

ARABIAN TALES:
BEING A
CONTINUATION
OF THE
THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS.

The story of the Sultan of Persia, and the two jealous sisters, seemed to have afforded great pleasure to Sultan Schahriar, whose curiosity was still to be kept up by a succession of interesting tales.

“Sister,” said Dinarzade to Scheherazade, “this marriage of Khosrouschah, and the series of interesting events connected with it, lead me to recoil at the marriage of the Caliph Haroun Alraschid with the princess of Persia, and the fair Zutulbé, which, in the same manner, took place after some of those nocturnal rambles through Bagdad, with which he so often amused himself in disguise. I have been much entertained when you told me the stories of these marriages, and have no doubt but we should find them diverting, if you would now repeat them.” “Sister,” replied the fair Sultana, “I have always been too much interested in the adventures of Haroun Alraschid, to forget any circumstance of the incidents of his life that has been handed down to us. If my Lord, the Sultan, chooses to honour me with his attention, I shall immediately gratify your curiosity.”—The Sultan testified his wish to hear the relation; and Scheherazade began in these words.

The ROBBER CALIPH; or, Adventures of Haroun Alraschid, with the Princess of Persia, and the fair Zutulbé.

The nobles, the viziers, and even several of the tributary princes, were assembled at Bagdad, upon the occasion of the festival of Haraphat¹, to join in the celebration of the usual solemnities. No expense was spared, no rite omitted, that could give dignity to the ceremonies of

¹ The Masulman festival of Haraphat is chiefly distinguished by the offering of animal sacrifices.

religion, or splendour to the Caliph's court. Melodious voices resounded through the wide concave of the high mosque; perfumes shed a rich fragrance through the air; the blood of victims besprinkled the altar, around which stood the different orders of the priesthood: nothing, in short, was wanting, that could serve to express to heaven and earth the piety of the Commander of the faithful, the greatest of the sovereigns of the world. But the ceremonies were tedious. Haroun was, moreover, fatigued by receiving and attending to the homage of so many princes and nobles; and, at last, absolutely overpowered with weariness and impatience,

"Giafar," said he, addressing himself to his grand vizier, the chief of the Barmecide family, "the festival of our great Prophet should inspire the heart with joy; yet, in spite of all my endeavours against it, I feel a depression of spirits gaining upon me. Amidst the pomp and brilliancy of this numerous assembly, I am oppressed with unaccountable dissatisfaction and chagrin. I need something to divert me: But, in a day like this, I may indulge in nothing, not immediately beneficial to my people. You and I will disguise ourselves, and go into Bagdad; we will there distribute alms among the poor, and seek out objects of misfortune whom we may relieve. I wish to see with my own eyes, whether the people be happy under my government,—whether the officers of justice and of the police do their duty."

Giafar was ready to obey the wishes of the Caliph. They went together into a secret apartment, changed their dress, and, taking each a thousand pieces of gold, sallied forth from the palace. They passed through the streets and squares of the city, and gave alms to every poor person they met with. Passing through one quarter of the city, they found a woman sitting on the pavement, in the middle of the street: she held out her hand to the Caliph, and asked his charity for the love of God. The prince was struck with the beauty of the arm held out to him: it was exquisitely turned, and white as alabaster. He gave Giafar a piece of gold for her, which the vizier put into her hand.

The woman, upon receiving this present, shut her hand upon it; but, feeling by its size and weight, that it was not one of those small pieces which are usually given in alms, she removed her fingers, and saw it to be gold. Immediately calling aloud after Giafar—

"Oh! handsome young man," said she, as-soon as he was near enough to hear her, "it is gold that you have given me. Do you intend it as alms? or, have you some other purposes?" "It is not I, Madam, that made the present," replied Giafar, "but the young man who is with me." "Pray, entreat him," returned the woman, "to explain his reasons for this extraordinary liberality?" Giafar mentioned the urgency of the woman's request to the Caliph, and was ordered to bid her make herself easy as to the motives of his benevolences; for they were none other but charity and

the love of God. "As this is the case, tell my benefactor," replied the woman, "that I shall offer my prayers to God, that his life may be prolonged."

The Caliph, informed by Giafar, in what manner the woman had received his present, and what wishes she had formed for the welfare of the giver, sent him instantly back to her, "Ask," said Haroun, "whether she is married: if she is unmarried, tell her, that I propose to take her to wife."

Giafar delivered the message. The woman replied, that she was unmarried, and willing to marry a young man who had shewn her so much kindness, if he were rich enough to allow her a suitable dowry. "Who can this woman be," added Giafar, as he repeated this answer to his master, "who doubts of the commander of the faithful's ability to assign her a dowry?"

"My disguise excuses her," said the Caliph; "learn from her, what dowry she desires." The grand vizier obeyed: the woman's answer was, "My dowry must be equal to a year's tribute of the cities of Ispahan and Karassin."

At this reply, Giafar was somewhat surprised. The Caliph had gone on towards the palace.

Giafar hastened after him, to give an account of the lady's demand. The Caliph seemed to be satisfied: "Return," said he, and let her know, what must surely astonish her, that I accept her terms."

The grand vizier immediately returns to the fair unknown, and delivers the Caliph's message. "Who may this be," said she, "who is able to give such a dowry? What, pray, are his qualities and his dignity?"

"He of whom I speak," replied Giafar, "is Haroun Alraschid, Commander of the faithful." At the name of the Caliph making her such a proposal, the woman rose, and, covering herself with her clothes, that she might appear with the more decency and modesty before the vizier, gave thanks to God, and said, "If he be the Caliph who asks me in marriage, I shall be pleased to belong to him: you may signify to him my consent." Giafar gives an account to the Caliph of this last conversation, and describes, in two words, her carriage, air, and manner. The Caliph gives immediate orders to one of the most venerable women in his palace, to go with a number of slaves to find this unknown fair one, and conduct her to the baths in the palace.

When she came out of the bath, they clothed her in gay attire. Her dress was set off with diamonds, and rich jewels of all sorts. She was conducted into one of the best apartments in the palace. The chief of the eunuchs went immediately to inform the Caliph, that his orders were obeyed; upon which the Caliph ordered him to bring the cadi to execute the marriage-contract.

When evening came, Haroun retired to his wife's apartment. She, on perceiving him, prostrated herself before him and, in ardent language, expressed her gratitude for his condescension and goodness. The Caliph, sitting down, made her sit beside him, and asked, "Madam, who is your father? What family are you of, to have asked me so large a dowry?"

"Prince of the faithful," replied she, modestly casting her eyes on the ground, "you see before you, a descendant from Kassera-Abocheroan: reverse of fortune, and my unhappy destiny, reduced me to the state in which you found me."

"Princess," replied the Caliph, "you are grand-daughter to Kassera, so dishonourably famous for the deeds of tyranny with which he disgraced his reign. He exercised the most shocking cruelties upon his subjects."

"It was that tyranny," returned the princess, "which reduced his children to beg their bread."

"But," returned the Caliph, "I have been assured, that he at length saw his errors and passionate excesses in their true light, and, in the end of his reign, ruled with great moderation, and distributed justice with such impartiality, that the beasts of the field, and the fowls of heaven, shared his bounty."

"And for this, too," replied the Princess, "God now rewards his posterity, by raising a daughter of his from the streets, to the honour of wife to the Commander of the Faithful."

Haroun Alraschid was much moved by so sensible a reply: He clasped her in his arms, and testified, by the most tender embraces, how he was pleased with the conquest he had made. But his happiness was soon interrupted by a disagreeable reflection.

"Pardon me, Princess, if I am forced from your arms by a vow which I happen to have made. I am at this moment the most unhappy of men! This morning, in the ardour of my zeal, and while I could have no idea what a treasure fortune was to put in my way to-day, I bound myself, in honour of the Prophet, by a solemn and irrevocable oath, not to cohabit, for a whole year, with the first woman whom I should marry. You cannot conceive how bitterly I now feel my imprudence; but I could not foresee what a felicity it was to deprive me of; and you, whose devotion seems so pure, must perceive, that the vow which I have uttered is sacred, and join with me in concerting, how to reconcile it best with my happiness."

The lady, whatever impression these words might make upon her mind, could only express her resignation and consent, by bowing her head, and casting her eyes on the ground. The Caliph retired. He had discovered in the Persian Princess so much merit, and so many charms, that he could not help promising himself much happiness in a more intimate intercourse with her. But, continuing firm to his oath, he would

not expose himself to the temptation to break it; and from this moment, therefore, he ceased to see her; only took care, that such attention should be paid to her, that she might see that she was neither neglected nor forgotten, and that the Caliph, although he had now time to reflect upon the choice which he had made, did not repent of it.

The year came, at length, to an end. The last day of it was the anniversary of the high festival of Haraphat. The Caliph, Giafar his grand vizier, and Mesrour, chief of his eunuchs, went together into Bagdad. They went through the streets in disguise; and every thing appeared to be in good order.

Returning to the palace, the Caliph passed nearby a pastry-cook's shop, which had such an air of neatness, that he became curious to try the pastry, of which great abundance was set out for sale, and which had the most inviting aspect and smell.

As soon as Haroun regained his apartment, he directed one of his officers to repair to the cook's shop, and to order an hundred *cataifs*¹. The officer executed the Caliph's commission; and, after seeing the hundred *cataifs* made in his presence, had them carried to the palace. No sooner had the Caliph received the pastry, than he put a piece of gold into each *cataif*, covered them with pistachio nuts, strewed them with sugar, and sent the whole to his wife, the Persian Princess; giving her notice, at the same time, that as the year of his vow was now expired, the Commander of the Faithful would spend the night with her. The eunuch who conveyed the message, had orders, at the same time, to enquire, whether there were any thing else in which the Caliph could gratify the wishes of the Princess? "Nothing," replied the grand-daughter of Kassera: "to see the Caliph, will completely gratify all my wishes."

Haroun was much pleased with so prudent a reply. But, being very desirous of doing something which might particularly oblige his young wife, he ordered Mesrour to insist that she should think of something in which he might do her pleasure.

"Since the Caliph," replied she to Mesrour, "is so kind, tell him, that I should wish to have a thousand pieces of gold, and a confidential female servant to attend me into the city, where I may give alms, in disguise, to the poor; in whose number, only a year ago, I myself was one."

The Caliph, smiling at the request, gave orders that it should be immediately complied with. The Princess and her female attendant pass through the streets of Bagdad, and give alms upon all sides, till the thousand pieces of gold are wholly distributed.

¹ Cataifs are a sort of small tarts.

The day was excessively hot. The Princess, on her return to the palace, felt herself exceedingly thirsty. She mentioned her uneasiness to her companion. The latter, perceiving a water-carrier, proposed that he should be called. "I cannot bear, however," said the lady, "to drink out of the same vessel that is at the command of every person in the streets, without distinction."

They then advanced to the gate of a palace. The attendant was no sooner at the gate, which was shut with doors of sandal wood, than she perceived, through an open window, a golden lustre, suspended in the porch, from a chain of the same metal. A curtain, richly embroidered, hung before; and two sophas of the finest marble, one on the right side, the other on the left of the gate, formed the rest of the furniture of the apartment.

