
LONDON: MDCCCLXXXII: PRINTED FOR THE VILLON SOCIETY BY PRIVATE SUBSCRIPTION AND FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION ONLY.
# CONTENTS OF THE SECOND VOLUME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9. THE HISTORY OF KING OMAR BEN ENNUMAN AND HIS SONS SHERKAN AND ZOULMEKAN</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. STORY OF TAJ EL MULOUK AND THE PRINCESS DUNYA</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. STORY OF AZIZ AND AZLEEH</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. BAKOUN'S STORY OF THE HASHISH-EATER</td>
<td>347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. HEMMAD THE BEDOUIN'S STORY</td>
<td>347</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE BOOK OF THE THOUSAND NIGHTS
AND ONE NIGHT.

THE HISTORY OF KING OMAR BEN ENUMAN
AND HIS SONS SHERKAN AND ZOULMEKAN.

There reigned once in the City of Peace, (Baghdad),
before the Khalifate of Abdulmelik ben Mervan,1 a king
called Omar ben Eanuman, who was of the mighty giants
and had subdued the kings of Persia and the Emperors
of the East, for none could warm himself at his fire; nor
come with him in battle, and when he was angry, there came
sparks out of his nostrils. He had gotten him the dominion
over all countries, and God had subjected unto him all
creatures; his commands were obeyed in all the great
cities and his armies penetrated the most distant lands:
the East and West came under his rule, with the regions
between them, Hind and Sind and China and Hejaz and
Yemen and the islands of India and China, Syria and
Mesopotamia and the land of the blacks and the islands of
the ocean and all the famous rivers of the earth, Jaxartes
and Bactrus, Nile and Euphrates. He sent his ambassadors
to the farthest parts of the earth, to fetch him true report,
and they returned with tidings of justice and peace, bringing
him assurance of loyalty and obedience and invocation
of blessings on his head; for he was a right noble king and there came to him gifts and tribute from all
parts of the world. He had a son called Sherkan, who
was one of the prodigies of the age and the likest of all

1 A.H. 65—86.
2 I.e. none could approach him in the heat of fight.

VOL. II. 1
men to his father, who loved him with an exceeding love and had appointed him to be king after him. The prince grew up till he reached man’s estate and was twenty years old, and God subjected all men to him, for he was gifted with great might and prowess in battle, humbling the champions and destroying all who made head against him. So, before long, this Sherkan became famous in all quarters of the world and his father rejoiced in him: and his might waxed, till he passed all bounds and magnified himself, taking by storm the citadels and strong places.

Now King Omar had four lawful wives, but God had vouchsafed him no son by them, except Sherkan, whom he had gotten of one of them, and the rest were barren. Moreover he had three hundred and threescore concubines, after the number of the days of the Coptic year, who were of all nations, and he had lodged them all within his palace. For he had built twelve pavilions, after the number of the months of the year, in each thirty chambers, and appointed to each of his concubines a night, which he lay with her and came not to her again for a full year. As providence would have it, one of them conceived and her pregnancy was made known, whereupon the King rejoiced with an exceeding joy, saying, "Mayhap it will be a son, in which case all my offspring will be males." Then he recorded the date of her conception and made much of her. But when the news came to Sherkan, he was troubled and it was grievous to him, for he said, "Verily, there cometh one who shall dispute the kingdom with me." So he said to himself, "If this damsel bear a male child, I will kill it." But he kept this his intent secret in his heart. Now the damsel in question was a Greek girl, by name Sufiyeh, whom the King of Rome,² lord of Cæsarea, had sent to King Omar as a present, together with great store of rarities. She was the fairest of face and most graceful of all his women and the most careful of her honour and was gifted with abounding wit and surpassing loveliness. She had served the King on the night of his lying with her, saying to him, "O King, I desire of the god of the heavens that He grant thee of me a male child, so I may rear him well and do my utmost endeavour to educate him and preserve him from harm." And her words pleased the King. She passed the time of her pregnancy in devout exercises, praying fervently to God to grant her a goodly male child and make his birth easy to her, till her months were accomplished and she sat down on the stool of delivery. Now the King had given an eunuch charge to let him know if the child she should bring forth were male or female; and in like manner his son Sherkan had sent one to bring him news of this. In due time, Sufiyeh was delivered of a child, which the midwives took and found to be a girl with a face more radiant than the moon. So they announced this to the bystanders, whereupon the eunuch carried the news to the King and Sherkan’s messenger did the like with his master, who rejoiced with exceeding joy; but after these two had departed, Sufiyeh said to the midwives, "Wait with me awhile, for I feel there is yet somewhat in my entrails." Then she moaned and the pains of labour took her again, but God made it easy to her and she gave birth to a second child. The midwives looked at it and found it a boy like the full moon, with flower-white forehead and rose-red cheeks; whereupon the damsel and her eunuchs and attendants rejoiced and she was delivered of the afterbirth, whilst all who were in the palace set up cries of joy. The other damsels heard of this and envied her; and the news came to Omar, who was glad and rejoiced. Then he rose and went to her and kissed her head, after which he looked at the boy and bending down to it, kissed it, whilst the damsels smote the tabrets and played on instruments of

---

1 Sophia.
2 Apparently Palæstine (in this case).
music; and he commanded that the boy should be named Zoumlekan and the girl Nushet ez Zeman, which was done accordingly. Then he appointed nurses, wet and dry, and cunachs and attendants to serve them and assigned them rations of sugar and liquors and oil and other necessaries, such as the tongue fails to set out. Moreover the people of Baghdad heard of the children that God had vouchsafed to the King; so they decorated the city and made proclamation of the good news. Then came the amirs and viziers and grandees and wished the King joy of his son and daughter, wherefore he thanked them and bestowed dresses of honour and favours and largesse on them and on all who were present, gentle and simple. Then he bade carry great store of jewellery and apparel and money to Susyeh and charged her to rear the children carefully and educate them well. After this wise, four years passed by, during which time the King sent every few days to seek news of Susyeh and her children; but all this while, his son Sherkan knew not that a male child had been born to his father, having news only of the birth of his daughter Nushet ez Zeman, and they hid the thing from him, until years and days had passed by, whilst he was busied in contending with the men of war and tilting against the cavaliers.

One day, as the King was sitting on his throne, there came in to him his chamberlains, who kissed the earth before him and said, "O King, there be come ambassadors from the King of the Greeks, lord of Constantinople the mighty, and they desire to be admitted to pay their respects to thee; so if the King give them leave to enter, we will admit them, and if not, there is no appeal from his decree." He bade admit them, and when they entered, he turned to them and asked them how they did and the reason of their coming. They kissed the earth before him and replied, "O Illustrious King and lord of the long arm, 1

know that King Afridoun, lord of the lands of the Greeks and of the Nazarene armies, holding the empire of Constantinople, hath sent us to make known to thee that he is now waging grievous war with a fierce rebel, the lord of Caesarea; and the cause of this war is as follows. One of the kings of the Arabs, a while since, chance, in one of his conquests, upon a treasure of the time of Alexander, from which he carried away countless riches and amongst other things, three round jewels, of the bigness of an ostrich's egg, from a mine of pure white jewels, never was seen the like. Upon each of these jewels were graven talismans in the Greek character, and they had many properties and virtues, amongst the rest that if one of them were hung round the neck of a new-born child, no ailment would hurt him nor would he moan or be fevered, so long as it was about his neck. When they came to the hands of the Arabian King and he knew their virtues, he sent the three jewels, together with other presents and rarities, as a gift to King Afridoun, and to that end fitted out two ships, one bearing the treasure and presents and the other men to guard them against whoso should offer them hindrance on the sea, being nevertheless assured that none would dare waylay them, for that he was King of the Arabs, more by token that their way lie through the sea in the dominions of the King of Constantinople and they were bound to him, nor were there on the shores of that sea any but subjects of the most mighty King Afridoun. The ships set out and sailed till they drew near our city, when there sailed out on them certain corsairs of the country and amongst them troops of the King of Caesarea, who took all the treasures and rarities in the ships, together with the three jewels, and slew the men. When the news came to our King, he sent an army against them, but they defeated it; then he sent another army, stronger than the first, but they put this also to the rout; whereupon the
King was wroth and swore that he would go out against them in person at the head of his whole army and not turn back from them; till he had left Cassarea in ruins and laid waste all the lands and cities over which its King held sway. So he craves of the lord of the age and the time, the King of Baghdad and Khorassan, that he succour us with an army, to the end that glory may redound to him; and he has sent by us somewhat of various kinds of presents and begets the King to favour him by accepting them and accord us his aid." Then they kissed the earth before King Omar and brought out the presents, which were fifty slave-girls of the choicest of the land of the Greeks, and fifty white male slaves in tunics of brocade, with girdles of gold and silver and in their ears pendants of gold and fine pearls, worth a thousand dinars each. The damsel were adorned after the same fashion and clad in stuffs worth much money. When the King saw them, he rejoiced in them and accepted them. Then he commanded that the ambassadors should be honourably entertained and summoning his viziers, took counsel with them of what he should do. Accordingly, one of them, an old man named Dendar, arose and kissing the earth before King Omar, said, "O King, thou wouldst do well to equip a numerous army and set over it thy son Sherkan, with us as his lieutenants; and to my mind it behoves thee to do this, for two reasons: first, that the King of the Greeks hath appealed to thee for aid and hath sent thee presents; and thou hast accepted them; and secondly, that no enemy dares attack our country, and that if thy host succour the King of the Greeks and his foe be put to the rout, the glory will fall to thee and the news of it will be noised abroad in all cities and countries; and especially, when the tidings reach the islands of the ocean and the people of Western Africa, they will send thee presents and tribute." When the King heard the Vizier's speech, it pleased him and he approved his counsel, so he bestowed on him a dress of honor and said to him, "It is with such as thee that kings take counsel and it befits that thou command the van of the army and my son Sherkan the main battle." Then he sent for Sherkan and expounded the matter to him, telling him what the ambassadors and the Vizier had said, and enjoined him to take arms and prepare to set out, charging him not to cross the Vizier Dendar in aught that he should do. Then he bade him choose from among his troops ten thousand horsemen armed cap-a-pie and inured to war and hardship. Accordingly, Sherkan rose at once and chose out ten thousand horsemen, in obedience to his father's commandment, after which he entered his palace and mustered his troops and distributed money to them, saying, "Ye have three days to make ready." They kissed the earth before him and proceeded at once to make their preparations for the campaign; whilst Sherkan repaired to the armories and provided himself with all the arms and armour that he needed, and thence to the stables, whence he took horses of choice breeds and others. When the three days were ended, the troops marched out of Baghdad, and King Omar came forth to take leave of his son, who kissed the earth before him, and he gave him seven thousand purses. Then he turned to the Vizier Dendar and commanded to his care his son Sherkan's army and charged the latter to consult the Vizier in all things, to which they both promised obedience. After this, the King returned to Baghdad and Sherkan commanded the officers to draw out the troops in battle array. So they mustered them and the number of the army was ten thousand horsemen, besides footmen and followers. Then they loaded the beasts and beat the drums and blew the clarions and unfurled the banners and the standards, whilst Sherkan mounted, with the Vizier Dendar by his side.

