the elephant carried me through the forest, until at last we came to the slope of a hill, which was covered with bleached bones and tusks.

"Here the elephant gently laid me down, and left me alone. I gazed around on this great treasure of ivory, and I could not help wondering at the wisdom of these animals. They had evidently brought me here to show me that I could get ivory without killing any more of

their number. For this, I felt sure, was the elephants' burying-place.

"I did not stay long on the hill, but gathering a few tusks together I sped back to the town, that I might tell my tale to the merchant. 'My poor Sindbad,' he cried, when he saw me, 'I thought thou wert dead, for I found the uprooted tree, and never expected to look upon thy face again.'

"Great was his delight when I told him of the Hill of Ivory, and when we had gone there together, and he saw for himself the wonders I had described, he was filled with astonishment.

"'Sindbad,' he cried, 'thou too shalt have a share of this great wealth. And first of all I shall give thee thy freedom. Until now, year by year have all my slaves been killed by the elephants, but now we need no longer run any risks, for here is ivory enough to enrich the whole island.'

"So I was set free, and loaded with honours, and when the trade winds brought the ships that traded in ivory, I bade good-bye to the island, and set sail for home, carrying with me a great cargo of ivory and other treasures.

"As soon as I landed I went to the Caliph, who was overjoyed to see me.

"'Great has been my anxiety, O Sindbad,' he said, 'for I feared some evil had befallen thee.'

"When, therefore, I had told him of my adventures, he was the more astonished, and ordered that all my story should be written in letters of gold, and placed among his treasures.

"Then I returned to my own house, and ever since have remained at home in peace and safety."

Thus Sindbad finished the story of his voyages, and turning to Hindbad, he said: "And now, friend Hindbad, what

dost thou think of the way I have earned my riches? Is it not just that I should live in enjoyment and ease?"

"O my lord," cried Hindbad, bowing before Sindbad, and kissing his hand, "great have been thy labours and perils, and truly dost thou deserve thy riches. My troubles are as nothing compared to thine. Long mayest thou live and prosper!"

Sindbad was well pleased with this answer, and he ordered that Hindbad should dine every day at his table, and receive his golden pieces, so that all his life he might have reason to remember the adventures of Sindbad the Sailor.