After observing these things, the attendant knocked at the door. It was immediately opened. A young man, richly dressed, presenting himself, asked what he could do to serve her. "My Lord," replied she, "you see my daughter: she is fainting with thirst, but she cannot endure to drink out of a water-carrier's pitcher. You will do us a singular favour, in giving her a glass of water."

"It shall be done in a moment, Madam," replied the young man. He, upon this, disappeared, and in an instant returned with a golden cup full of water, which he presented to the woman. She delivered it to the Princess; who, taking it in her hand, turned towards the wall, and satisfied her thirst. The woman thanked him, for herself, and in the name of her pretended daughter; and the two ladies, retiring together, returned to the palace.

When the Commander of the faithful had arranged the tarts on the plate, as above mentioned, he at the same time enjoined the eunuch to tell the Princess, that he sent her this present as a pledge and sign of peace. The chief eunuch, the bearer of the present and the message, not knowing in what manner the pastry had been secretly seasoned by the Caliph, or of how much importance it was, and thinking nothing more of it than as a very ordinary piece of gallantry, did not deliver the message precisely in the Caliph's words. He imagined, that his chief business was, to announce the Caliph's intention of visiting her; and the Princess, equally concerned about this point only, directed the pastry to be set down upon a table in her apartment; and paid no farther heed to it.

Upon her return home, after distributing her alms, she observed the pastry, and conceived that it might make a very proper recompense to the person who had given her the glass of water. Addressing her female attendant, therefore, she bade her, "Carry that plate of tarts immediately, and in your own name, to the young man to whom I am obliged for the glass of water, which he gave in so handsome a manner."

The woman went immediately with the pastry. She found the young man fitting upon one of the sophas in the porch: "My daughter and I," said she, "are much obliged to you for your kindness and politeness. Accept, in return, this pastry, as a mark of our gratitude."

"Since it is your pleasure, Madam, to acknowledge so trifling a service in so handsome a manner, I should be afraid of disobliging you, by a refusal to accept your present: put it upon the sofa." This short interview ended with some compliments upon both sides, and the woman returned to the palace.

At this very instant, the watchman of that quarter of the city came to wait on the young man, and pay him the compliments usual at the feast of Haraphat; and, as he ended, asked the gift of the season. Take that plate of *cataifs*, said the young man. The watchman joyfully accepted the present, kissed his benefactor's hand, and returned to his own house, very well pleased.

The watchman's wife, upon seeing him come in with so large and splendid a plate, cried out, "Where had you that plate. husband? Are you such an unhappy wretch as to have stolen it?" "No, wife," replied the watchman, "the Haze¹, that high officer of the Caliph's, gave it me in a present—God preserve his life! Let us eat up the *cataifs*. What dainties they are!"

"Glutton that thou art!" answered his wife, "Wouldst thou dare to touch what must have cost so high a price? Go, sell them and the plate together: such delicacies are not for poor people like us. With the money which you will receive for them, we may buy provisions fitter for the use of our family."

"Wife! wife!" returned the watchman, "God has sent us the tarts; I am determined to eat them."

"You shall not taste one of them," replied the wife, in a tone of rage: "Your son has neither cap nor shoes; I am almost naked; and you yourself are in rags. Go instantly, sell the plate, and all that is upon it, and bring home the money."

The watchman, being thus obliged to yield to his wife, went to the market, and put the plate into the hands of a public crier. A merchant purchased it at a certain price, paid the crier, and carried off his purchase.

On his way home, he began to examine it more particularly, and finding the name of Haroun Alraschid inscribed round the edge, returned hastily to the market; and, seeking out the crier, bade him, "Take back your plate which you have stolen from the emperor: Would you ruin me, by bringing me under suspicion of the theft?"

¹ The Haze¹ is the first gentleman of the Caliph's bedchamber.

The crier soon perceived the truth of what the merchant alleged, read the characters engraven upon the edges of the plate, and, in the utmost consternation, halted to the palace, demanded admission into the presence of the Caliph, and shewed him the tarts, with the piece of plate upon which they were placed.

Haroun instantly recognized the plate which he had sent to the Princess of Persia, to be served up as one of the dishes in the collation which he intended to take with her in the evening. That great man had the fault of annexing, in his own mind, too much importance to every thing that he did. By the *cataifs* he had expected to occasion an agreeable surprise to his new married spouse, and to furnish her with means for being liberal to those about her, while she would seem to distribute only so many tarts.

The derangement of this little scheme of gallantry was highly displeasing to him by whom it had been contrived. Another more mortifying reflection at the same time occurred: a present, sent directly from his own hand, had been neglected and despised, notwithstanding the message with which it had been accompanied. At the thought, he became in a violent passion against the Princess.

"Tell," said he to the crier in a furious tone, "who gave you these?" "Most potent Caliph," replied the crier, "it was the watchman in such a quarter of the city, who gave them to me to sell."

The Caliph ordered the watchman to be brought, with his head and feet bare, and in chains. The man was seized, fettered with the severity which had been enjoined, and carried before the Caliph. The poor wretch, seeing himself reduced to this condition, began to exclaim against his wife with bitter imprecations. "Accursed creature," said he, "formed to betray man, even by thy endeavours to serve him; even when thy advice seems to be good, it should not be trusted! Why didst thou not suffer me to eat those *cataifs*! no harm could then have happened me. But thou waft determined to be thrifty, and a good house-wife. Thy dress lost thee thy first husband; and thy dress will continue to occasion mischief, till thy last be gone. Here am I exposed to the indignation of the prince of all the earth.—Come, give me thy advice at present, how I may best extricate myself from my perilous situation; if any thing good can possibly proceed out of thy mouth, which is ever uttering falsehood."

The Caliph interrupted these complaints, by asking the watchman, who had given him the plate of tarts? "Tell, wretch," said the angry monarch, "tell the truth, if thou wouldst save thy life."

"Oh! commander of the faithful!" cried the trembling watchman, "let your highness suspend your resentment, and not destroy the innocent with the guilty! It was your officer, Hazebe Yemaleddin, who gave me the plate for my Haraphat gift."

At the name of Yemaleddin, the Caliph's rage seemed to be redoubled. He ordered that officer to be brought before him, with his head and feet bare, his hands bound, and the muslin of his turban tied about his neck. The same decree bore, that the house of this officer should be razed to the ground, and his goods and furniture confiscated.

Those who were charged with the execution of this decree, proceeded immediately to find the Hazeb, invested his house, and knocked at the gate. He was the first to open it himself: But, great was his astonishment, when the rigorous order of the Caliph was signified to him. The reasons which had moved the Caliph, they did not explain. He immediately expressed the most submissive deference; "I obey," said he, "God, and the prince of the faithful, his vice-gerent upon earth."

One of the officers took the Hizeb's turban, and bound the muslin of it about his neck. "Is it by the order of our sovereign," said Yemaleddin, "that you treat me thus?" "Yes," replied the officer, "I am to confiscate your effects, and raze your house to the ground, and to conduct you in chains, with your head and feet bare, before the Caliph. I shall not execute my orders with the most rigid severity: we remember with gratitude how kind you were to us, and that you were always ready to receive us in your house with open hospitality." "Since you," rejoined the Hazeb, "are thus disposed, when you demolish my house, leave some retreat to my aged mother, and my young sister."

Yemaleddin being thus conducted to the foot of the Caliph's throne, prostrated himself before his sovereign. "Heaven bless," said he, "and load with happiness, the vice-gerent of its will upon earth!" "Oh! sage and equitable Haroun Alraschid, in what can the humblest of your slaves have offended, so as to deserve such extreme severity of punishment?"

"Do you know that man in chains before you there?" said the Caliph, pointing to the watchman. "He is the watchman of our quarter," replied Yemaleddin. "Do you know that plate?" continued Haroun; "Who gave it to you? Why have you contemptuously prostituted it, by bestowing it on the meanest of my slaves?"

"Oh! sovereign lord," replied Yemaleddin, "have but the goodness to hear me. I was in my house: I heard a knocking at the gate: I opened it myself: an old woman attending a young lady, said to me, this is my daughter; she is fainting for thirst, yet cannot prevail with herself to drink out of a water-carrier's dish. Favour her, I entreat you, with a glass of water: upon this I went in, filled a cup with water, and presented it to the woman who had spoken to me: the younger lady drank, and they went both away. I continued sitting on a sopha in the entrance into my house, in order to enjoy the fresh air, when the same woman returned with this plate of *cataifs*." "My son," said she, "the lady, whom you so obligingly served with the water, thanks you for your kindness, and begs

you to accept this trifling mark of her gratitude. With this, she set down the plate upon the opposite sofa, and disappeared. Soon after, the watchman of the quarter came to make his compliments to me upon occasion of the feast of Haraphat, and asked the usual present. I gave him some money and this plate, which I had not touched myself. This, Commander of the faithful, is the truest narrative of these things that can be given."

The Caliph heard this relation with the chagrin natural to a man so highly elevated above all others. "A woman," said he to himself, "whom I have raised from the most abject condition, gives to a man, absolutely unknown to her, an hundred *cataifs*, seasoned with gold, pistachio nuts, and sugar by my own hand—and all for a single cup of water! She had good reason to ask the revenue of two provinces for her dowry. I sent her a token of love; a pledge of peace; and this she would have given to a water-carrier in the streets, had she not loathed his dish. Such is the esteem with which the grand-daughter of King Kaffera regards the presents which she receives from the affection of Haroun Alraschid. But, let us see how far the Princess has carried her forgetfulness of me and of herself." Then, addressing the Hazeb in an altered and frightful tone;

"Yemalecklin," said he, "did you see the face of the woman to whom you gave the water!" "Yes," replied the Hazeb, in his confusion, and without considering what he said.

At this reply, which was equally false and involuntary, jealousy arising to increase the chagrin which Haroun already felt, he ordered the Persian Princess to be brought forth immediately,, and both her and Yernaledin to be beheaded.

The grand-daughter of Kaffera appeared: "Madam," said the Caliph, "you went into the city, under pretence of distributing alms to the poor and unfortunate: was it to shew your face to this young man?"

The Princess casting her eyes on Yernaledin, asked, "Have you seen my face? Know you who is the author of a falsehood which is about to cost us both, our lives?" "Pardon me, Madam," replied the Hazeb; "it was I myself. My lips uttered it, without the consent of my heart or understanding. Blame the fatal influence of the stars, and our unhappy destiny, by which I have been unaccountably constrained to tell a falsehood, which my soul disavows."

This explanation had not the effect to make the Caliph retract his order for their execution. The executioner bound the eyes of the two pretended criminals; and then addressing Haroun, said, "Commander of the faithful, shall I strike?" "Strike," said the Caliph. The executioner

went once or twice round the criminals¹, still renewing the same question to the Caliph, and; receiving the same answer. After the third time, he addressed Yemaleddin: "Have you any thing; to say to the Caliph, before you die? avail yourself of the only moment that remains to you; think, that you have lost all hopes of life."

"Loose," said Yemaleddin, "this bandage from about my eyes; I would yet see my relations and friends." The Hazeb finding his eyes again uncovered, looked all around, but could see no person ready to interfere in his favour; such was the awful respect for the Caliph with which all were impressed.