1 About £ 35,000.
side and the standards waving over them, and the army set out and fared on, with the ambassadors in the van, till the day departed and the night came, when they halted and encamped for the night. On the morrow, as soon as God brought in the day, they took horse and continued their march, nor did they cease to press onward, guided by the ambassadors, for the space of twenty days. On the twenty-first day, at nightfall, they came to a wide and fertile valley, whose sides were thickly wooded and covered with grass, and there Sherkan called a three days' halt. So they dismounted and pitched their tents, dispersing right and left in the valley, whilst the Vizier Dendan and the ambassadors alighted in the midst. As for Sherkan, when he had seen the tents pitched and the troops dispersed on either side and had commanded his officers and attendants to camp beside the Vizier Dendan, he gave reins to his horse, being minded to explore the valley and himself mount guard over the army, having regard to his father's injunctions and to the fact that they had reached the frontier of the land of Rome and were now in the enemy's country. So he rode on alone along the valley, till a fourth part of the night was passed, when he grew weary and sleep overcame him, so that he could no longer spur his horse. Now he was used to sleep on horseback; so when drowsiness got the better of him, he fell asleep and the horse paced on with him half the night and entered a forest; but Sherkan awoke not, till the dawn smote the earth with his hoof. Then he started from sleep and found himself among trees; and the moon arose and lighted up the two horizons. He was troubled at finding himself alone in this place and spoke the words, which whose says shall never be confounded, that is to say, "There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High, the Supreme!" But as he rode on, in fear of the wild beasts, behold, the trees thinned and the moon shone out upon a meadow as it were one of the meadows of Paradise; and he heard therein a noise of talk and pleasant laughter, such as ravishes the wit of men. So King Sherkan dismounted and tying his horse to a tree, fared on a little way, till he espied a stream of running water and heard a woman talking and saying in Arabic, "By the virtue of the Messiah, this is not handsome of you! But whoso speaks a word, I will throw her down and bind her with her girdle." He followed in the direction of the voice and saw gazelles frolicking and wild cattle pasturing and birds in their various voices expressing joy and gladness: and the earth was embroidered with all manner of flowers and green herbs, even as says of it the poet in the following verses:

Earth has no fairer sight to show than this its blossom-time, With all the gently running streams that wander oer its face; It is indeed the handiwork of God Omnipoison, The Lord of every noble gift and Giver of all grace!

Midmost the meadow stood a monastery, and within the enclosure was a citadel that rose high into the air in the light of the moon. The stream passed through the midst of the monastery and therewith sat ten damsels like moons, high-bosomed maidens, clad in dresses and ornaments that dazzled the eyes, as says of them the poet:

The meadow glitters with the troops Of lovely ones that wander there; Its grace and beauty doubled are By these that are so passing fair; Virgins that, with their swimming gait, The hearts of all that see enume; Along whose necks, like trails of grapes, Stream down the tresses of their hair; Proudly they walk, with eyes that darts The shafts and arrows of despair, And all the champions of the world Are slain by their selective sight.

Sherkan looked at the ten girls and saw in their midst a lady like the moon at its full, with ringleted hair and
shining forehead, great black eyes and curling brow-locks, perfect in person and attributes, as says the poet:

Her beauty beamed on me with glasses wonder-bright! The slender Syrian spears are not so straight and slight;
She laid her veil aside, and lo, her cheeks rose-red! All manner loveliness was in their sweetest sight.
The locks, that e'er her brow fell down, were like the night, From out of which there shines a morning of delight.

Then Sherkan heard her say to the girls, "Come on, that I may wrestle with you, ere the moon set and the dawn come." So they came up to her, one after another, and she overthrew them, one by one, and bound their hands behind them with their girdles. When she had thrown them all, there turned to her an old woman, who was before her, and said, as if she were wrath with her, "O wanton, dost thou glory in overthrowing these girls? Behold, I am an old woman, yet have I thrown them forty times! So what hast thou to boast of? But if thou have strength to wrestle with me, stand up that I may grip thee and put thy head between thy feet." The young lady smiled at her words, although her heart was full of anger against her, and said, "O my lady Dhat ed Dwhahl, wilt indeed wrestle with me, or dost thou jest with me?" "I mean to wrestle with thee in very deed," replied she.

"Stand up to me then," said the damsel, "if thou have strength to do so." When the old woman heard this, she was sore enraged and the hair of her body stood on end, like that of a hedge-hog. Then she sprang up, whilst the damsel confronted her, and said, "By the virtue of the Messiah, I will not wrestle with thee, except I be naked, O baggage!" So she loosed her trousers and putting her hand under her clothes, tore them off her body; then, taking a handkerchief of silk, she bound it about her middle and became as she were a baird Afriteh or a pied snake. Then she turned to the young lady and said to her, "Do as I have done." All this time, Sherkan was watching them and laughing at the loathly favour of the old woman. So the damsel took a sae of Yemen stuff and doubled it about her waist, then tucked up her trousers and showed legs of alabaster and above them a hummock of crystal, soft and swelling, and a belly that excelled musk from its dimples, as it were a bed of blood-red anemones, and breasts like double pomegranates. Then the old woman bent to her and they took hold of one another, whilst Sherkan raised his eyes to heaven and prayed to God that the damsel might conquer the old hag. Presently, the former bored in under the latter, and gripping her by the breech with the left hand and by the gallet with the right, hoisted her off the ground; whereupon the old woman strove to free herself and in the struggle wriggled out of the girl's hands and fell on her back. Up went her legs and showed her hairy tout in the moonlight, and she let fly two great cracks of wind, one of which smote the earth, whilst the other smoked up to the skies. At this Sherkan laughed, till he fell to the ground, and said, "He lied not who dubbed thee Lady of Calamities! Verily, thou sawest her prowess against the others." Then he arose and looked right and left, but saw none save the old woman thrown down on her back. So he drew near to hear what should pass between them; and behold, the young lady came up to the old one and throwing over her a veil of fine silk, helped her to dress herself, making excuses to her and saying, "O my lady Dhat ed Dwhahl, I did not mean to throw thee so roughly, but thou wriggledst out of my hands; so praised be God for safety!" She returned her no answer, but rose in her confusion and walked away out of sight, leaving the young lady standing alone, by the other girls thrown down and bound. Then said Sherkan to himself, "To every fortune there is a

1 Dhat ni Denski.
a cause. Sleep fell not on me nor did the steed bear me
hither but for my good fortune; for of a surety this damsels
and what is with her shall be my prize." So he turned
back and mounted and drew his scimitar; then he gave
his horse the spur and he started off with him, like an
arrow from a bow, whilst he brandished his naked blade
and cried out, "God is Most Great!" When the damsels
saw him, she sprang to her feet and running to the bank
of the river, which was there some cubits wide, made a
spring and landed on the other side, where she turned
and standing, cried out in a loud voice, "Who art thou,
sirrah, that art so bold as to approach our damsel to
thee, or to take away thy horse and me?" Then he said,
"Thou art the damsels, and what with me, and what
is with thee, thou shalt be at my commandment. Swear
this to me, for I fear thy peril, since experience has it
that, as long as perfidy is in men's natures, to trust in
one is weakness. But if thou wilt swear, I will come over
to thee." Quoth Sherkan (and indeed he lusted after her
and said to himself, "She does not know that I am a
champion of the champions"), "I impose on thee whatever
oath thou deemest binding, and I will swear not to draw
near thee till thou hast made thy preparations and sayest,
"Come and wrestle with me." If thou throw me, I have
wealth wherewith to ransom myself, and if I throw thee,
I shall get fine purchase." Then said she, "Swear to me
by Him who hath lodged the soul in the body and given
laws to mankind, that thou wilt not be so foolish as to
use violence, but be so wise as to use force to frustrate
my escape." "By Allah," exclaimed Sherkan, "if a Cadi
should swear me, though he were Cadi of the Cadi,
he would not impose on me the like of this oath!" Then
he took the oath she required and tied his horse to a
tree, sunk in the sea of revile and saying in himself,
"Glory to Him who fashioned her of vile water!" Then
he girt himself and made ready for wrestling and said to
her, "Cross the stream to me." Quoth she, "It is not for
me to come to thee; if thou wilt, do thou cross over to
me." "I cannot do that," replied he, and she said, "Oh,
I will come to thee." So she gathered her skirts and
making a spring, landed on the other side of the river
by him; whereupon he drew near to her, wondering at