A gloomy silence reigned through the whole assembly. Yemaleddin availed himself of it, and exclaimed; "I would speak to the Prince of the faithful." He was suffered to draw near: "Dispenser of favours and of punishments," said he, "suspend my punishment but for one month; and within the last three days of it, you shall see wonderful things, which it concerns you highly to know."

The Caliph was surprised at the prophetic tone in which these wonders were announced to him. His curiosity prevailing over every other passion, and as the criminals could not escape from his power, he resolved to send the princess his wife, and Yemaleddin, to prison; promising himself to satisfy his vengeance at the end of the month, if it should appear that he had been imposed upon by a false pretence in the prophetic denunciation of Yemaleddin.

Years roll on, months fly, but days are gone with a breath. The Caliph, having been accustomed to see and hear so many extraordinary things, had become not a little credulous; and he now every moment expected the appearance of the wonders which had been so confidently announced by Yemaleddin.

Seven and twenty days had now expired, undistinguished by any extraordinary events. At last, he said to himself, "Those marvellous events will not come to seek me out in my palace; I must rather go, alone, into Bagdad, in search of them."

With this fancy of going out to ramble without attendants through the streets of his capital, the idea of the most fantastic disguise imaginable at the same time occurred to him. He put on a large, coarse turban upon his head, a buff waistcoat almost covered over by a broad leathern girdle; under this, a short robe of ordinary cloth. These pieces of dress were all of an old, worn out appearance; and he wore, besides, on his legs, half boots of strong, coarse leather.

¹ Haroun made it a rule, that the executioner should turn thrice round the criminal before striking; it is easy to see his reason.

He, at the same time, armed himself with a spear, took a bow and arrows in his hand; and, after disguising, with no less care, his complexion, beard, and eye-brows, left his palace in this assumed garb of an Arab from the desert. A purse containing a thousand pieces of gold hung from his girdle.

He had scarcely gone the length of two streets, when he saw a man come out from a kan¹, and heard him say aloud, "How very astonishing!" He, upon this, approached the stranger, and asked, "What is it that is so astonishing?" "An old woman," replied the other, "seemingly in the most extreme poverty. From the very dawn of the morning, she reads the koran, beside the mosque, as readily, as correctly, as God dictated it to Mahomet; yet nobody gives her alms, as she does not ask; and this passes unnoticed in a country subject to the Musulman law. Can any thing be more astonishing?"

The Caliph, upon hearing this, entered the kan, and saw the old woman, sitting upon a seat of stones, and reading the koran with singular ease and correctness. She was in the last chapter. He stopped to listen, and perceived a crowd listening around her, but giving her nothing. When she had ended, she shut the book, arose, and went away.

Haroun followed, to give her alms; but, as there was a crowd between them, she had entered a merchant's shop, before he could come up with her. Curious to know who she might be, and what could be her business in the shop, as she did not seem to be in circumstances to make any purchase, he continued to follow, till he saw her enter into conversation with the master of the shop. He drew near, unperceived; lent an ear, and heard her say to the merchant, "Handsome young man, you are not yet settled in life; would you choose to marry a young woman of rare and singular beauty?" "Possibly I may," said the merchant. "In this case," said the woman, "you need only to follow me; I will shew you a wonder of nature."

The Caliph, upon hearing this proposal, understood it in his own way. "Ah! cursed old jade!" said he to himself, "I should have taken you for a saint; but you are only an instrument of corruption! You shall have no alms from me. Let me follow, however, and see what means she employs for the perdition of youth. I came out in search of wondrous incidents which were foretold to me; I shall, at least, see how this adventure may terminate?" He, accordingly, followed close after the pair,

¹ Kans, or caravanserais, are large houses, or rather squares, for the entertainment of merchants, and the reception of their goods. The inns in Asia Minor are called *Konacs*. In ancient Persia were *statbmi* at regular distances on the roads. *Howel's Journal*, p. 186. Herodotus, *Terpsicbare*, p. 52.

till at length she opened a door, led the young man in; and then shut it upon herself and him.

The curiosity of Haroun Alraschid would here have been disappointed, if the key-hole had not been very large. He looked through this, and saw, first, the merchant standing alone: instantly, however, a closet door was opened, and out of it came the old woman, leading with her a young person of such dazzling beauty, that the Caliph was overpowered, and enchanted at the sight. Her stature was like the stem of a young tree rising by the side of a river; her black eyes, which might be compared to the fruit of the richest almond tree in the gardens of Damascus, shed a mild lustre, like the star of the morning; her eyebrows were two aerial arches, from which the arrows of love were ready to be aimed against all who should dare to gaze on the charms of her face; her mouth was like the ring of Solomon, on which is inscribed the ineffable name; her lips displayed a vermilion more, vivid than that which stains the coral; the enchanting row of her teeth was whiter than alabaster, and covered with the same enamel which glitters on the pearls of the Red-sea and the Persian gulph¹: The few words which proceeded from her mouth, seemed to surpass in sweetness the honey of Palestine; her breath embalmed the air; two globes, white as the lily, and round and firm as pomegranates, gently heaved upon her bosom. She was indeed above all praise that even the poet. of the happiest genius could bestow; and angelic modesty heightened all her other perfections. The Caliph was captivated with the sight, and observed, with pain, that she had not linen to cover her.

When this young beauty found, that her mother was exposing her to be seen by the merchant, she was covered with confusion, which still improved her beauty: She retired hastily to conceal herself in her chamber, crying, "Ah! Why would you expose me to the sight of that man? God keep women both young and old from appearing before men!"

"Be easy, child," said the mother; "nothing is ill that ends well: A man may see for once a young woman to whom he wishes to make proposals of marriage: If their destiny unite them, all is well; if they agree not, they see each other no more, and nothing is wrong."

When the young lady retired, the Caliph had applied his ear, instead of his eye, to the key-hole. Upon hearing the last words from the old woman, he began to think, that he had judged wrong, when he took her for a procuress. "This poor woman," said he, "has a beautiful

¹ The coasts of the Persian Gulph are inhabited, at present, by tribes of Arabs, supposed to be the *Ichthyophagi* of ancient writers; who are much employed in the pearl fishery.— See [Nicbuchar's travels](#), vol. II. translated by R. Heron.

daughter to dispose of in marriage; and no other means to procure her a husband, but by shewing her."

While the Caliph was making this reflection, the mother entered into conversation with the young merchant: "I promised you a miracle of beauty," said she; "have you been deceived? Do you like my daughter?"

"So entirely, Madam," replied the merchant, "that I desire only to know, how much you demand for the contract, and for her dowry?"—"Four thousand sequins¹ for the one," replied the mother, "and four thousand for the other." "Madam," replied the merchant, "were I to engage for these sums, I should be reduced to beggary: My whole fortune is only four thousand sequins. But, I offer you a thousand sequins, and as much to buy clothes for the marriage, and furniture. The remaining two thousand I must retain to carry on my trade, and support my wife. I can make no farther sacrifice."

"By the name of God which is written on our great Prophet's forehead," said the woman, "if but one of the eight thousand sequins which I ask be wanting, you shall not possess a hair of my daughter's head." "I must think myself unfortunate, then, Madam, in having been introduced to her; but, it is impossible for me to comply with your demands." So saying, he saluted her, and retired.

No sooner was one wooer gone, than a second made his appearance; and this was no other than the Caliph himself. The fair maid whom he now saw, was more beautiful than the princess of Persia; who, according to the law, was not even yet, his wife, and whom, besides, he had put into prison, and left her to languish there, under sentence of death, till he should see the event of the prophecy of Yemaleddin, on which depended both her fate, and the fate of that officer.

Haroun Alraschid went deliberately into the old woman's house, and saluted her. "What want you?" asked she. "I come," said the Caliph, "from the young merchant to whom you wished to dispose of your daughter in marriage. He has charged me to tell you, that you need think no more of him." "We know," said the old woman, "he was not to return."

"Well," rejoined the Caliph, "give her to me; I am ready to pay you down both the eight thousand sequins, and whatever more you may require either for furniture, or to gratify any of your whimsies. "We shall not disagree upon these matters."

The old woman surveyed the Caliph from head to foot. "Robber that thou art!" then said she, "for you have the dress and appearance of a robber; do you think of plundering the caravan on its way to Mecca, in order to furnish us with eight thousand sequins, and with so much linen, clothes, and furniture? You have not even wherewith to clothe

¹ A sequin is about nine shillings Sterling.

yourself. Get you gone, you robber; otherwise I shall call out for assistance."

"Whether I be robber or not, Madam, that is no business of yours. I offer to pay down instantly the eight thousand sequins. I shall join a handsome present for yourself; all the furniture—" "Do you think to make a mock of me, you robber? but justice is to be obtained at Bagdad: this is not a place for men like you to insult a poor woman with impunity. I take you at your word: if you cannot keep it, the Commander of the faithful shall condemn you to be strangled, this very evening."

"I accept these conditions, and am ready to sign them," said the Caliph: "I espouse your daughter; and you shall see me keep my promise." Upon this the old woman conducts him into her chamber. He seats himself, and says to her; "Take all proper precautions, first, to secure your daughter from me, in your absence: Go then to such a *cadi*; he lives at no great distance; tell him, that a man named *Il Bondocani* desires him to come hither instantly."

"And do you think," returned the woman, "that the *cadi* will come hither for such a man as you? If you are rich, so much the worse for you, your fortune has surely been dishonestly acquired: you are nothing but a cut-purse: and should a *cadi* come to wait upon you?" The Caliph smiled at this reply: "Go, Madam," said he, "give yourself no uneasiness; only bid the *cadi* come, and bring with him pen, ink, and paper."

At last, the old woman was persuaded to call the *cadi*. "If the judge come at the bidding of this man," said she to herself, "I may look upon my would-be son-in-law as a Captain of robbers. But, either the *cadi* will comply with the message which I bear, or he will at least rid me of this villain." As she was musing thus, she arrived at the *cadi*'s house. She was afraid of entering the apartment in which that magistrate was fitting with several of the nobles of the city. The shame of poverty, and the fear of being driven out in disgrace, held her back. "However," said she to herself, "if I go not in, I shall have come hither to no purpose. Let me at least endeavour to learn, who he is, that would he my son-in-law, if it were only to get quit of him. I may venture"—Then, advancing to the door of the apartment, she turned hastily back, fearing that an imprudent step might lead her into some unhappy embarrassment: hardly had she shewn her face in the hall, when she was seized with a panic terror which rendered her unable to go forward.

The *cadi* observed her head coming and going, appearing, and again disappearing.—He ordered one of his officers to see what that person wanted. The old woman was brought before him. "What would you have, good woman?" said the judge to her. "My Lord," replied she, "a man in my house, sent me to ask you to come to him." "What sayest thou, impudent old woman that thou art?" answered the *cadi*: "A man send for me!" at the same time turning to his officers, he bade them bind

the madwoman, and carry her to the hospital for lunatics." "Mercy!" cried the old woman, when she heard this order: "Ah! the cursed robber who sent me hither to ruin me. Did not I tell him, that he was not a man to send for the *cadi*? Do not, my Lord, lay hold upon me for this. I have a thief, a robber, a hang-dog in my house, who compelled me to come upon his errand. I came, against my will: but I am a woman; I am alone: that wicked man would marry my daughter; there was no refusing him; he said that you knew him, and that his name was *Il Bondocani*.¹

As soon as ever the *cadi* heard this name; "*My faragi!*" cried he hastily. "Set the woman at liberty. My good woman," said he, "softening his tone, you say that the young man who sent you to me is called—" "*My Lord,*" replied the old woman, "ask me not to repeat his name; it makes my flesh shrink to think of it. He is undoubtedly some notorious rogue; the captain of a troop of robbers. But, if I must pronounce it, his name is *Il Bondocani*."

The *cadi* now knew the fancied robber to be the Caliph in person. He wrapped himself in his *faragi*. "*Madam,*" said he to the old woman, "I beg a thousand pardons for the mistake which I have made, and the rudeness with which you have been treated."

The spectators were not a little surprised at so sudden and extraordinary a change in the *cadi*'s tone and behaviour, without any other apparent cause than the influence simply of the words, *Il Bondocani*. "Where go you in such a haste, Sir?" asked they. "Upon secret business," replied he. Then addressing himself very politely to the old woman; "Is it at your house, *Madam*, that he waits for me?" "Yes, Sir:" "Do me the favour of leading the way."

The old woman proceeded homeward, much more cheerfully than she had come abroad; and the *cadi* followed. It was not without great difficulty, and uneasiness that she had prevailed with herself to go to call the *cadi*: the bearing of such a message was enough to make her pass for a mad woman, and to occasion her being sent to the hospital for life. Now, she saw herself treated respectfully, and honoured with the name of *Madam*. "To be sure," said she to herself, "my intended son-in-law must be a man much respected by the *cadi*; or this magistrate may possibly be terrified at the name of so formidable a captain of banditti; he is in such a trepidation, that he has come out without his sandals: "What a change! It is not I, now, that am to be sent to bedlam; but he deserves to be sent thither, who seems beside himself at the mere hearing of a name; runs out in his robe, with bare feet, and without knowing what he does, or says. This *cadi* must be much afraid indeed of robbers, and of

¹ This was a name which the Caliph assumed when in disguise, and was known to his principal officers.

my intended son-in-law more than of any other, else he would never submit to such a piece of imposition."

With these thoughts in her head, the old woman entered her home. The *cadi* entered with her; and instantly knew the Commander of the faithful. He would have prostrated himself before his sovereign: but a sign from the prince, warned him not to discover his secret. After barely saluting him, therefore, the judge sat down by *II Bondocani*, who said, "My Lord, I propose to marry this old woman's daughter:" then the mother and the daughter came both forward and the *cadi* asked, whether they accepted *II Bondocani's* proposals?—the daughter, in particular, whether she would have him for her husband?" They both replied, "Yes, my Lord." The *cadi* next demanded, how much they required for the contract and the dowry? The old woman answered, "Four thousand sequins for the one, and as many for the other." "You, *II Bondocani*," said the *cadi* to the Caliph, "are you willing to pay these eight thousand sequins?" "Yes, my Lord," returned the Caliph; "make out the contract."

The *cadi* was not a little at a loss, how to obey his sovereign's command. "He had neglected to bring paper: The only expedient that remained in his power, was, to write the contract upon the tail of his *faragi*. After writing the first lines, which formed the preamble, he addressed the old woman; "Madam, you must name the father and grandfather of your daughter." "If the father and grandfather of my daughter were alive," returned the old woman, raising her voice, and in a piteous tone, "I should not be thus reduced to give her in marriage to a man, of whom I dare not say how unfavourably I think." "All in good time, Madam," answered the *cadi*; "but they are not alive, and their names are requisite here." "My daughter," said the old woman, "is named *Zutulbe*, and I *Lelamain*. The rest shall, on no account, pass my lips. She is of too good a family, I assure you, for the wife of a robber."

It is easy to conceive, how much the Caliph must have been inwardly entertained with the perplexity of the *cadi*, the dissatisfaction of the good woman, and with the whole incident of this scene, which he owed to the fantastic disguise he had assumed. The contract was at last drawn out. The man of the law gravely cut off the piece upon which it was written, from the tail of his *faragi*, and delivered it to the young lady; but, being ashamed to appear in the street, with a robe thus curtailed, he took it off, and gave it to the old woman, begging her to dispose of it in alms to the poor. His services being no farther necessary, he, hereupon, bowed and retired.

"Certainly," said the old woman to her new-made son-in-law, "you must have played this *cadi* some fine trick or other, in the exercise of your profession. You seem to know how to make yourself feared, as a captain of banditti. That poor man hastened hither, without taking time to put on his sandals. He is gone back half-naked, leaving his *faragi*

here, and you have paid him nothing for his trouble, nothing for the contract; he has served you, without money, and at the expense of his gown. Are all you robbers so narrow in these matters?

"My good mother," replied the Caliph, "give yourself no concern as to the cadi's not being paid, or forgetting his gown. You and I have matters of more importance to settle. I must leave you for the present, that I may bring the dowry which I have stipulated to pay, and stuffs for dresses to my wife. You shall see, that I can be generous enough, upon occasion."

"And what poor man's strong-box, and warehouse," exclaimed the old woman, "are to supply means for your liberality? He must be astonished, to-morrow, to find himself robbed by he knows not whom: for I suppose that in a city such as this, you gentry, do your business very quietly."

Haroun, without reply, returned to his palace; put on a dress more suitable to his dignity; sent for an architect; specified the house which he wished him to embellish, and ordered him to take with him all the necessary workmen; and, as far as possible, to transform it instantaneously into a sumptuous palace. "The grand visier," added he, "will furnish you with whatever you may want for the accomplishment of this task. The whole must be done before sun-set. You shall answer with your head for your activity in executing these orders. If the woman of the house ask, who sent you to work there? tell her, her son-in-law. If she express any anxiety to know the name or the profession of her newly-acquired relation; answer, that you know not who he is, but only, that his name is *Il Bondocani*. Let none make the slightest mention of my rank to any person; make a discreet choice of your workmen; and reflect, that your life depends upon your discretion and theirs."

The architect only answered, "I shall obey the Prince of the faithful." He immediately furnishes himself with materials. The house of old Lelamain is crowded with workmen, furniture, tapestry, stuffs: ladders are set to the walls; on all sides, within and without, are people at work. "Who sent you hither?" asks old Lelamain from the workmen; "What come you to do?" "We come to improve and embellish your house," answered they; "to line the walls with this wood of aloes, to set up these marbles, these paintings, that furniture, these curtains; all by the orders of your daughter's new-married husband." "But, how do ye call him? What are his quality and condition?" asked the old lady. "We know nothing of his quality. As to his name, we can easily satisfy you; it is *Il Bondocani*."

"I knew," said good Lelamain to herself, "that a captain of banditti could make himself formidable through all the country round. But the fear of this man seems even to have spread through the city: Not one of

these people dares call a robber by his proper name. Very extraordinary, indeed!"

While she was making these reflections, a man came in, with a porter before him, bearing an iron chest, damasked with gold. "What bring you here?" said the old woman. "The dowry of the new-married lady," answered the man: "In this coffer you will find eight thousand sequins in gold, and two thousand more for your expences: here is the key."

"In good time," said Lelamain; "my son-in-law, whatever he may be, is, at least, a man of his word. But, where could he have all this? Who is he? What does he?" "I know neither who he is, nor what he does," replied the messenger; "you should know your daughters husband better than I: I, for my part, know nothing more of him, than that he is called *Il Bondocani*."

In the mean time, the workmen had accomplished their task; and night was not yet come. Such a change had been produced upon this little house, (which, before they began their repairs, confided of two wide rooms in a very desolate condition, and having no other furniture but two deals supported upon stones, two wooden stools, and two mats very much worn), that it seemed now not unfit for the reception even of a prince. Lelamain surveyed, one after another, all the objects by which this alteration had been effected; and, although so unsuccessful in her former attempts, yet could she not help going again to the workmen, one by one, and saying, "You surely know who my son-in-law is, and what is his condition?." She received still the same answer; "We know that his name is *Il Bondocani*."

The old woman was, at last, left alone with her daughter: "Your husband," said she to the maid, "must be a very extraordinary man. He has done more in a day, than any other would attempt to accomplish in a year. None but the Caliph, or a captain of banditti, could have so many people at his command. But, while these folks pay such ready obedience to my son-in-law, they dare not avow, who he is: were his character declared, they should, no doubt, have to blush both for him and themselves. I addressed myself to the youngest of them, supposing that I might perhaps succeed with him. His answer. was; "If one of us should reveal the quality of your new relation, his imprudent blabbing would cost him his life." "Undoubtedly, daughter, he is a captain of banditti, to whom you are betrothed, and the whole world are afraid of him. God and his Prophet help us!"

The architect went to inform the Caliph, that his Highness's orders were obeyed. He, and those whom he had employed, were liberally recompensed. But the house was as yet provided only with those articles of furniture which were most indispensably requisite. Haroun now ordered Giafar to ornament it speedily with all those sumptuous pieces of

decoration, rather than of use, which usually enrich the palaces of monarchs. Lelamain, when she saw this new profusion of luxurious splendour brought in, again sought to obtain information concerning the quality of him who sent so many fine things. "We know," said the bearers, as they placed the things in proper order, "that they are sent by your daughter's husband, whose name is Il Bondocani. We received our orders from him."

Scarcely were these gone, when a new party knocked at the door: the old woman opened, and saw them bring in a number of bales of the richest stuffs, of all sorts. When they opened the bales, and spread out the stuffs before her; "For what purpose do you open our these beautiful stuffs?" asked she. "That you may see them, Madam." "Your shewing them to me is needless; for we are by much too poor, to purchase any thing so valuable." "Is not this the house that was repaired to-day?" asked the others. "Yes," returned Lelamain. "These are all yours, then; your newly-acquired relation sends them. Furnish your house; dress out the newly-married lady and your female friends: Your son-in-law has abundance of every thing; spare you nothing. We were ordered to tell you, that he would be here by eleven o'clock." Having said thus much, they went away.

"He will come at eleven," said she; "robbers dare not roam abroad, except at night, when all the world is asleep." As she ended this little reflection, seeing that several things still remained to be set in order, she went to ask the assistance of some of her neighbours. Great was their surprise, to see her house changed, in the course of a single day, from what it had been before, into a pompous palace. It was natural that they should be curious to know, how so great and so sudden a change had been effected. It had the air of enchantment, illusion, the vision of a dream. "All has come about naturally enough, however," said Lelamain. "This morning came a man who asked my daughter in marriage. He sent for the *cadi*; the contract was made out; and, in an instant after, by my son-in-law's orders, all the workmen in Bagdad were here, making these alterations, and bringing all that profusion of fine things, which you see."