\[1\text{ i.e. sperma hominis.}\]
her beauty and grace, and saw a form that the hand of Omnipotence had tanned with the leaves of the Jinn and which had been fostered by Divine solicitude, a form on which the zeals of fair fortune had blazed and over whose creation favourable planets had presided. Then she called out to him, saying, "O Muslim, come and wrestle before the day break!" and tucked up her sleeves, showing a fore-arm like fresh currant; the whole place was lighted up by its whiteness and Sherkan was dazzled by it. Then he bent forward and clapped his hands and she did the like, and they took hold and gripped each other. He laid his hands on her slender waist, so that the tips of his fingers sank into the folds of her belly, and his limbs relaxed and he stood in the stead of desire, for there was displayed to him a body, in which was languishment of hearts; and he fell a-trembling like the Persian reed in the hurricane. So she lifted him up and throwing him to the ground, sat down on his breast with buttocks like a hill of sand, for he was not master of his reason. Then she said to him, "O Muslim, is it lawful among you to kill Christians; what sayst thou to my killing thee?" "O my lady," replied he, "as for killing me, it is unlawful; for our Prophet (whom God bless and preserve!) hath forbidden the slaying of women and children and old men and monks." "Since this was revealed unto your prophet," rejoined she, "it behoves us to be even with him therein; so rise: I give thee thy life, for beneficence is not lost upon men." Then she got off his breast and he rose and brushed the earth from his head, and she said to him, "Be not abashed; but, indeed, one who enters the land of the Greeks in quest of booty and to succour kings against kings, how comes it that there is no strength in him to defend himself against a woman?" "It was not lack of strength in me," replied he; "nor was it thy strength that overthrew me, but thy beauty: so if thou wilt grant me another bout, it will be of thy favour." She laughed and said, "I grant thee this: but these damsels have been long bound and their arms and shoulders are weary, and it were fitting I should loose them, since this next bout may peradventure be a long one." Then she went up to the girls and unbinding them, said to them in the Greek tongue, "Go and put yourselves in safety, till I have brought to nought this Muslim's craving for you." So they went away, whilst Sherkan looked at them and they gazed at him and the young lady. Then she and he drew near again and set breast against breast; but, when he felt her belly against his, his strength failed him, and she feeling this, lifted him in her hands, swifter than the blinding lightning, and threw him to the ground. He fell on his back, and she said to him, "Rise: I give thee thy life a second time. I spared thee before for the sake of thy prophet, for that he forbade the killing of women, and I do so this second time because of thy weakness and tender age and strangerhood; but I charge thee, if there be, in the army sent by King Omar ben Enanman to the succour of the King of Constantinople, a stronger than thou, send him hither and tell him of me, for in wrestling there are divers kinds of strokes and tricks, such as feinting and the fore-hipe and the back-hipe and the leg-crick and the thigh-twist and the joistle and the cross-buttock." "By Allah, O my lady," replied Sherkan, (and indeed he was greatly incensed against her), "were I the chief Es Sefedi or Mohammed Caumal or Ibn es Seddi, I had not observed the fashions thou namest; for, by Allah, it was not by thy strength that thou overhewest me, but by filling me with the desire of thy buttocks; because we people of Chaldaea love great thighs, so that nor wit nor foresight was left in me. But now if thou have a mind to try another fall with me, with my wits about me, I have a right to this one bout more, by the rules of the

1 Apparently the names of noted wrestlers.
game, for my presence of mind has now returned to me." "Hast thou not had enough of wrestling? O conquered one?" rejoined she. "However, come, if thou wilt; but know that this bout must be the last." Then they took hold of each other and he set to in earnest and warded himself against being thrown down; so they strained awhile, and the damsel found in him strength such as she had not before observed and said to him, "O Muslim, thou art on thy guard!" "Yes," replied he; "thou knowest that there remaineth but this bout, and after each of us will go his own way." She laughed and he laughed too; then she seized the opportunity to bore in upon him unawares, and gripping him by the thigh, threw him to the ground, so that he fell on his back. She laughed at him and said, "Thou art surely an eater of bran; for thou art like a Bedouin bonnet, that falls at a touch, or a child's toy, that a puff of air overturns. Out on thee, thou poor creature!" Go back to the array of the Muslims and send us other than thyself, for thou lackest thaws, and cry us among the Arabs and Persians and Turks and Medes. "Whose has might in him, let him come to us." Then she made a spring and landed on the other side of the stream and said to Sherkan, laughing, "It goes to my heart to part with thee; get thee to thy friends, O my lord, before the morning, lest the knights come upon thee and take thee on the points of their lances. Thou hast not strength enough to defend thee against women; so how couldst thou make head against men and cavaliers?" And she turned to go back to the monastery. Sherkan was confounded and called out to her, saying, "O my lady, wilt thou go away and leave the wretched stranger, the broken-hearted slave of love?" So she turned to him, laughing, and said, "What wouldst thou? I grant thy prayer." "Have I set foot in thy country and tasted the sweetness of thy favours," replied Sherkan, "and shall I return without eating of thy victual and tasting thy hospitality? Indeed I am become one of thy servitors." Quoth she, "None but the base refuses hospitality; on my head and eyes be it! Do me the favour to mount and ride along the bank of the stream, abreast of me, for thou art my guest." At this Sherkan rejoiced and hastening back to his horse, mounted and rode along the river bank, keeping abreast of her, till he came to a drawbridge, that hung by pulleys and chains of steel, made fast with locks and padlocks. Here stood the ten damsels awaiting the lady, who spoke to one of them in the Greek tongue and said to her, "Go to him; take his horse's rein and bring him over to the monastery." So she went up to Sherkan and led him over the bridge to the other side and he followed her, amazed at what he saw and saying in himself, "Would the Vizier Dondan were with me, to look on these fair faces with his own eyes!" Then he turned to the young lady and said to her, "O wonder of beauty, now art thou doubly bound to me, firstly, by the bond of comradeship, and secondly for that thou carriest me to thy house and I accept of thy hospitality and am at thy disposal and under thy protection. So do me the favour to go with me to the land of Islam, where thou shalt look upon many a lion-hearted prince and know who I am." His speech angered her and she said to him, "By the virtue of the Messiah, thou art keen of wit with me! But I see now what depravity is in thy heart and how thou allowest thyself to say a thing that proves thee a traitor. How should I do what thou sayest, when I know that, if I came to thy King Omar ben 'Abnun, I should never win free of him? For he has not the like of me among his women nor in his palace, all lord of Bagdad and Khorassan as he is, with his twelve palaces, in number as the months of the year, and his concubines therein, in number as the days thereof; and if I come to him, he will not respect me, for that ye hold it lawful to take possession..."
of the like of me, as it is said in your scripture, 'That which your right hand possesses.' So how canst thou speak thus to me? As for thy saying, 'Thou shalt look upon the champions of the Muslims,' by the Messiah, thou dost know which is not true; for I saw thy army, when it reached our country, these two days ago, and I did not see that your ordinance was that of kings, but beheld you only as a rabble of men collected together. And as for thy saying, 'Thou shalt know who I am,' I did not show thee that which is my duty, out of pride in myself; and the like of thee should not say this to the like of me, even though thou be Sherkan himself, King Omar ben Ennunan's son, who is renowned in these days.

'And dost thou know Sherkan?' asked he. 'Yes,' replied she; 'and I know of his coming with an army of ten thousand horse, for that he was sent by his father with these troops to the succour of the King of Constantinople.'

'O my lady,' rejoined Sherkan, 'I conjure thee, as thou believest in thy religion, tell me the cause of all this, that I may know truth from falsehood and with whom the fault lies.' 'By the virtue of thy faith,' replied she, 'were it not that I fear lest the news of me be bruited abroad that I am of the daughters of the Greeks, I would adventure myself and sail forth against the ten thousand horse and kill their chief, the Vizier Dandian, and take their champion Sherkan. Nor would there be any reproach to me in this, for I have read books and know the Arabic language and have studied good breeding and polite letters. But I have no need to vaunt my own prowess to thee, for thou hast tasted of my quality and proved my strength and skill and pre-eminence in wrestling; nor if Sherkan himself had been in thy place to-night and it had been said to him, 'Leap this river,' could he have done so. And I could wish

1 A phrase of frequent occurrence in the Koran, meaning "your female slave" or "the women ye have captured in war."
marbles, and in the midst was a basin of water, with four-and-twenty spouts of gold around it, from which issued water like liquid silver; whilst at the upper end stood a throne covered with silks of royal purple. Then said the damsels, "O my lord, mount this throne." So he seated himself on it, and she withdrew; and when she had been absent awhile, he asked the servants of her, and they said, "She hath gone to her sleeping-chamber; but we will serve thee as thou shalt order." So they set before him rare meats, and he ate till he was satisfied, when they brought him a basin of gold and an ever of silver, and he washed his hands. Then his mind reverted to his troops, and he was troubled, knowing not what had befallen them in his absence and thinking how he had forgotten his father's injunctions, so that he abode oppressed with anxiety and repenting of what he had done, till the dawn broke and the day appeared, when he lamented and sighed and became drowned in the sea of melancholy, repeating the following verses:

I lack not of prudence and yet in this case I've been fooled; so what shift shall avail unto me?
If any could ease me of love and its stress, Of my night and my virtue
I'd set myself free.
But alas! my heart's lost in the maze of desire, And no helper save God
in my strait can I see.

Hardly had he finished, when up came more than twenty damsels like moons, encompassing the young lady, who appeared amongst them as the full moon among stars. She was clad in royal brocade and gilt with a woven girdle set with various kinds of jewels, that straitly clasped her waist, and made her buttocks stand out as they were a hill of crystal upholding a wand of silver; and her breasts were like double pomegranates. On her head she wore a network of pearls, gemmed with various kinds of jewels, and she moved with a coquettish swimming gait, swaying

wonder-gracefully, whilst the damsels held up her skirts. When Sherkan saw her beauty and grace, he was transported for joy and forgot his army and the Vizier Dandun and spitting to his feet, cried out, "Beware, beware of that girdle rare!" and repeated the following verses:

Henry of butocks, languorous of gait, With limber shape and breasts right delicate,
She hides what passion in her bosom burns; Yet cannot I my heat dissimulate.
Her matters, like strung pearls, behind her fare, New all dispersed, now knot is ordered state.