"In this case," replied the neighbours, "he must be a prince to whom you have given your daughter, or at least the richest merchant in the empire." "We are far from having happened so fortunately," returned the old woman. "From what I have seen, I fear that my son-in-law is a robber; and, such is the terror with which he seems to have impressed all who come from him, that I cannot suppose him to be less than a captain of robbers." At this declaration, her guests were alarmed. "At least, Madam," said they, "put your son-in-law in mind, that it has been always the custom for robbers, to spare their neighbourhood." "Fear nothing," answered the old woman: "My son-in-law is surely a robber;

but I cannot suppose him capable of injuring his neighbours. Be you easy; I engage, that he shall not harm you."

Her friends are thus encouraged. The men arrange the furniture; and the women assist the young wife to dress. Nature had, indeed, done so much for her, that she had little need of the aids of art, to render her charming; and yet, a jewel seems to acquire additional value, when employed to assist the effect of her charms. The stir within the house was interrupted anew, by a noise at the door. Those who knocked, proved to be persons bringing dishes of meat for a repast, in the highest degree sumptuous and delicate. A second service followed, consisting of the rarest and finest fruits, and the most exquisite confections. The most delicious wines, with other excellent liquors of all sorts, accompanied the other things prepared for this magnificent banquet. The vessels were all gold and porcelain. "Here, Madam," said the bearers, "is a collation for yourself and your neighbours." "You come from my son-in-law?" replied Lelamain. "But, once for all, for goodness sake, who is he? What is his condition?" "We know no more than you," was their answer; "his name—" "Ah! his name I know better than you— —No necessity for its being so often repeated to me."

These persons retired, upon this; and Lelamain's neighbours began to look one upon another, and to believe, seriously, that her son-in-law could be none other than a captain of robbers. They however sat down at table, after putting aside some of the best dishes, that the young couple might sup together when the husband should arrive. To make the most of the adventure, they took care to eat, with great appetite, of the good things which Il Bondocani had provided. After rising from their repast, they took leave of Lelanutin and her daughter; congratulating them upon the happy change in their fortune, and wishing them all manner of prosperity. The news was soon spread through all quarters of the town, that a captain of robbers from the desert, had married old Lelamain's charming daughter; the whole affair had been negotiated in one day; the house was already filled with the spoils of a dozen of caravans. Such were the reports given out.

The young merchant, to whom Lelamain had proposed her daughter, was, by this time, violently in love with her. He was piqued to think, that a robber should be preferred to him. He therefore contrived, how to ruin his rival, and regain the object of which *he* had deprived him. He determined to wait on the judge of the police, and to make a declaration before that magistrate, which he might procure to be supported by proper witnesses; and, in consequence of which, the robber would be seized and strangled, without farther process. He should, himself, in consequence of thus bringing the criminal to justice, receive a share of his confiscated effects; and moreover, in spite of the accursed old mother, the daughter would be adjudged to him, and he should enjoy

the object of his passion. Such was the plan which the joint force of jealousy, love, and avarice, prompted him to form, and to execute without delay. He instantly waited upon the judge, roused his avidity by a description of the riches which the fancied robber had impudently displayed in the house of Lelamain, and began with presenting him a gratification in hand.

This magistrate, being a covetous, selfish man, took the money, listened coolly to the merchant's report, gave himself time to reflect; and then said, with a degree of gravity becoming his magisterial importance: "Go home for the present; it is now only eight o'clock; at ten, come back; that being the hour for supper, we may then possibly surprise the robber. I shall make him be seized, fettered and strangled. I will likewise put you in possession of the daughter, and order the bastinado to be inflicted on the old woman, as a punishment for her rejecting you, for such a rival. But, nothing of all this must transpire." The young merchant went home; and, at the hour agreed upon, returned. The judge had, in the mean time, mustered three hundred of his troops. He immediately mounted his horse, and followed the informer to the old woman's house. He met with no person on his way thither, every body being retired to prepare for rest. The habitation of old Lelamain was soon invested. The mother and her daughter were sitting quietly together, with a number of lights burning around them in golden candlesticks, and expecting the arrival of the generous robber. They heard a noise. Lelamain looked out at the window, and perceived the judge of the police, with his officers, and a numerous band of attendants.

They knocked repeatedly at the gate. The old woman would not open to them: But, the knocking became harder and louder. The person who beat so furiously, was Chamama, the worthiest officer that ever covetous and corrupt judge was blessed with. That daemon incarnate gave out himself, that Satan was his father, and the devil Camas his brother. "Let us break up the door," cried he with fury, "since it is not opened. There is a risk of the treasures within escaping us. They are perhaps hiding them under ground, where we may not be able to find them; Besides, a party of superior officers may join us while we stand here, and share our booty. The door is strong, but we must instantly get levers, and raise it off the hinges, if we would not be disappointed of our object."

This activity accorded entirely with the secret inclinations of the judge. But, the officer next under him, who was named Hazen, was naturally of a mild, beneficent, and charitable disposition, and was even disposed to take the part of the unfortunate. "The advice of Chamama," said this officer to the judge, "is violent and dangerous. This house was never yet suspected for a haunt of robbers. Perhaps the young merchant has been so far blinded by passion, as to give it a false declaration. How

greatly then should we endanger ourselves, by violating the retirements of women! They are under the express protection of the law; and we have to render an account of our conduct to the Prince of the faithful."

Lelamain lent an ear to this discourse. "Ah!" said she then, running back to her daughter. "What unfortunate creatures are we! The judge is come hither, to search for your robber, and seize him." "Do not open the door, mother," replied the young woman; "Perhaps, God may send us assistance, to relieve us from our perplexity." The judge, however, still continued to knock at the door: "Who are you," said the old woman, "that knock with such violence?" "It is the judge of the police," replied the detestable Chamama; "open, thou infamous old woman, who prostitutes youth, and resettest robbers. Knowest thou not how much thou endangerest thyself by thine obstinacy?"

"Here are none but two women," replied Lelamain; "it becomes you to know and respect the law. We neither can, nor will open to you; you come not here."

"Ah! sorceress!" replied Chamama, foaming with rage, "open thy door; otherwise we will burst it open; and thou and thy daughter shall both be burnt." Lelamain made no answer to these menaces and invectives, but returned to her daughter. "See, now," said she, "whether my fears were well-founded. Is it evident or not, now, that you are married to a robber? Heaven grant that he come not here to-night! If the judge and his officers can but lay their hands upon him, they will cut him in pieces. Ah! daughter, were your father alive, had even your brother escaped that misfortune, we should have made an alliance, which would not have occasioned our door to be beset by the judge and all his ragamuffins.

"What mean you?" said the young lady: "For some time, you may be sensible, the influence of the stars, which predominates over human affairs, has singled us out, and pursued us with malignity: It is enough that we submit to it: Why should we voluntarily distress ourselves with anxieties which can do us no good?"

While the judge and Chamama continued to insist upon the opening of the door, and the women to lament their condition, without knowing what they should do; the Caliph resumed his arrows and half-boots, and came to consummate his nuptials. The blaze of lights, the numbers of people about the house, and the noise which was made, were together sufficient to warn him, that something extraordinary was going forward. He soon discerned, who was at the head of the troop; and saw, by his side, the young merchant to whom Lelamain had first proposed her daughter.

Chamama continued to knock at the door, and, at each blow, to utter horrid imprecations against those within. He repeated all his former reproaches, and continued to threaten the bastinado, hanging, burning,

and whatever else he imagined most likely to frighten the women; calling, at the same time, for levers, to force the door.

Some of the attendants were preparing to effect their entrance in this manner. But Hazen, the lieutenant, stopped them, saying: "Do not comrades, intrude by violence into a house, in which are only two women. The alarm will be enough to kill them. Besides, how know we, whether the man we seek, be a robber, or not? We are infringing the law at the peril of our lives, and committing an act of extreme injustice."

"Pretty scruples these, for an officer of justice!" cried Chamama. "You are unfit for your place, Hazen. You trifle squeamishly about nothing, till the guilty will escape. A woman who trades in prostituting the virtue of others, and gives up her own daughter to a robber professed, has forfeited the privileges of her sex. Can you doubt the fellow's being a robber, when all the neighbours, of whom inquiry has been made, declare so?"

"Infamous Chamama!" said the Caliph to himself, when he heard this language; "thy present conduit, and thine oppressive principles, shall cost thee dear: I will make a striking example of thee." So saying, he contrived how he might best get into Lelamain's house, unseen. It stood contiguous to the gardens of a large palace, the gate of which opened into one side of a street. The palace belonged to Ilamir Youmis, the first of the princes and nobility of Bagdad, a cruel, bloody-minded man. The court was illuminated with a profusion of lights. A eunuch sat in it on a marble sofa. At sight of the Caliph, the eunuch arose, and, railing his sabre, advanced to meet him. The Caliph holding out his sabre, to parry an attack, exclaimed with passion; "Accursed negro! is it thus that thou art ever ready to kill, without being at the pains to inquire, whether he is friend or foe, against whom thou raisest thine arm?"

These words from the Caliph, and the sight of the sabre, made the eunuch flee in terror to his master. Youmis was surprised, and asked the cause of his trepidation. "I was at the gate of the palace," said the black; "A man of a frightful aspect, came up to me. I went to send him away, or to strike him with my sabre, if he should refuse to be gone. He drew his sabre, spoke to me in a voice of thunder, and was raising his arm, to cleave me to the ground."

"Base coward!" answered Ilamir Youmis; "thou haft fled from thine own shadow, perhaps; yet I would know, who has had the presumption to threaten my slave. His life shall answer for his insolence. To insult my slave, is to attack myself." So saying, Ilamir Youmis took up a mafly brazen mace, and went to find the object of the eunuch's fears.

The Caliph, who had remained in the court, seeing Youmis approach, addressed him thus: "Youmis, is this your house?" The chief emir no sooner heard the Caliph's voice, than his mace dropped from his

hands, and he prostrated himself at his master's feet: "Commander of the Faithful! your slave is ready to receive your commands."

"Dost thou deserve to be honoured with my commands? stupid and negligent as thou art;" replied the Caliph. "Thou art chief of my emirs, and ruler in this quarter of the city, where is thy care to maintain order?" A poor woman in thy near neighbourhood is at this instant oppressed and insulted. The judge of the police and his ruffian officers are the actors in this scene of violence and injustice. For such purposes do they abuse the privileges of office. And thou art far from exerting thine authority to redress such flagrant abuses. Thou, in the mean time, drunkard that thou art! liest asleep in the arms of thy women; and leavest all to the direction of a eunuch. Thou art at best but a pitiful and cowardly wretch, to suffer thine equals to be insulted, and this at thy very gate!"

"Commander of the Faithful! I could not have the least knowledge of the disturbance your Highness mentions. Till this moment I had received no notice of it. Had the noise reached my ears, I would have treated the judge and his party agreeably to their demerits. With your permission, I go to teach them, whether it becomes them or not, to disturb the tranquillity of the city."

"Have done with this unreasonable boasting of thy zeal and courage. The house which they have beset, is adjoining to the walls of thy garden. Let us cross it. Get me two ladders, by which I may enter over the walls, into the house that is besieged."

Youmis obeys. They pass through the garden. Youmis holds one ladder inclined against the wall, while the Caliph mounts it; and, with the help of the other, goes down upon the terrace of the house that contained his bride. Youmis followed. "Stop here," then said the Caliph, "till I call you." Haroun himself drew near to a window, and, looking in, saw that the architect had executed his orders respecting the decorations of the apartments with great exactness. They were brilliantly illuminated. His young wife was so richly arrayed, that her beauty appeared in his eyes still more charming than before. It dazzled with all the radiance of the sun, rising through an unclouded sky: her eyes were bathed in tears, and pearls seemed to chase each other down her cheeks. Never did the full moon shine with half that mild, yet vivid lustre, which now adorned the brow of the fair Zutulbe. The amorous Haroun Alraschid was in an ecstasy of joy and love; from which he was soon roused by an exclamation of Lelamain's.

"Daughter! they continue to knock furiously. The door will be laid in pieces. What will become of us, poor women, who have none but God to help us, in the hands of those tygers? Some devil it was, surely, that sent us this robber, whose alliance thus completes the sum of our misfortunes." "Mother," returned the daughter, "you do yourself wrong,

and increase our distress needlessly, in supposing my husband a robber. I cannot, for my part, think that he is; but I have received him, by your consent, from the hand of God; and it is my duty to submit cheerfully to the divine decree, by which I have been joined to him. Every reproach or aspersion thrown out against him, is equally injurious to me." Such words from his bride, were the sweetest music to the Caliph's ear.

"God be praised!" cried Lelamain, "since thou art content with thy lot, my poor daughter. I also see many things about him, with which I am far from displeased. Would that I were a bird, to meet him, and whisper in his ear, that he come not hither to-night. If he come, and fall into the hands of these ruffians, he is a dead man. They will cut him in pieces; and then seize every thing here. You and I, my dear daughter, shall be lambs in the jaws of the wolf."

The Caliph, in order to interrupt these complaints, took up a small stone, and aiming at the light which stood beside the mother, put it out. Lelamain lighted it again, without taking any notice of the accident. A second stone extinguished the light with which she had rekindled the former; and the good woman sought a third to rekindle this. "The wind is surely strong," said she, "or some spirit in the air diverts itself with putting out these lights." While she was speaking, a bit of gravel fell upon her hand. She uttered a cry of surprise, and looked towards the window, where she immediately saw the Caliph on the outside. "Here is your husband," said she to her daughter; "he comes by the way which all such persons are obliged to take. A thief never enters by the door. Will you now maintain against me, that he is not such? Thank God! he has for once escaped the officers of justice; and I cannot tell how happy I am!" Then speaking to himself, "Return," said she, "quickly, by the way thou camest. Here is no good for thee. Dost not thou hear the noise which is made at the door by a band of other robbers? They will give thee no quarter."

While Lelamain was anxiously making this harangue, the Caliph laid aside his boots, his cloak, and his girdle; and, wrapping them up with his bow and arrows in a parcel, sprang with the nimbleness of a bird into the apartment. He saluted the mother affectionately; and then fondly embraced the daughter, before either could have time to speak.

"Robber!" said the old woman, "is this a time for kissing and embracing, when a party are in search of thee, to take thy life? The least that it can cost thee is these two hands. Thus are persons of thy character handled by justice, even when most mercifully dealt with. Art thou not afraid of all those people?"

"No, my good mother," answered the Caliph. "I have seen many more than those in my time; and, such as you see me, I am made for noise. Heed them not. They have supped, and have had nothing so agreeable as I find here, to detain them at home. My dear wife and I must

sit down to supper. Their noise will serve us for music. Give us some of your best dishes: You would make good cheer for your neighbours; and you cannot but have something nice remaining."

The old woman covered the table, saying, as she did so, "He is a perfect devil this; no more afraid of three hundred men, than I of a mouse. After all the ill that is said of the trade, I can conceive that a woman may love a robber. They are nimble as antelopes, and bold as lions." The Caliph sat down by his bride, at the table. Lelamain's place was opposite to them. She gazed on her son-in-law, while he ate with a good appetite, and cast his eyes, from time to time, with inexpressible fondness, on his spouse: This silent eloquence was now and then interrupted by gallant and tender expressions of his love.

"Delight of my soul!" said the enraptured Caliph, "give me but that bit from your rosy lips, which has received the perfume of your delicious breath. Ah! could I but surprise one sigh breathed for me!"

"What a deluding tongue!" muttered the old woman; "where has he stolen these honied words, to make my daughter fond to distraction of him, to-night, that she may weep out her eyes for him to-morrow:"—"You are speaking to yourself, good mother; what is it you say?" —"That you might shew more regard to me: am I so undeserving of your polite attentions?" "I honour, I respect your wrinkles, Madam; they bespeak a venerable experience, maturity of understanding, and of years."—"Plague upon your maturity! I have seen the time when more gallant compliments were paid me." "That I can well believe, from the resemblance which you still bear to your lovely daughter."

So saying, Haroun fondly embraced his wife. But, all of a sudden, the terrible Chamama thundered at the door: "Open! open! thou old sorceress!" and knocked at the same time, as if his arms had been made of brass. "Fear not, my dove," said the Caliph; "let us enjoy the delights of mutual love. No pleasure has so exquisite a relish as that which is attended with anxiety. Beat, knock, thunder with thy discordant voice, thou blustering Chamama! compel the tender, trembling beauty, who is frightened by thy threats, to flee, for refuge, into my arms; and her soul to escape by her lips into my heart." "Have done, thou dog of a robber!" cried the old woman: "wilt thou not escape by the window, and leave us here? The house is ready to take fire; and must thy breath kindle the blaze? As for me, I am more dead than alive."

"I will not be gone," said the Caliph; "I am too happy here. But, as it is time for us to go to bed, and as you dislike the music, let us send away the musicians. Take this ring, speak through the key-hole to the persons who are knocking, and tell them; "My daughter's husband is here, and bids me deliver this ring into the hands of the judge, who will see, by it, what it behoves him to do."

"And will your ring, think you, turn their heads, as you have turned my daughter's, with these twining arms of yours? Although the cadi might be in connivance with you; sure all these people cannot. But, if you succeed in this masterpiece of enchantment, as in so many others; I shall instantly put on a double belt, like yours, to give me that look of activity which becomes your profession; and beg you to teach me, as my first lesson in roguery, how to steal a woman's shoes from her feet, and come off, without detection."

"You choose to be pleasant, good mother. So much the better; the fitter are you to discharge my commission. Take the ring, open the door so far as that you may put out your arm; deliver the ring to the judge, and tell him, "This is my son-in-law's ring; his name is *II Bondocani*. Pronounce the name in a firm, distinct tone of voice."—"I go," said the old woman; "that name has magic in it, I know, to make men still and stupid as statues."

While Lelamain goes to deliver the ring and the menage, the Caliph returns by the window to the terrace. Youmis was there in waiting for him. "Take my sabre," said the prince; "get down instantly by your ladder into the street; see, whether any one have the audacity to commit, or to order the smallest violence; whoever is guilty, strike off his head. Discover yourself as soon as you see that my ring, which I have sent out to them, has disposed the whole party to pay a due obedience to my commands. Degrade the judge; invest the Hazen with his authority. Take into custody, the judge, Chamama, and all such others of the party, as you have observed to be forward in the assault. They must be all laid in irons till to-morrow; and you will then inflict the punishment due to their demerits."

After giving these orders to Youmis, the Caliph returned to his bride; and the chief of the emirs hastened to fulfil his master's commands. He instantly went down near the tumultuous band, with his naked sabre under his gown. The old woman was, in the mean time, holding a parley with Chamama, at the door: "Cease knocking thus at the door, thou devil's whelp," said she, "retire for a moment; I would speak with my Lord; I have a ring to deliver him." "Open the door, and give me the ring, thou old sink of impurity: My Lord is on horseback; and should he dismount for thee?" "He must dismount," returned the old woman; "I have a ring to give into his own hands from my son-in-law: My Lord judge will surely be able to read the inscription upon it."—"A mighty matter to read, truly! My Lord," continued Chamama, turning to the judge, "let me cut down the door with two or three blows of this hatchet; we may then seize that son of the gallows, with all his plunder, the old woman, and her daughter, who is as bad as herself."

"My Lord," said the Hazen, "your wisdom cannot, surely, approve of Chamama's violence. You may soon know what the ring means. We

understand that the man we are in search of, is now in the house. How he came there, is hard to tell; for it is regularly invested. It is not therefore the abode merely of a simple woman, into which we are preparing to force admission. If, after inspecting the ring, you continue in the mind to break down the door in the case of resistance, here am I ready to give the first blow. But, first, permit me to send these people a short way backwards, and to question the woman."

The judge was in a manner forced to yield to so reasonable a proposal. Chamama retired, uttering the most horrible imprecations. The Hazen approached the door. "Open, without fear," said he to the old woman, "and give me the ring: from whom do you bring it?" "From my son-in-law," replied Lelamain with somewhat more confidence, in consequence of the mild words of the Hazen: "He says, that his name is Il Bondocani."

The Hazen faithfully delivered the ring to the judge, and, with it, the message, word by word. The name of Il Bondocani had no effect upon the accursed Chamama, who was not in the secret of it. "Who," said he, "is this Bondocani, who sends us this ring? He shall have an hundred bastinadoes, with his ring upon his finger, out of respect to the dignity of his name. The old woman shall be cut in pieces. I will have her burnt to cinders, to powder, and that strewed in the next brook. Open the door fully upon both sides, otherwise I will break it down with my hatchet."

"Peace! wretch," said the astonished judge. "Thine infamous, insatiable avarice, thy horrible villainy, has ruined us all." His Lordship had, by this time examined the ring, and the name of Il Bondocani was well known to him. The words, *It is the Caliph*, which the magistrate uttered, were at the same time repeated from mouth to mouth through the whole party, till they reached Chamama's ear.

But, if vipers, serpents, hydras, and all the hideous animals upon earth, had hissed at once in Chamama's ears, he could not have been more terribly alarmed. He fell down, like a dead lump, upon the ground; bit the earth, and dashed his head upon it with the vehemence of despair. His awakened and agonizing conscience presents him with a frightful view of all his crimes. His whole frame is convulsed, with all the most dreadful symptoms of madness and epilepsy. "I am convinced; I am thunderstruck; I am dead!" cried he. In this despairing condition was he found, when persons came, by Ilamir Youmis' orders, to fetter him, and carry him into confinement in the house of that Emir. Good Lelamain had watched to see what effects the name and ring of her son-in-law might have. When she returned into the house, her uneasiness was entirely gone; but her surprise become much greater than ever.

"The word and the talisman have not failed," said she: "An awful name, this of yours! I absolutely shudder to think of it. As to the

scoundrel Chamama, he has not a bowel in his belly by this time; and all the rest are petrified with fear. Sure, you must have done the officers of the police much mischief, before you could make yourself so very formidable to them. Hark! the noise is still; no lights are now to be seen in the street: They are all gone, I believe. Well! I should be pleased myself, to make people do as much for me, out of goodwill; but God keep me from ever being the object of general terror; for, we must account for all at the last."