She fixed her eyes on him and considered him awhile, till she was assured of him, when she came up to him and said, "Indeed the place is honoured and illumined by thy presence, O Sherkan! How didst thou pass the night? O hero, after we went away and left thee? Verily, lying is a defect and a reproach in kings, especially in great kings; and thou art Sherkan, son of King Omar ben Ennuman; so henceforth tell me nought but truth and strive not to keep the secret of thy condition, for falsehood engenders hatred and enmity. The arrow of destiny hath fallen on thee, and it behoves thee to show resignation and submission." When Sherkan heard what she said, he saw nothing for it but to tell her the truth; so he said, "I am indeed Sherkan, son of Omar ben Ennuman, whom fortune hath afflicted and cast into this place; so now do whatsoever thou wilt." She bowed her head a long while, then turned to him and said, "Reassure thyself and be of good cheer; for thou art my guest and bread and salt have passed between us; so art thou in my safeguard and under my protection. Have no fear; by the virtue of the Messiah, if all the people of the earth sought to harm thee, they should not come at thee, till the breath had left my body for thy sake; for thou art under my protection and that of the Messiah." Then she
sat down by his side and began to sport with him, till his alarm subsided and he knew that, had she been minded to kill him, she would have done so on the last night. After a while, she spoke in the Greek tongue to one of her serving-women, who went away and returned in a little with a goblet and a tray of food; but Sherkan abstained from eating, saying in himself, “Maybe she hath put somewhat in this meat.” She knew what was in his thought; so she turned to him and said, “By the virtue of the Messiah, the case is not as thou deemest, nor is there aught in this food of what thou suspectest! Were I minded to kill thee, I had done so before now.” Then she came to the table and ate a mouthful of every dish, whereupon Sherkan came forward and fell to. She was pleased at this, and they both ate till they were satisfied, after which she let bring perfumes and sweet-smelling herbs and wires of all colours and kinds, in vessels of gold and silver and crystal. She filled a first cup and drank it off, before offering it to Sherkan, even as she had done with the food. Then she filled a second time and gave the cup to him. He drank and she said to him, “See, O Muslim, how thou art in the utmost delight and pleasure of life!” And she ceased not to drink and ply him with drink, till he took leave of his wits, for the wine and the intoxication of love for her. Presently she said to the serving-maid, “O Merjaneh, bring us some instruments of music.” “I hear and obey,” replied Merjaneh, and going out, returned immediately with a lute, a Persian harp, a Tartar flute and an Egyptian dulcimer. The young lady took the lute and tuning it, sang to it in a dulcet voice, softer than the zephyr and sweeter than the waters of Terebinth,1 the following verses:

May Allah assuage thine eyes! How much is the blood they have shed!
How great is the tale of the shafts thy pitiless glance have sped!

1 One of the fountains of Paradise.
If Azizah should before a judge the sun of seeming cite, Needs must the
umpire down to her the need of beauty bright;
And women all, wem come to me, at her to rail and fite, God make
your cheeks the sandal soles whereon her feet slight!

And indeed it is reported," added she. "that Azizah
was endowed with the extreme of beauty and grace.
Then she said to Sherkan, "O king's son, dost thou know
aught of Jemil's verses to Bethineh?" "Yes," replied
he; "none knows Jemil's verses better than I." And he
repeated the following:

"Up and away to the holy war, Jemil!" they say; and I, "What have
I to do with waging war except among the fair?"
For deed and saying with them alike are full of ease and cheer, And
he's a martyr who tilts with them and falleth fighting there.
If I say to Bethineh, "What is this love, that eatcheth my life away?"
She answers, "Thy rooted fast in thy heart and will decrease forever."
Oh if I beg her to give me back some semblance of my wit, Wherewith to
deal with the folk and live, she answers, "Hope it never!"
Thou wilt my death, ah, woe is me! thou wilt nought else but that;
Yet I, I can see no goal but thee, towards which my wishes face.

"Thou hast done well, O king's son," said she, "and
Jemil also did excellently well. But what would Bethineh
have done with him that he says, 'Thou wished to kill me
and nought else?'' "O my lady," replied he, "she sought
to do with him what thou sekest to do with me, and even
that will not content thee." She laughed at his answer,
and they ceased not to carouse till the day departed
and the night came with the darkness. Then she rose
and went to her sleeping-chamber, and Sherkan slept in his
place till the morning. As soon as he awoke, the damsel's
came to him with tambourines and other instruments of
music, according to their wont, and kissing the earth be-
fore him, said to him, "In the name of God, deign to

1 Jemil ben Mamer, another celebrated Arabian poet and lover, a
friend and contemporary of Kuthilir.
2 A person who dies for love is executed a martyr by the Arabs.

Verily Kuthilir was a poet of renown and a master of chaste eloquence
and attained rare perfection in praise of Azizah, especially when
he says:

Verily Kuthilir was Ali Juma, a well-known poet of the seventh
and eighth centuries at Medina. He was celebrated for his love of Azizah,
in whose honour most of his poems were written. The writer (or
copyist) of this tale has committed an anachronism in introducing these
verses, as Kuthilir was a contemporary of the Khalif Abdallah ben
Merwan before whose time Sherkan and his father (both imaginary
characters) are stated (see supra, p. 1) to have lived; but the whole
narrative is full of the grossest anachronisms, too numerous, indeed,
to notice.
follow us; for our mistress bids thee to her." So he rose and accompanied the girls, who escorted him, smiling on tabrets and other instruments of music, to another saloon, bigger than the first and decorated with pictures and figures of birds and beasts, passing description. Sherkan wondered at the fashion of the place and repeated the following verses:

My rival plucked of the boughs the branches wide, Pearls of the breasts in gold encased and beauteified
With running fountains of liquid silver in streams And cheeks of roses and beryls, side by side.

It seemed, indeed, as if the violet's color vied With the sapphire blue of the eyes, with amethyst dyed.

When the lady saw Sherkan, she came to meet him, and taking him by the hand, said to him, "O son of King Omar ben Ebnunan, hast thou any skill in the game of chess?"

"Yes," replied he; "but do not thou be as says the poet.
And he repeated the following verses:

I speak; and passion, the white folds and business the eye; But a draught of the honey of love my spirit's thirst could slake.
I sit at the chess with her I love, and she plays with me, With white and with black; but it contenteth me no way.
Messesoth as the king were set in the place of the rook And sought with the rival queens a bout of the game to play.
And if I looked in her eyes, to spy the shift of her moves, The amorous grace of her glance would doom me to death straightway.

Then she brought the chess-board and played with him; but instead of looking at her moves, he looked at her face and set the knight in the place of the elephant and the elephant in the place of the knight. She laughed and said to him, "If this be thy play, thou knowest nothing of the game."

"This is only the first bout," replied he; "take no count of it." She beat him, and he replaced the pieces

1 I suspect these verses to have been introduced in error by some copyist. They appear entirely meaningless in this context.

2 The bishop.
till her men should come! These are the knights with whom she threatened me: but it is I who have thrown myself into this peril." Then he turned to the lady to reproach her, but saw that she had changed colour; and she sprang to her feet and said to the new comer, "Who are ye?" "O noble princess and unsheared pearl," replied the knight their chief, "dost thou know who is this man with thee?" "Not I," answered she. "Who is he?" Quoth the knight, "He is the despoiler of cities and prince of cavaliers, Sherkan, son of King Omar ben Ennunan. This is he who captures the ciudels and masters the most impregnable strengths. The news of him reached King Herdoub, thy father, by the report of the old prince Dhat ed Dewahi: and thou hast done good service to the army of the Greeks by helping them to lay hands on this pestilent lion." When she heard this, she looked at the knight and said to him, "What is thy name?" And he answered, "My name is Mousourech son of thy slave Mousourech ben Kasherech, chief of the nobles." Quoth she, "And how camest thou in to me without my leave?" "O our lady," replied he, "when I came to the gate, neither chamberlain nor porter offered me any hindrance; but all the gatekeepers rose and foresaw me as of wont; though, when others came, they leave them standing at the gate, while they ask leave for them to enter. But this is no time for long talk, for the King awaits our return to him with this prince, who is the mainstay of the army of Islam, that he may kill him and that his troops may depart whence they came, without our having the toil of fighting them." "Thou sayest an ill thing," rejoined the princess. "Verily, the Lady Dhat ed Dewahi lied; and she hath avouched a vain thing, of which she knows not the truth; for by the virtue of the Messiah, this man who is with me is not Sherkan, nor is he a captive, but a stranger, who came to us, seeking hospitality, and we received him as a guest. So, even were we assured that this was Sherkan and did we know that it was he beyond doubt, it would suit ill with my honour that I should deliver into your hands one who hath come under my safeguard. Betray me not, therefore, in the person of my guest, neither bring me into ill repute among men, but return to the King my father and kiss the earth before him and tell him that the case is not according to the report of the Lady Dhat ed Dewahi." "O Aburizel," replied the knight Masouruch, "I cannot go back to the King without his enemy." Quoth she, and indeed she was angry, "Out on thee! Return to him with the answer, and no blame shall fall on thee." But he said, "I will not return without him." At this her colour changed and she exclaimed, "A truce to talk and idle words; for of a verity this man would not have come in to us, except he were assured that he could of himself make head against a hundred horse; and if I said to him, 'Art thou Sherkan, son of King Omar ben Ennunan?' he would answer, 'Yes.' Nayless, it is not in your power to hinder him; for if ye beset him, he will not turn back from you, till he have slain all that are in the place. Behold, he is with me and I will bring him before you, with his sword and buckler in his hands." "If I be safe from thy wrath," replied Masouruch, "I am not safe from that of thy father, and when I see him, I shall sign to the knights to take him prisoner, and we will carry him, bound and abject, to the King." When she heard this, she said, "The thing shall not pass thus, for it would be a disgrace. This man is but one and ye are a hundred. So, an ye be minded to attack him, come out against him, one after one, that it may appear to the King which is the valiant amongst you." "By the Messiah," rejoined Night Masouruch, "thou sayest sooth, and none but I shall go out against him first!" Then she said, "Wait till I go to him and tell him and hear what he says. If he consent, it is well: but if he refuse, ye shall not anywise come at
him, for I and my damsels and all that are in the house will be his ransom." So she went to Sherkan and told him the case, whereat he smiled and knew that she had not betrayed him, but that the matter had been bruited abroad, till it came to the King, against her wish. So he laid all the blame on himself, saying, "How came I to venture myself in the country of the Greeks?" Then he said to her, "Indeed, to let them tire against me, one by one, were to lay on them a burden more than they can bear. Will they not come out against me, ten by ten?"

"That were knavery and oppression," replied she. "One man is a match for another." When he heard this, he sprang to his feet and made towards them, with his sword and battle-gear; and Masearch also sprang up and rushed on him. Sherkan met him like a lion and smote him with his sword upon the shoulder, that the blade came out gleaming from his back and vitals. When the princess saw this, Sherkan's prowess was magnified in her eyes and she knew that she had not overthrown him by her strength, but by her beauty and grace. So she turned to the knights and said to them, "Avenge your chief!" Thereupon out came the slain man's brother, a fierce warrior, and rushed upon Sherkan, who delayed not, but smote him on the shoulders, and the sword came out, gleaming, from his vitals. Then cried the princess, "Servants of the Messiah, avenge your comrades!" So they ceased not to come out against him, one by one, and he plied them with the sword, till he had slain fifty knights, whilst the princess looked on. And God cast terror into the hearts of those who were left, so that they held back and dared not meet him in single combat, but rushed on him all at once; and he drove at them with a heart fiercer than a rock and smote them as the thresher smiteth the corn, till he had driven sense and life forth of them. Then the princess cried out to her damsels, saying, "Who is left in the monastery?"