"Yes, good mother," said the Caliph, "you must give in your account likewise; and if there be harm in loquacity, sure, you have not a little to reckon for." Then approaching his young wife; "Idol of my soul!" said he, "art thou now easy?" "Ah!" replied she, "it was only for you I trembled." "Dear, charming words!" said Haroun; "an angel engraves them on my heart; and never shall they be effaced. But, dear Zutulbe, for I have not forgotten your pretty name, tell me, is your heart now perfectly free from anxiety?"

"Not quite at ease," replied Zutulbe; "I feel a stronger emotion than fear could inspire: But, it does me no harm; I should rather, indeed, wish it to be augmented than allayed: I cannot help feeling, at the same time, a sort of slight fear—"

"The delight of my life," said the fond Caliph, "found in a fair garden, at the dawn of day." "Yes, my dear husband, I am found so." "Well! the opening rose, sparkling with all the dewy pearls of the morn, at once fears and desires to meet the radiance of the star of day. Such is my charming Zutulbe."

"And such is my robber of a son-in-law," said the old woman, having her arms crossed upon her breast, and looking kindly upon the fond pair, "who, after doing so much mischief, and impressing so great fear, every where else, comes hither to rob me of the heart of my child. God and his Prophet bless your union, such as it is; for a marriage it is, to be sure: As for me, I have nothing to do here, but to put out the lights."

Haroun Alraschid, now more in love than he had ever been in his life, undressed Zutulbe with; his own hand's; and the mother drew the curtains upon the fond couple. Here let us leave them, that we may see how Hamir Youmis acquitted himself of the commission with which he was charged. The Hazen having been invested by him in the authority of the deposed judge, and mounted upon his horse, was permitted to return home, with all such of the party as had conducted themselves without any blameable degree of insolence. Chamama, the judge, and four other rascals of the same spirit as Chamama, passed the night in irons, in the court of the emir's palace. Soon as it was day, the judge was sent to prison; and Chamama to the next cross-way, where he expired under the bastinado. His body was cut in pieces. His four worthy comrades, after

being rudely handled in the same style, were cast into a dungeon, more dead than alive. Their crime was, *prevarication and oppression in the discharge of their employments, as officers of justice.*

These punishments had been inflicted by the time Haroun and Zutulbe opened their eyes. The Caliph arose. He naturally supposed that Youmis would have informed Giafar and Mesrour of the night's adventure, and that all was quiet at the palace. But, his affairs now rendered it necessary for himself to repair thither.

Good mother Lelamain had prepared a collation, which the young couple found very agreeable. A little desultory conversation was intermixed.

"Heaven grant," said the old woman, "that our misfortunes end here! Never were poor women more unfortunate than we; after being once rich and happy above our wishes."

"What!" said the Caliph, "if you had riches, who has taken them from you?" "Envious fortune and injustice," answered Lelamain. "And you have suffered from these in Bagdad?" returned the Caliph, with an appearance of anxiety. "Where else," answered the old woman, "since we have lived all our lives here?" "That cannot be, under the reign of Haroun Alraschid." "Was he not reigning a month ago?" "But, does not he disapprove and repress all injustice?" "Yes, yes," answered Lelamain, "he punishes injustice rigidly enough in others. But, for injustice in himself, he pardons it in that quarter, unless you should suppose, that he knows not what he does." "You surprise me, good mother. Pray, let me hear how the matter stands? The delegates of his authority must have abused the trust reposed in them."

"No;" said Lelamain, "in the present instance, no such abuse has been committed. It was he himself in person, the sage Haroun, that pattern for princes, who did all the ill. Would that he had contented himself with stripping persons of our birth and rank, of all their substance, and reducing us to the state of misery and meanness in which you found us. Had he only brought us to this condition, in which, to avoid perishing by hunger, I have been obliged to give my daughter to such a man as you; I could have forgiven him for all this: But, to rob me cruelly of my dearest son, of a jewel, of which you have not the match, although you possess his sister Zultulbe— The bulrushes of the Nile are not straighter than he, nor the cedars of Lebanon, which are visited by the devout, more gracefully majestic in their aspect. He was mild as a lamb; candid in his manners as a dove: The eye of the eagle was never more piercing than his judgment; the squirrel not more active: He was Hazeb, and served the Caliph with unequalled attachment, assiduity, and zeal. It might have been thought, that the Prince loved him. But who can trust to those tigers of monarchs? He commanded his faithful servant's death, and in an instant completed both his ruin and ours. Ah!

my poor Yemaleddin!" cried the old woman here; "the tyrant who condemned thee to death for a glass of water, had surely drunk thirty glasses of wine more than enough."

The Caliph, as he heard this relation, began to perceive how much he had erred. But, as he had never before received such a lesson from any person, although he had taken several to himself in the course of his life; he wished to excuse what he had done, as much as possible.

"I have heard the affair of Hazeb Yemaleddin mentioned," said he; "there was something more in it than the glass of water." "You mean a plate of cataifs? A fine affair, truly! My son kept too good a table of his own, to have any fancy for such trash. He knew not whence the plate came. He gave it, for whatever it might be worth, to the watchman of our ward."—"But," said the Caliph, "there was something much more serious than what you speak of. He looked upon the lady while she was drinking, and was therefore lawfully condemned to death——"

"Don't you go to plead here for the Caliph, and the law. Persons of your stamp have no business to understand it. My son never looked upon the woman: the poor good youth had no more malice in his heart, than a lamb. But, even if he had seen her face; he has nothing of the basilisk about him: Would his eyes have killed her? Did he know her to be another man's wife? If all those men were to lose their eyes, who happen, by chance, to see a woman in the streets, we should meet with few but blind men. —But, she was one of the Caliph's wives; and whoever looks upon any of them must die," you will perhaps say. "Why, then, does the Caliph suffer them to run up and down the streets, if those who happen to be abroad at the same time, are ever as if a sabre were hung by a hair over their heads? Let him put a label upon the foreheads of those whom he permits to walk about; and I warrant you they shall find neither a man nor a glass of water in the way."

"But, tell me, thou robber by profession—for I cannot doubt of thy being so, since all the world say that thou art, and pursue thee, to punish thee as such —Wouldst thou be guilty of such another piece of cruelty, as that of which I accuse the Commander of the Faithful, God's vice-gerent upon earth?"

"You indeed attack people for their property; but, you never kill them, unless in self-defence; their feet and their hands, you always leave them, to draw them out of the affair, the best way they can. Would you assassinate, without compassion, one who had served you faithfully?—Yet, you are not princes; you are only robbers: and I am tempted to think, that there will be an hundred robbers in paradise, for one prince; as it cannot be denied, that Haroun Alraschid is the most perfect model of a good king, upon earth."

Here honest Lelamain stopped; and it was indeed time. Haroun was confounded by the truths which she urged, and could advance nothing farther in his own defence.

"You have reason, I see, good mother," said he; "the Caliph is wrong. He has suffered himself to be hurried away by passion. All about him have been in a haste to obey the dictates of his anger. He has not found, in his whole court, one friend or counsellor, to perform the friendly duty of staying his rash hand. He is much to be blamed, but still more to be pitied." "Happily, there is yet no great harm done. Your son is alive. Your whole fortune has been ruined in a moment, but may be as suddenly restored. I am going out. I have some little interest in the palace, I shall use it all to serve you; and I may venture to promise, that you shall, this day, embrace your son."

"Son-in-law," replied Lelamain, "you may make us believe what you please here: But, the Caliph is not a man to run after you, without his slippers. You have not now the ring which spread so much confusion through the judge of the police's rascally troop. Don't you pretend to intermeddle in the affairs of the great Haroun Alraschid, to whom the earth and the sea are subject; before whom the stars bow their heads, in honour to the vicar of our great Prophet. The grand vizier, Giafar, durst not undertake what you propose."

"Be you easy here, since you are let alone: change your way of life; remain with us; become an honest man: give alms: God is good, and will pardon the past: By going out, you will expose yourself to the utmost danger, and leave us here in a state of extreme anxiety. Look how tenderly the eyes of my poor Zutulbe seem to entreat you to be careful of yourself; and think with yourself, that those baubles of gold, silk and jasper, which you leave with us, will not make up to us for the loss we shall suffer in being deprived of yourself. My son is innocent; he is under the divine protection; and although I cannot love you so well as him, I am however less afraid for him than for you."

The Caliph was moved even to tears by this discourse of Lelamain's, so full of amiable affection, and of pious sentiments. He arose to go out; but Zutulbe and her mother held him by his gown. "In the name of God, which is written on the plate of gold that adorned the brow of the high priest of the Jews," said they to him, "do not leave us."

Haroun, still more affected, took Lelamain by the hand, in a tender respectful manner: "O my good mother!" said he, "you have given me a treasure in the person of your amiable daughter; and you give me, what is even more valuable, in those wise instructions which I may with so much advantage apply to the regulation of my future conduct. I vow to you a warm and lasting attachment, and the sincerest gratitude, of which you shall receive the most signal proofs. But, permit me to go out; and as for my personal safety, make yourselves perfectly easy. Business

of indispensable necessity calls me hence. Adieu! dear Zutulbe; you shall soon see me again." With this he left them, and returned to his palace, by a private passage, which led to his own apartment.

Immediately after his arrival, he put on his robes of state, ascended his throne, and ordered his viziers, emirs, and other officers, to be assembled before him. While each of them took his place, the Caliph sat with his head reclining on his hand.

"Cruel Caliph!" said he to himself; "thou hast heaped affliction upon an illustrious family, respectable equally for their high rank, and their important services: Thou hast almost stained thy hands with the blood of one of thy most faithful subjects: Thou hast cast a Princess, whose virtues and misfortunes should have rendered her respectable in thine eyes, to languish in a dungeon: Thou hast acted as an odious tyrant; and yet thy courtiers exalt thee to the skies. In their flattering language, thou art the Great Haroun Alraschid!"

While the Caliph was taking this painful retrospective view of his own conduct, the most illustrious of his subjects and courtiers were prostrated before him. He looked, with an air of dissatisfaction, on that deceitful homage; and thought himself rather disgraced, than honoured, by their abject adoration.

"Rise, I command you," said he. "Release the noble Hazeb Yemaleddin from prison. Array him in a rich robe, and conduct him hither. I have myself examined into the unlucky affair for which he was condemned, and have received the most satisfactory proofs of his innocence. Instead of punishment, he merits rewards; I shall this day recompense him for what he has undeservedly suffered.—You viziers who hear me, and know how ready I am to listen to the truth; tell me how it came, that you, who should have known, better than I, the fidelity of the subject against whom I had been prepossessed by appearances, did not, any of you, make the slightest attempt to clear up my mistake, and save a man of his dignity and merits?"

"O Caliph!" replied the viziers, "respect held us mute." "I hate," returned the Caliph, "that respect which conceals the truth: let it never hereafter be exercised towards me." The viziers kissed the ground, in token of their disposition to obey.

Yemaleddin was now brought in, and prostrated himself at the foot of the throne. Haroun descended, to invest him, with his own hands, in the richest pellicle from the royal wardrobe. "God prolong your life, Sovereign of the faithful!" said the young Hazeb; "as he has turned your favour upon me."—"I create you," said the Caliph, "prince above all the princes of my empire, and chief of all my emirs. Go, bear consolation to your mother." Yemaleddin was eager to obey so pleasing a command.