"None but the porters," replied they; whereupon she went up to Sherkan and embraced him, and he returned with her to the saloon, after he had made an end of the mullay. Now there remained a few of the knights hidden in the cells of the convent, and when Abrihar saw this, she rose and going away, returned, clad in a straight-singed coat of mail and holding in her hand a scimitar of Indian steel. And she said, "By the virtue of the Messiah, I will not be grudging of myself for my guest nor will I abandon him, though for this I abide reproach in the land of the Greeks!" Then she counted the dead and found that he had slain fourscore of the knights and other twenty had taken flight. When she saw how he had dealt with them, she said to him, "God bless thee, O Sherkan! The cavaliers may well glory in the like of thee!" Then he rose and wiping his sword of the blood of the slain, repeated the following verses:

How often in battle I've left the array And given the champions to wild beasts a prey!  
Ask all men what happened to me and to them, When I drove through the ranks on the sword-smiling day. 
I left all their lives of war overthrown; On the sun-scorched sands of those countries they lay.  

When he had finished, the princess came up to him and kissed his hand; then she put off her coat of mail, and he said to her, "O lady, wherfore didst thou don that coat of mail and bare thy sabre?" "It was of my care for thee against yonder wretches," replied she. Then she called the porters and said to them, "How came you to let the king's men enter my house, without my leave?" "O princess," replied they, "we have not used to need to ask leave for the king's messengers, and especially for the chief of the knights." Quoth she, "I think you were minded to dishonour me and slay my guest." And she bade Sherkan strike off their heads. He did so and she
said to the rest of her servants, "Indeed, they deserved more than that." Then turning to Sherkan, she said to him, "Now that there hath become manifest to thee what was hidden, I will tell thee my story. Know, then, that I am the daughter of Herdoub, King of Roum; my name is Abrizech and the old woman called Dhat ed Dewahi is my grandmother, my father's mother. She it was who told my father of thee, and she will certainly cast about to ruin me, especially as thou hast slain my father's men and it is noised abroad that I have made common cause with the Muslims. Wherefore it were wiser that I should leave dwelling here, what while Dhat ed Dewahi is behind me; but I claim of thee the like kindness and courtesy I have shown thee, for my father and I are now become at odds on thine account. So do not thou omit to do aught that I shall say to thee, for indeed all this hath fallen out through thee." At this, Sherkan was transported for joy and his breast dilated, and he said, "By Allah, none shall come at thee, whilst my life lasts in my body! But canst thou endure the parting from thy father and thy folk?" "Yes," answered she. So Sherkan swore to her and they made a covenant of this. Then said she, "Now my heart is at ease; but there is one other condition I must exact of thee." "What is that?" asked Sherkan. "It is," replied she, "that thou return with thy troops to thine own country." "O my lady," said he, "my father, King Omar ben Emanan, sent me to make war upon thy father, on account of the treasure he took from the King of Constantinople, and amongst the rest three great jewels, rich in happy properties." "Reasure thyself," answered she; "I will tell thee the truth of the matter and the cause of the feud between us and the King of Constantinople. Know that we have a festival called the Festival of the Monastery, for which each year the kings' daughters of various countries and the wives and daughters of the notables and merchants resort to a certain monastery and abide there seven days. I was wont to resort therethrough the rest; but when there befell hostility between us, my father forbade me to be present at the festival for the space of seven years. One year, it chanced that amongst the young ladies who resorted to the Festival as of wont, there came the King's daughter of Constantinople, a handsome girl called Sufiyeh. They tarried at the monastery six days, and on the seventh, the folk went away; but Sufiyeh said, 'I will not return to Constantinople, but by sea.' So they fitted her out a ship, in which she embarked, she and her suite, and put out to sea; but as they sailed, a contrary wind caught them and drove the ship from her course, till, as fate and providence would have it, she fell in with a ship of the Christians from the Island of Camphor, with a crew of five hundred armed Franks, who had been cruising about for some time. When they sighted the sails of the ship in which were Sufiyeh and her maidsens, they gave chase in all haste and coming up with her before long, threw grappling-irons on board and made fast to her. Then they made all sail for their own island and were but a little distant from it, when the wind veered and rent their sails and cast them on to a reef on our coast. Therewith we salved forth on them, and looking on them as buoy driven to us by fate, slew the men and made prize of the ships, in which we found the treasures and rarities in question and forty damsels, amongst whom was Sufiyeh. We carried the damsels to my father, not knowing that the King's daughter of Constantinople was amongst them, and he chose out ten of them, including Sufiyeh, for himself, and divided the rest among his couriers. Then he set apart Sufiyeh and four other girls and sent them to thy father, King Omar ben Emanan, together with other presents, each as cloth and stuffs of wool and Grecian silks. Thy father accepted them and
chose out from amongst the five girls the princess Sufiyeh, daughter of King Afridoun; nor did we hear aught more of the matter till the beginning of this year, when King Afridoun wrote to my father in terms which he befits not to repeat, reproaching and menacing him and saying to him, "Two years ago, there fell into thy hands a ship of ours, that had been seized by a company of Frankish corsairs and in which was my daughter Sufiyeh, attended by near three-score damsels. Yet thou sentest none to tell me of this and I could not make the case public, lest disgrace fall on my reputation among the kings, by reason of my daughter's dishonour. So I kept the affair secret till this year, when I communicated with certain of the Frankish pirates and sought news of my daughter from the kings of the islands. They replied, "By Allah, we bore her not forth of thy realm, but we have heard that King Herdoub took her from certain pirates." And they told me all that had befallen her. So now, except thou wish to be at feud with me and design to disgrace me and dishonour my daughter, thou wilt forfend, as soon as this letter reaches thee, send my daughter back to me. But if thou pay no heed to my letter and disobey my commandment, I will assuredly requite thee thy foul dealing and the baseness of thine acts.' When my father read this letter, it was grievous to him and he regretted not having known that Sufiyeh, King Afridoun's daughter, was amongst the captured damsels, that he might have sent her back to her father; and he was perplexed about the affair, for that, after the lapse of so long a time, he could not send to King Omar ben Enunnan and demand her back from him, the more that he had lately heard that God had vouchsafed him children by this very Sufiyeh. So when we considered the matter, we knew that this letter was none other than a great calamity; and nothing would serve but that my father must write an answer to it, making his excuses to King Afridoun and swearing to him that he knew not that his daughter was among the girls in the ship and setting forth how he had sent her to King Omar ben Enunnan and God had vouchsafed him children by her. When my father's reply reached King Afridoun, he rose and sat down and roared and foamed at the mouth, exclaiming, 'What! Shall he make prize of my daughter and she become a slave-girl and be passed from hand to hand and sent for a gift to kings, and they lie with her without a contract? By the virtue of the Messiah and the true faith, I will not desist till I have taken my revenge for this and wiped out my disgrace; and indeed I will do a deed that the chroniclers shall chronicle after me!' So he took patience till he had devised a plot and laid great snares, when he sent an embassy to thy father King Omar, to tell him that which thou hast heard; so that thy father equipped thee and an army with thee and sent thee to him, Afridoun's object being to lay hold of thee and thine army with thee. As for the three jewels, of which he told thy father, he spake not the truth of them; for they were with Sufiyeh and my father took them from her, when she fell into his hands, she and her maidens, and gave them to me, and they are now with me. So go thou to thy troops and turn them back, ere they fare farther into the land of the Franks and the country of the Greeks; for as soon as you are come far enough into the inward of the country, they will stop the roads upon you, and there will be no escape for you from their hands till the day of rewards and punishments. I know that thy troops are still where thou lestest them, because thou didst order them to halt there three days; and they have missed thee all this time and know not what to do.' When Sherlian heard her words, he was absent awhile in thought; then he kissed Abridhe's hand and said, "Praise be to God who hath bestowed thee on me and appointed thee to be
the cause of my salvation and that of those who are with me! But it is grievous to me to part from thee and I know not what will become of thee after my departure." Quoth she, "Go now to thy troops and lead them back, whilst ye are yet near your own country. If the ambassadors are still with them, lay hands on them, that the case may be made manifest to thee, and after three days I will rejoin thee and we will all enter Bagdad together; but forget thou not the compact between us." Then she rose to bid him farewell and assuage the fire of longing, so she took leave of him and embraced him and wept sore; whereupon passion and desire were sore upon him and he also wept and repeated the following verses:

I bade her farewell, whilst my right hand was wiping my eyes, And still with my left, the while, I held her in close embrace.
Then, "Fearst thou not disgrace?" quoth she; and I answered, "No. Sure, on the parting-day, for lovers there's no disgrace!"

Then Sherkan left her and went without the monastery, where they brought him his horse and he mounted and rode down the bank of the stream, till he came to the bridge, and crossing it, entered the forest. As soon as he was clear of the trees and came to the open country, he was aware of three horsemen pricking towards him. So he drew his sword and rode on cautiously: but as they drew near, he recognized them and beheld, it was the Vizier Dendan and two of his officers. When they saw him and knew him, they dismounted and saluting him, asked the reason of his absence, whereupon he told them all that had passed between him and the princess Afrizeh from first to last. The Vizier returned thanks to God the Most High for his safety and said, "Let us at once depart hence, for the ambassadors that were with us are gone to inform their king of our arrival, and belike he will hasten to fall on us and seize us." So they rode on in haste, till they came to the camp, when Sherkan commanded to depart forthright, and the army set out and journeyed by forced marches for five days, at the end of which time they alighted in a thickly wooded valley, where they rested awhile. Then they set out again and fared on till they came to the frontiers of their own country. Here they fell themselves in safety and halted to rest; and the country people came out to them with guest-gifts and victual and fodder for the cattle. They lay there and rested two days; after which Sherkan bade the Vizier Dendan fare forward to Bagdad with his troops, and he did so. But Sherkan himself abode behind with a hundred horse, till the rest of the army had been gone a day, when he mounted, he and his men, and fared on two parasangs' space, till they came to a narrow pass between two mountains and behold, there arose a great cloud of dust in their front. So they halted their horses awhile, till the dust lifted and discovered a hundred cavaliers, as they were fierce lions, cased in complete steel. As soon as they came within earshot of Sherkan and his men, they cried out to them, saying, "By John and Mary, we have gotten what we hoped! We have been following you by forced marches, night and day, till we forewent you in this place. So alight and lay down your arms and yield yourselves, that we may grant you your lives." When Sherkan heard this, his eyes rolled and his cheeks flushed and he said, "O dogs of Nazarenes, how dare ye enter our country and set foot on our earth? And doth not this suffice you, but ye must adventure yourselves and give us such words as these? Do ye think to escape out of our hands and return to your country?" Then he cried out to his hundred horse, saying, "Up and at these dogs, for they are even as you in number!" So saying, he drew his sword and drove at them, without further parley, he and his hundred men. The Franks received them with hearts stouter than stone, and they met, man to man. Then fell champion upon champion and there befell
a sore strife and great was the terror and the roar of the battle; nor did they leave jousting and joining and smiling
with swords, till the day departed and the night came with
the darkness; when they drew apart, and Sherkan mustered
his men and found them all unhurt, save four who were
slightly wounded. Then said he to them, "By Allah, all
my life I have waded in the surging sea of war and battle,
but never saw I any so firm and stout in sword-play and
shock of men as these warriors!" "Know, O King," re-
plied they, "that there is among them a Frank cavalier,
who is their leader, and indeed he is a man of valor and
his strokes are terrible: but, by Allah, he spares us, great
and small; for whom falls into his hands, he lets him go
and forbears to slay him. By Allah, an he would, he could
kill us all!" When Sherkan heard this, he was confounded
and said, "To-morrow, we will draw out and defy them
to single combat, for we are a hundred to their hundred;
and we will seek help against them from the Lord of the
heavens." Meanwhile, the Franks came to their leader
and said to him, "Of a truth, we have not come by our
desire of these this day." "To-morrow," quoth he, "we
will draw out and joust against them, one by one." So
they passed the night in this mind, and both camps kept
watch till the morning. As soon as God the Most High
brought on the day, King Sherkan mounted, with his
hundred horse, and they betook themselves to the field,
where they found the Franks ranged in battle array, and
Sherkan said to his men, "Verily, our enemies are of the
same mind as we; so up and at them briskly!" Then came
forth a herald of the Franks and cried out, saying, "Let
there be no fighting between us to-day, except by way of
single combat, a champion of yours against one of ours!"
Thereupon one of SHERKAN'S men came out from the ranks
and spurring between the two parties, cried out, "Who is for
jousting? Who is for fighting? Let no laggard nor weak-
ling come out against me to-day!" Hardly had he made
an end of speaking, when there sallied forth to him a
Frankish horseman, armed cap-a-pie and clad in cloth of
gold, riding on a gray horse, and he had no hair on his
cheeks. He drove his horse into the midst of the field
and the two champions fell to cutting and thrusting, nor
was it long before the Frank smote the Muslim with his
lance and unhorsed him, took him prisoner and bore him
off in triumph. At this, his comrades rejoiced and for-
bidding him to go out again, sent forth another to the
field, to whom sallied out a second Muslim, the brother of
the first. The two drove at each other and fought for a
little, till the Frank ran at the Muslim and throwing him
off his guard by a feint, smote him with the butt end of
his spear and unhorsed him and took him prisoner. After
this fashion, the Muslims ceased not to come forth and
the Franks to unhorse them and take them prisoner, till
the day departed and the night came with the darkness.
Now they had captured twenty cavaliers of the Muslims,
and when SHERKAN saw this, it was grievous to him, and
he mustered his men and said to them, "What is this thing
that hath befallen us? To-morrow morning, I myself will
go out into the field and seek to joust with their chief and
learn his reason for entering our country and warn him
against fighting. If he persist, we will do battle with him,
and if he proffer peace, we will make peace with him." They
passed the night thus, and when God brought on the
day, both parties mounted and drew out in battle array.
Then SHERKAN was about to sally forth, when behold, more
than half of the Franks dismounted and marched on foot,
before one of them, who was mounted, to the midst of the
field. SHERKAN looked at this cavalier and beheld, he was
their chief. He was clad in a tunic of blue satin and a
close-ringed shirt of mail; his face was as the full moon
at its rising and he had no hair on his cheeks. In his
hand he held a sword of Indian steel, and he was mounted on a black horse with a white star, like a diadem, on his forehead. He spurred into the midst of the field and signing to the Muslims, cried out with fluent speech in the Arabic tongue, saying, "Ho, Sherkan! Ho, son of Oman ben Ennuman, thou that smitest the citadels and layest waste the lands, up and out to joust and battle with him who halves the field with thee! Thou art prince of thy people and I am prince of mine; and whoso hath the upper hand, the other’s men shall come under his sway." Hardly had he made an end of speaking, when out came Sherkan, with a heart full of wrath, and spurring his horse into the midst of the field, drove like an angry lion at the Frank, who awaited him with calm and steadfastness and met him as a champion should. Then they fell to cutting and thrusting, nor did they cease to wheel and turn and give and take, as they were two mountains clashing together or two seas breaking one against the other, till the day departed and the night brought on the darkness, when they drew apart and returned, each to his people. As soon as Sherkan reached his comrades, he said to them, "Never in my life saw I the like of this cavalier; and he has one fashion I never yet beheld in any. It is that, when he has a chance of dealing his adversary a deadly blow, he reverses his lance and strikes him with the butt. Of a truth, I know not what will be the issue between him and me; but I would we had in our army his like and the like of his men." Then he passed the night in sleep, and when it was morning, the Frank spurred out to the mid-field, where Sherkan met him, and they fell to fighting and circling one about the other, whilst all necks were stretched out to look at them; nor did they cease from battle and sword play and thrusting with spears, till the day departed and the night came with the darkness, when they drew asunder and returned each to his own camp. Then each related to his comrades what had befallen him with his adversary, and the Frank said to his men, "To-morrow shall decide the matter." So they both passed the night in sleep, and as soon as it was day, they mounted and drove at each other and ceased not to fight till the middle of the day. Then the Frank made a shift, first spurring his horse and then checking him with the bridle, so that he stumbled and threw him; whereupon Sherkan fell on him and was about to smite him with his sword and make an end of the long strife, when the Frank cried out, "O Sherkan, this is not the fashion of champions! It is only the beaten who deal thus with women." When Sherkan heard this, he raised his eyes to the Frank’s face and looking steadfastly at him, knew him for none other than the princess Abrizah, whereupon he threw the sword from his hand and kissing the earth before her, said to her, "What moved thee to do this thing?" Quoth she, "I was minded to prove thee in the field and try thy stoutness in battle. These that are with me are all of them my women, and they are all maidens; yet have they overcome thy horsemen in fair fight; and had not my horse stumbled with me, thou shouldest have seen my strength and prowess." Sherkan smiled at her speech and said, "Praised be God for safety and for my reunion with thee, 0 queen of the age!" Then she cried out to her damsels to lose the prisoners and dismount. They did as she bade and came and kissed the earth before her and Sherkan, who said to them, "It is the like of you that kings treasure up against the hour of need." Then he signed to his comrades to salute the princess; so they dismounted all and kissed the earth before her, for they knew the story. After this, the whole two hundred mounted and rode day and night for six days’ space, till they drew near to Baghdad, when they halted and Sherkan made Abrizah and her com-

1 Apparently referring in jest to her speech to him (see supra, p. 27), "Thou art beaten in everything."
Night panic was put off their male attire and don the dress of the women of the Greeks. Then he despatched a company of his men to Baghdad to acquaint his father with his arrival in company with the princess Abrizeth, daughter of King Herlomb, to the intent that he might send some one to meet her. They passed the night in that place, and when God the Most High brought on the day, Sherkan and his company took horses and fared on towards the city. On the way, they met the Vizier Dendan, who had come out with a thousand horses, by commandment of King Omar, to do honour to the princess Abrizeth and to Sherkan. When they drew near, the Vizier and his company dismounted and kissed the earth before the prince and princess, then mounted again and escorted them, till they reached the city and came to the palace. Sherkan went in to his father, who rose and embraced him and questioned him of what had happened. So he told him all that had befallen him, including what the princess Abrizeth had told him and what had passed between them and how she had left her father and her kingdom and had chosen to depart and take up her abode with them. And he said to his father, "Indeed, the King of Constantinople had plotted to do us a mischief, because of his daughter Sufyeh, for that the King of Caesarea had made known to him her history and the manner of her being made a gift to thee, he not knowing her to be King Africoun's daughter; else would he have restored her to her father. And of a verity, we were only saved from these perils by the Lady Abrizeth, and never saw I a more valiant than she!" And he went on to tell his father of the wrestling and the jousting from beginning to end. When King Omar heard his son's story, Abrizeth was exalted in his eyes, and he longed to see her and sent Sherkan to fetch her. So Sherkan went out to her and said, "The king calls for thee." She replied, "I hear and obey;" and he took her and brought her in to his father, who was seated on his throne, attended only by the eminents, having dismissed his courtiers and officers. The princess entered and kissing the ground before him, saluted him in choice terms. He was amazed at her fluent speech and thanked her for her dealing with his son Sherkan and bade her be seated. So she sat down and uncovered her face, which when the king saw, his reason fled and he made her draw near and showed her especial favour, appointing her a palace for herself and her damsels and assigning them due allowances. Then he asked her of the three jewels aforesaid, and she replied, "O King of the age, they are with me." So saying, she rose and going to her lodging, opened her baggage and brought out a box, from which she took a casket of gold. She opened the casket and taking out the three jewels, kissed them and gave them to the King and went away, taking his heart with her. Then the King sent for his son Sherkan and gave him one of the three jewels. Sherkan enquired of the other two, and the king replied, "O my son, I mean to give one to thy brother Zoumenean and the other to thy sister Nuzhet ez Zeman." When Sherkan heard that he had a brother (for up to that time he had only known of his sister) he turned to his father and said to him, "O King, hast thou a son other than myself?" "Yes," answered Omar, "and he is now six years old." And he told him that his name was Zoumenean and that he and Nuzhet ez Zeman were twins, born at a birth. This news was grievous to Sherkan, but he hid his chagrin and said, "The blessing of God the Most High be upon them!" And he threw the jewel from his hand and shook the dust off his clothes. Quoth his father, "What made thee change colour, when I told thee of this, seeing that the kingdom is assured to thee after me? For, verily, the troops have sworn to thee and the Amirs and grandees have taken the oath of succession to thee; and this one
of the three jewels is thine." At this, Sherkan bowed his head and was ashamed to bandy words with his father: so he accepted the jewel and went away, knowing not what to do for excess of anger, and stayed not till he reached the princess Abrizeh’s palace. When she saw him, she rose to meet him and thanked him for what he had done and called down blessings on him and his father. Then she sat down and made him sit by her side. After a while, she saw anger in his face and questioned him, whereupon he told her that God had vouchsafed his father two children, a boy and a girl, by Sufiyeh, and that he had named the boy Zainulmakan and the girl Nuzhet ez Zeman. "He has given me one of the jewels," continued he, "and kept the other two for them. I knew not of Zainulmakan’s birth till this day, and he is now six years old. So when I learnt this, wrath possessed me and I threw down the jewel: and I tell thee the reason of my anger and hide nothing from thee. But I fear lest the King take thee to wife, for he loves thee and I saw in him signs of desire for thee: so what wilt thou say, if he wish this?" "Know, O Sherkan," replied the princess, "that thy father has no dominion over me, nor can he take me without my consent; and if he take me by force, I will kill myself. As for the three jewels, it was not my intent that he should give them to either of his children and I had no thought but that he would lay them up with his things of price in his treasury; but now I desire of thy favour that thou make me a present of the jewel that he gave thee, if thou hast accepted it." "I hear and obey," replied Sherkan and gave her the jewel. Then said she, "Fear nothing," and talked with him awhile. Presently she said, "I fear lest my father hear that I am with you and sit not down with my loss, but do his endeavour to come at me; and to that end he may ally himself with King Afridoun and both come on thee with armies and so there befall a great turmoil." "O my lady," replied Sherkan, "if it please thee to sojourn with us, take no thought of them, though all that be in the earth and in the ocean gather themselves together against us!" "It is well," rejoined she; "if ye entreat me well, I will tarry with you, and if ye deal evilly by me, I will depart from you." Then she bade her maidens bring food; so they set the tables, and Sherkan sat a little and went away to his own house, anxious and troubled.