He supposed that he was to proceed on foot, and unattended: but a horse with rich harness stood ready at the gate; and the viziers were

ordered to attend in his train. Four gentlemen went before, to give Lelamain notice of her son's approach, lest the surprise might be too great, if he should appear abruptly in her presence.

While Yemaleddin went home, Giafar and Mesrour conducted the young Princess of Persia to her apartment. Haroun, after the offence which he had offered her, would not venture to appear in her presence. She was his wife only by a contract, which might be torn in pieces. The Caliph's two confidants were directed to inform her, that she was restored to liberty, and might spend the rest of her days in the palace, in the character, and in the enjoyment of all the honours, of either wife or daughter to the Sovereign.

The Princess of Persia, when she consented to give her hand to Haroun, had considered it as a high honour for her to become one in the number of the wives of the Commander of the faithful: but her heart had conceived no passionate attachment to his person. She felt a secret satisfaction at the proposal now made to her. "In me," said she to the confidants of the prince, "you see the submissive, grateful, and respectful daughter of the Commander of all the faithful."

Haroun was charmed to learn that she had received his proposal in this modest manner, and immediately conceived the design of marrying his adopted daughter to him whom he had lately advanced to the highest dignity among his princes and emirs.

The mother and sister of Yemaleddin ran eagerly out to meet him. Their meeting was a scene of overpowering joy and tenderness. After embracing his mother and sister, he proceeded into their pavilion, and there sat down.

"Where am I?" said he; "our house was pillaged and razed to the ground; nor can I perceive any of its remains here, although I am on the spot on which it stood not more than a month ago. Here is a glare of splendour and opulence more than we ever possessed."

"Alas! son," replied good Lelamain, "these riches are only a proof of the extreme misery into which we are fallen: when you were torn from us, all that we had was broken or pillaged; we were left without clothes, bread, or even a bucket for water: we could not work; and I saw myself reduced to the shame of begging for your sister and myself. Yesterday came a man who offered us eight thousand sequins, if he might have Zutulbe in marriage. He was tall and handsome; but, as to rank and character, only an Arab from the desert. I suspected him not to be worth much; but we had not an ounce of bread in the house. He proposed, that I should go myself to bring the cadì to draw out the contract.

"At the first word which I spoke to the cadì, he threatened to send me to a mad-house; But of a sudden he changed his tone, shewed me the politest attention, and hastened after me, without waiting to put on his slippers. When he came, paper was wanting for the contract. He supplied

the want, by writing it upon the tail of his faragi, tearing off the piece, and presenting it to Zutulbe: Nay, he even left us his gown, and went off without looking behind him. My son-in-law soon followed. Almost immediately after, the house was filled with architects, upholsterers, statuaries, painters, gilders. We had hardly room left us to turn. I asked what profession my son-in-law was of; but not a syllable of information could I obtain from them.

“Soon after, came a coffer, containing the dowry, with a variety of stuffs and rich furniture; and at last a supper fit for a prince. So far all went well. But, at ten o'clock, the judge of the police came to the door, with thirty flambeaus, and a troop of three hundred men, to seize the robber, and punish us for harbouring him. He abused us with the most opprobrious language; and his party were preparing to break open the door. In the mean time, drops our new acquired friend, from the sky, I believe, upon the roof of the house. He came in by the window, ate, drank, joked, and made love, as if they had been ringing his praises at the door. By and by, he wished to go to bed, and seemed to be weary of the noise. He accordingly gave me a ring, on which certain characters were inscribed, bidding me deliver it to the judge, at the door. At sight of the ring, the whole band were seized with such dismay, that they instantly made off in all confusion: and we lay down in the same tranquillity, as if nothing had happened.

“This morning, when my son-in-law arose, we began to speak of our affairs. He presumed to take part with the Caliph against us. What had an Arab from the desert, a robber—for he is so, to be sure—to do with the affair? I however brought him at last to allow that the Caliph was wrong. But, what was still more strange, he told us, as he went away, that he would speak to the Caliph for us. A most powerful protector he, no doubt! However, every thing is not absolutely ill about him. I have some hopes of his amendment. Yet I am not, for this, the less sorry for having given my daughter to an unhappy wight of a robber.”

While Yemaleddin's mother was speaking, her son continued to fall into one fit of surprise after another. A robber do such extraordinary things, openly and in Bagdad! Send for a cadi, and he run to him barefooted! A contract written on the tail of a faragi, and the monument of this piece of extravagance remaining in the house! Furnish an apartment fit for the reception of the Caliph himself! Elude the search and pursuit of three hundred officers of justice, by means of a talisman!

Here was enough to confound Wisdom herself. It appeared, however, from the steps taken by the judge of the police, against the person who had done all these wonders, that he was undoubtedly a robber. “Mother,” replied Yemaleddin, “the whole of your relation bears the marks at once of truth and improbability. But how could you think of giving your daughter to a robber?” “Ah! misery—nothing but the

extremity of misery, could have forced me." "The rascal," replied Yemaleddin, "hath taken advantage of your situation; but, by the favour of heaven, it is now changed. I am the head of the family; while I live, my sister cannot marry without my consent. I have the law and the Caliph to side with me, and I swear by the Caaba¹——

As he spoke thus, Yemaleddin put his hand to the hilt of his scymitar. The fond and timid Zutulbe trembled to see how his eyes sparkled with rage. "What a train of misfortunes!" cried the old woman; "nothing of all this would have happened, if the Caliph had done you justice but one day sooner. We should not then have disgraced ourselves by an alliance with this robber *Il Bondocani*." "What name is that you mention, mother?" returned Yemaleddin eagerly. "The name of my son-in-law," replied Lelamain: "*Il Bondocani, Il Bondocani*. Have you it now?" "And is it he, mother, who has married my sister?"—"Here, if what I have told you be not enough, read the contract; there it is. *Contract of marriage, you see, between Zutulbe, daughter to widow Lelamain, and Il Bondocani*."

At this sight, Yemaleddin hastily prostrated himself to the ground. Lelamain burst out a-laughing. "So, so, my brave fellow! Thou wast to dissolve the marriage! But there thou art on the ground, as well as the others! Why dost not thou draw thy sabre now? Oh! gallant name, this of my son-in-law! I am glad that it has come to my knowledge. We are expecting the caravan from Mecca: I will go along with it, and will tell the name of my son-in-law aloud; and shall see all India, Armenia, Persia, and Romelia bow the knee before him. I will not bate a single camel. Go; hast thou thy nose in the earth still? Get up, my tamed lion! put off thy slippers, tear thy gown, and do any other act of extravagance thou pleasest. Thy excuse is ready. The name which I have told thee, turns the brain of every body. Thou hast not yet seen the ring, which works no less extraordinary effects. Arise, then! I order thee, in the name of *Il Bondocani*."

"Yes, mother, I will rise," said Yemaleddin, "at the name to which all on earth either pays, or at least owes, obedience and respect. I was giving thanks to the Supreme Being, for the goodness which he has vouchsafed to our family, in giving my sister in marriage to the Prince of princes, the King of kings, the sage and magnanimous Haroun Alraschid; for your son-in-law, *Il Bondocani*, is no other than the Caliph himself. "Ah, wretch that I am!" cried Lelamain, "where shall I hide my head? I loaded him with abuse upon our account." "Said you nothing but the truth?" returned Yemaleddin; "for, though exalted above other men, he is

¹ A black stone in the temple at Mecca, which is worshipped by the Mahometans. See Niebuhr's travels.

still a man; and ill may be said of him." "Nothing," replied Lelamain; "I spoke only of what had befallen ourselves." "Then," said the young man, "you may judge of the ill that he means to you, by the good he has done me. Your representation has gained me my liberty, with the title of Prince of princes, and the place of chief of the emirs. Such is the revenge which a truly great man takes upon those, who dare to tell him a severe, but useful truth."

Hardly had Yemaleddin ended speaking, when Mesrour appeared, to give notice of the Caliph's approach. The good mother would gladly have gone to hide herself. Yemaleddin and Zutulbe held her by the hands. "Come, mother," said the young prince, "honour virtue by confidence. The Caliph is no ordinary man."

Haroun entered alone, resplendent in all the pomp of rich and dignified dress. Lelamain, Yemaleddin, and Zutulbe, prostrated themselves before him. He eagerly raised them, one after another, with gracious tenderness. "Your fears on my account, have become somewhat easier," said he to Lelamain; "I allure you, that you need have none remaining: You shall always be regarded, in my eyes, as the mother of Zutulbe, who is mistress of my heart; and of Yemaleddin, who has merited my confidence. I shall ever respect you, as having given me sage advices, which opened my eyes to faults, that I am happy to have had it in my power to correct. You will pardon me, I hope, for the uneasiness which your son's disgrace must have occasioned to you. —His palace shall immediately be rebuilt in a style suitable to his new dignity: and as I wish to connect him with myself as closely as possible, I will this day give him in marriage a noble and amiable descendent of the Sovereign family of Kassera Abocheroan of Persia, who has lately become, instead of one of my wives, my daughter by adoption. As for my Zutulbe, who disdained to not to look with some degree of favour upon, and to take a tender interest in the fortune of, an Arab from the desert, to whose ruin every thing seemed to conspire; as she seemed willing to share my fortune, whatever it might be; I offer her nothing that is not unworthy of her merit, when I invite her to partake the rank and honours of Haroun Alraschid."

It is impossible to mention a better proof of the satisfaction which this discourse of the Caliph's diffused through the family, than that Lelamain lost, for a time, the use of her tongue. The Caliph had ordered a litter to be brought for her and her daughter: they went into it, and the Caliph followed them on horseback; Yemaleddin attending him on one side, and Giafar on the other. The Princess of Persia was on the same day married to the new favourite. Sumptuous feasts were held, and alms liberally distributed among the people disposed, them, to sympathize in the joy which prevailed through the Imperial palace. Yemaleddin carried his wife and his mother back to his own house; but good Lelamain

continued to go every day between the one and the other in a superb litter, to congratulate her children upon their good fortune; instead of reading the Koran at the door of the mosque, and asking alms from persons who were deaf to her request. If but one of those had happened to lend an ear to her, there would have been no occasion for crying out, what a wonder! The Caliph would not then have run to see the greatest of all wonders, the charming Zutulbe; and Yemaleddin would have proved a false prophet.

These incidents afford a remarkable proof, that the stars direct the train of human events, by an influence equally strange in its operation, and imperceptible to human eyes.

Here Scheherazade stopt. "Have you done already?" said Dinarzade. "I cannot express the pleasure which I have received, from the description of the Caliph leaping in by the window, and from the rest of the story." "I am charmed," replied the fair sultana, "to understand, that one of this renowned monarch's adventures, in his younger days, has afforded you some entertainment. I shall next exhibit him to your attention, engaged in more serious cares, in an adventure in which he put his favourite minister to a very extraordinary trial; which, in my mind, shews him to no less advantage."——

Dinarzade was pleased with the hope of hearing a new story. Schahriar said, that he would hear it with pleasure; and Sheherazade began in these words.