Meanwhile, King Omar betook himself to the lodging of the Lady Sufiyeh, who rose to her feet, when she saw him, and stood till he was seated. Presently, his two children, Zainulmakan and Nuzhet ez Zeman, came to him, and he kissed them and hung a jewel round each one’s neck, at which they rejoiced and kissed his hands. Then they went to their mother, who rejoiced in them and wished the King long life; and he said to her, "Why hast thou not told me, all this time, that thou art King Afridoun’s daughter, that I might have advanced thee and enlarged thee in dignity and used thee with increase of honour and consideration?" "O King," replied Sufiyeh, "what could I desire greater or more exalted than this my standing with thee, overwhelmed as I am with thy favours and thy goodness? And God to boot hath blessed me by thee with two children, a son and a daughter." Her answer pleased the king and he set apart for her and her children a splendid palace. Moreover, he appointed for their service eunuchs and attendants and doctors and sages and astrologers and physicians and surgeons and in every way redoubled in favour and munificence towards them. Nevertheless, he was greatly occupied with love of the princess Abrizeh and burnt with desire of her night and day; and every night, he would go in to her, and talk with her and pay his court to her, but she gave him no answer, saying only, "O King of the age, I have no desire for
men at this present." When he saw that she repelled him, his passion and longing increased till, at last, when he was weary of this, he called his vizier Dendan and opening his heart to him, told him how love for the princess Abrizeh was killing him and how she refused to yield to his wishes and how could get nothing of her. Quoth thevizier, "As soon as it is dark night, do thou take a piece of henbane, the bigness of a dinar, and go in to her and drink wine with her. When the hour of leave-taking draws near, fill a last cup and drop the henbane in it, give it to her to drink, and she will not reach her sleeping-chamber, ere the drug take effect on her. Then do thou go in to her and take thy will of her." "Thy counsel is good," said the King, and going to his treasury, took thence a piece of concentrated henbane, which if an elephant smelt, he would sleep from year to year. He put it in his bosom and waited till some little of the night was past, when he betook himself to the palace of the princess, who rose to receive him; but he bade her sit down. So she sat down, and he by her, and he began to talk with her of drinking, whereupon she brought the table of wine and set it before him. Then she set on the drinking-vessels and lighted the candles and called for fruits and confections and sweetmeats and all that pertains to drinking. So they fell to drinking and ceased not to carouse, till drunkenness crept into the princess's head. When the King saw this, he took out the piece of henbane and holding it between his fingers, filled a cup and drank it off; then filled another cup, into which he dropped the henbane, unseen of Abrizeh, and saying, "Thy health!" presented it to her. She took it and drank it off; then rose and went to her sleeping-chamber. He waited awhile, till he was assured that the drug had taken effect on her and gotten the mastery of her senses, when he went in to her and found her lying on her back, with a lighted candle at her head and another at her feet. She had put off her trousers, and the air raised the skirt of her shift and discovered what was between her thighs. When the King saw this, he took leave of his senses for desire and Satan tempted him and he could not master himself, but put off his trousers and fell upon her and did away her maidenhead. Then he went out and said to one of her women, by name Merjanah, "Go in to thy mistress, for she calls for thee." So she went in to the princess and found her lying on her back, with the blood running down her thighs; whereupon she took a handkerchief and wiped away the blood and tended her mistress and lay by her that night. As soon as it was day, she washed the princess's hands and feet and bathed her face and mouth with rose-water, whereupon she sneezed and yawned and cast up the henbane. Then she revived and washed her hands and mouth and said to Merjanah, "Tell me what has befallen me." So she told her what had passed and how she had found her, lying on her back, with the blood running down her thighs, wherefore she knew that the King had played the traitor with her and had undone her and taken his will of her. At this she was afflicted and shut herself up, saying to her damsels, "Let no one come in to me and say to all that I am ill, till I see what God will do with me." The news of her illness came to the King, and he sent her cordials and sherbet of sugar and confections. Some months passed thus, during which time the King's flame subsided and his desire for her cooled, so that he abstained from her. Now she had conceived by him, and in due time, her pregnancy appeared and her belly swelled, wherefore the world was straitened upon her and she said to her maid Merjanah, "Know that it is not the folk who have wronged me, but I who sinned against myself in that I left my father and mother and country. Indeed, I abhor life, for my heart is broken and I have neither courage
nor strength left. I used, when I mounted my horse, to have the mastery of him, but now I have no strength to ride. If I be brought to bed in this place, I shall be disowned among my women, and everyone in the palace will know that he has taken my maidenhead in the way of shame; and if I return to my father, with what face shall I meet him or have recourse to him? How well says the poet:

Wherewith shall I be comforted, that am of all bereft, To whom nor folk nor home nor friend nor dwelling-place is left?

Quoth Merjanah, "It is for thee to command; I will obey." And Abrizech said, "I would fain leave this place privily, so that none shall know of me but thou, and return to my father and mother; for when flesh stinketh, there is nought for it but its own folk, and God shall do with me as He will." "It is well, O princess," replied Merjanah. So she made ready in secret and waited awhile, till the King went out to hunt and Sherkan betook himself to certain of the fortresses to sojourn there awhile. Then she said to Merjanah, "I wish to set out to-night, but how shall I do? For already I feel the pangs of labour, and if I abide other four or five days, I shall be brought to bed here, and how then can I go to my country? But this is what was written on my forehead." Then she considered awhile and said, "Look out a man who will go with us and serve us by the way, for I have no strength to bear arms." "By Allah, O my lady," replied Merjanah, "I know none but a black slave called Ghezan, who is one of the slaves of King Omar ben Eemunan; he is a stout fellow and keeps guard at the gate of our palace. The King appointed him to attend us, and indeed we have overwhelmed him with favours. I will go out and speak with him of the matter and promise him money and tell him that, if he have a mind to tarry with us, we will marry him to whom he will. He told me before to-day that he had been a highwayman; so if he consent, we shall have our desire and come to our own country." "Call him, that I may talk with him," said the princess. So Merjanah went out and said to the slave, "O Ghezan, God prosper thee, do thou fall in with what my lady says to thee." Then she took him by the hand and brought him to Abrizech. He kissed the princess's hands and when she saw him, her heart took fright at him, but she said to herself, "Necessity is imperious," and to him, "O Ghezan, wilt thou help us against the perfections of fortune and keep my secret, if I discover it to thee?" When the slave saw her, his heart was taken by storm and he fell in love with her forthright and could not choose but answer, "O my mistress, whatsoever thou biddest me do, I will not depart from it." Quoth she, "I would have thee take me and this my maid and saddle us two camels and two of the king's horses and set on each horse a saddle-bag of stuff and somewhat of victual, and go with us to our own country; where, if thou desire to abide with us, I will marry thee to her thou shalt choose of my damsels; or if thou prefer to return to thine own country, we will send thee thither, with as much money as will content thee." When Ghezan heard this, he rejoiced greatly and replied, "O my lady, I will serve thee faithfully and will go at once and saddle the horses." Then he went away, rejoicing and saying in himself, "I shall get my will of them; and if they will not yield to me, I will kill them and take their riches." But this his intent he kept to himself and presently returned, mounted on one horse and leading the other two and two camels. He brought the horses to the princess, who mounted one and made Merjanah mount the other, albeit she was suffering from the pains of labour and could scarce possess herself for anguish. Then they set out and journeyed night and day through the passses of the mountains, till there remained but a day's journey between

VOL. II.
them and their own country, when the pangs of travail came upon Abirizeh and she could no longer sit her horse. So she said to Ghezban, "Set me down, for the pains of labour are upon me," and cried to Merjaneh, saying, "Do thou alight and sit down by me and deliver me." They both drew rein and dismounting from their horses, helped the princess to alight, and she avowed stress of pain. When Ghezban saw her on the ground, Satan entered into him and he drew his sabre and brandishing it in her face, said, "O my lady, vouchesafe me thy favours." With this, she turned to him and said, "It were a fine thing that I should yield to black slaves, after having reigned kings and princes!" And she was wroth with him and said, "What words are these? Out on thee! do not talk thus in my presence and know that I will never consent to what thou sayst, though I drink the cup of death. Wait till I have cast my burden and am delivered of the after-birth, and after, if thou be able therto, do with me as thou wilt; but, an thou leave not lowd talk at this time, I will slay myself and leave the world and be at peace from all this." And she recited the following verses:

O Ghezban, unsheath me and let me go free: Sure forune is heavy enough upon me.
My Lord hath forbidden me whoredom. "The fire Shall be the transgressor's last dwelling," quoth He:
So look not on me with the eye of desire. For surely to lewdness I may not agree;
And if thou respect not mine honour and God Nor put away filthy behaviour from thee,
I will call with my might on the men of my tribe And draw them all both from upland and sea.
Were I hence, limb from limb, with the Yemeni sword, Yet never a lecherous visage should see
Of the freeborn and mighty; so how then should I Let a whoreson black slave have possession of me?

When Ghezban heard this, he was exceeding angry;

his eyes grew bloodshot and his face became of the colour of dust; his nostrils swelled, his lips protruded: and the terrors of his aspect redoubled. And he repeated the following verses:

Abirizeh, have mercy nor leave me to sigh. Who am slain by the glance of thy Yemeni eye! 1
My body is wasted, my patience at end, And my heart for thy cruelty racked like to die.
Thy glance with secrecy ravish all hearts; My reason is distant and passion is nigh.
Though thou dostst to thy succour the world full of troops, I'd not stir till my purpose accomplished had I.

Then upon Abirizeh wept sore and said to him, "Out on thee, O Ghezban! How darest thou demand this of me, O son of shame and nursing of lewdness? Doest thou think all folk are alike?" When the pestilential slave heard this, he was enraged and his eyes reddened: and he came up to her and snatched with the sword on her neck and killed her. Then he made off into the mountains, driving her horse before him with the treasure. In the agonies of death, she gave birth to a son, like the moon, and Merjanah took him and laid him by her side, after doing him the necessary offices; and behold, the child fastened to its mother's breast, and she dead. When Merjanah saw this, she cried out grievously and rent her clothes and cast dust on her head and buffeted her cheeks, till the blood came, saying, "Alas, my mistress! Alas, the pity of it! Thou art dead by the hand of a worthless black slave, after all thy prowess!" As she sat weeping, there arose a great cloud of dust and darkened the plain: but, after a while, it lifted and discovered a numerous army. Now this was the army of King Herdoub, the princess Abirizeh's father, who, hearing that his daughter had fled to Bagdad, she and

1 He likens the glance of her eye to the blade of a Yemeni sword,—a frequent occurrence in Arabic poetry.
her maidens, and that they were with King Omar ben
Emmanan, had come out with his troops to seek tidings of
her from travellers who might have seen her with King
Omar at Baghdad. When he had gone a day's journey
from his capital, he espied three horsemen afar off and
made towards them, thinking to ask whence they came
and seek news of his daughter. Now these three were his
dughter and Merjanjeh and Ghezen; and when the latter
saw the troops drawing near, he feared for himself; so he
killed Atrizeh and fled. When they came up and King
Herlobd saw his daughter lying dead and Merjanjeh weep-
ing over her, he threw himself from his horse and fell
down in a swoon. So all his company dismounted and
pitching the tents, set up a great pavilion for the King,
without which stood the grandee of the kingdom. At the
sight of her lord the King, Merjanjeh's tears redoubled,
and when he came to himself, he questioned her and she
told him all that had passed, how he that had slain his
dughter was a black slave, belonging to King Omar ben
Emmanan, and how the latter had dealt with the princess.
When King Herlobd heard this, the world grew black in
his sight and he wept sore. Then he called for a litter
and laying his dead daughter therein, returned to Cæsarea
and carried her into the palace. Then he went in to his
mother Dhat ed Dewahi and said to her, "Shall the Mus-
lins deal thus with my daughter? King Omar ben Emmanan
despoiled her by force of her honour and after this, one of
his black slaves slew her. By the Messiah, I will assuredly
be revenged for her and clear away the stain from my
honour! Else I shall kill myself with my own hand." And
he wept passing sore. Quoth his mother, "It was none
other than Merjanjeh killed her, for she hated her in secret.
But do not thou fear for taking revenge for thy daughter,
for, by the virtue of the Messiah, I will not turn back from
King Omar ben Emmanan, till I have slain him and his
sons; and I will assuredly do a deed, passing the power of
wise men and champions, of which the chroniclers shall
tell in all countries and places: but needs must thou obey
me in all. I shall direct, for he who is firmly set on aught
shall surely compass his desire." "By the virtue of the
Messiah," replied he, "I will not cross thee in aught that
thou shalt say!" Then said she, "Bring me a number of
damsels, high-borned maids, and summon the wise men
of the time and let them teach them philosophy and the
art of conversation and making verses and the rules of
behaviour before kings, and let them talk with them of all
manner of science and edifying knowledge. The sages
must be Muslims, that they may teach the damsels the
language and traditions of the Arabs, together with the
history of the Khalifs and the pedigree of the Kings of
Islam; and if we persevere in this for the space of four
years, we shall attain our end. So possess thy soul in
patience and wait; for, as one of the Arabs says, 'It is
a little thing to wait forty years for one's reomage.' When
we have taught the girls these things, we shall be able
to do our will with our enemy, for he is a doting lover of
women and has three hundred and threescore concubines,
to which are now added a hundred of the flower of thy
damsels, that were with thy late daughter. So, as soon as
we have made an end of their education, I will take them
and set out with them." When the King heard his mother's
words, he rejoiced and came up to her and kissed her
head. Then he rose at once and despatched messengers
and couriers to the ends of the earth, to fetch him Muslim
sages. So they betook them to distant lands and brought
him thence the sages and doctors whom he sought. When
they were before him, he made much of them and bestowed
on them dresses of honour, appointing them stipends and
allowances and promising them much money, whereas they
should have taught the damsels. Then he committed the
Night
lit.
latter to their charge, enjoining them to instruct them in all manner of knowledge, sacred and profane, and all polite accomplishments; and they set themselves to do his bidding.

As for King Omar ben Emnunan, when he returned from hunting, he sought the princess Abrizah, but found her not nor could any give him news of her. This was grievous to him and he said, "How did she leave the palace, unknown of any? Had my kingdom been at stake in this, it were in a parlous case! Never again will I go a-hunting till I have sent to the gates those who shall keep good guard over them!" And he was sore vexed and heavy at heart for the loss of the princess Abrizah. Presently, his son Sherkan returned from his journey; and he told him what had happened and how the princess had died, whilst he was absent a-hunting, whereas he was greatly concerned. Then King Omar took to visiting his children every day and making much of them and brought them wise men and doctors, to teach them, appointing them stipends and allowances. When Sherkan saw this, he was exceeding wroth and jealous of his brother and sister, so that the signs of chagrin appeared in his face and he ceased not to languish by reason of this, till one day his father said to him, "What ails thee, that I see thee grown weak in body and pale of face?" "O my father," replied Sherkan, "every time I see thee fondle my brother and sister and make much of them, jealousy seizes on me, and I fear lest it grow on me, till I slay them and thou slay me in return. This is the reason of my weakness of body and change of colour. But now I crave of thy favour that thou give me one of thine outlying fortresses, that I may abide them the rest of my life, for as the hyowrd says, 'It is better and fitter for me to be at a distance from my friend; for when the eye seeth not, the heart doth not grieve.'" And he bowed his head. When the King heard Sherkan's words and knew the cause of his ailment, he soothed him and said to

him, "O my son, I grant thee this. I have not in my realm a greater than the fortress of Damascus, and the government of it is thine from this time." So saying, he called his secretaries of state and bade them make out Sherkan's patent of investiture to the vice-royalty of Damascus of Syria. Then he equipped Sherkan and formally invested him with the office and gave him his final instructions, enjoining him to policy and good government; and the prince took leave of his father and the grandees and officers of state and set out for his government, taking with him the vizier Dandan. When he arrived at Damascus, the townspeople beat the drums and blew the trumpets and decorated the city and came out to meet him in great state, whilst all the notables and grandees walked in procession, each according to his rank.

Soon after Sherkan's departure, the governors of King Omar's children presented themselves before him and said to him, "O our lord, thy children's education is now complete and they are versed in all polite accomplishments and in the rules of manners and etiquette." At this the King rejoiced with an exceeding joy and conferred bountiful largesse upon the wise men, seeing Zoulimakan grown up and flourishing and skilled in horsemanship. The prince had now reached the age of fourteen and occupied himself with pious and devout exercises, loving the poor and wise men and the students of the Koran, so that all the people of Baghdad loved him, men and women. One day, the procession of the Mehmil1 of Iraq passed round

1 Mehmil. A decorated framework or litter borne by a camel, sent as an emblem of royalty with the caravan of pilgrims to Mecca, by way of honour to the occasion and to the sacred object of the pilgrimage, much as great people send their empty carriages to attend the funeral of a person for whose memory they wish to show their respect. The introduction of the Mehmil brie is another of the many amalgamations of the story, as the custom is said not to have come into use till a much later period.
Baghdad, previously to the departure of the pilgrimage to the holy places and tomb of the Prophet. When Zoulinekan saw the procession, he was seized with longing to go on the pilgrimage; so he went in to his father and said to him, "I come to ask thy leave to make the pilgrimage." But his father forbade him, saying, "Wait till next year, and I will go with thee." When Zoulinekan saw that the fulfilment of his desire was postponed, he betook himself to his sister Nuzhet ez Zeman, whom he found standing at prayer. As soon as she had made an end of her devotions, he said to her, "I am dying of desire to see the Holy House of God at Mecca and to visit the Prophet's tomb. I asked my father's leave, but he forbade me: so I mean to take somewhat of money and set out privately on the pilgrimage, without his knowledge." "I conjure thee by Allah," exclaimed she, "to take me with thee and that thou forbid me not to visit the tomb of the Prophet, whom God bless and preserve!" And he answered, "As soon as it is dark night, do thou leave this place, without telling any, and come to me." Accordingly, she waited till the middle of the night, when she doosed a man's habit and went to the gate of the palace, where she found Zoulinekan with camels ready harnessed. So they mounted and riding after the caravan, mingled with the Arab pilgrims, and God decreed them a prosperous journey, so that they entered Mecca the Holy in safety, standing upon Amaw and performing the various rites of the pilgrimage. Then they paid a visit to the tomb of the Prophet (whom God bless and preserve) and thought to return with the pilgrims to their native land; but Zoulinekan said to his sister, "O my sister, it is in my mind to visit Jerusalem and the tomb of Abraham the friend of God (on whom be peace)." "I also desire to do this," replied she. So they agreed upon this, and he went out and took passage for himself and her and

---

1 Mecca.

2 Medina.
weeping with him awhile, after which she rose and veiling her head with a camel-cloth, which the owner had forgotten with them, embraced her brother and went forth, weeping and knowing not whither she should go. Zoalmekan abode, awaiting her return, till the evening; but she came not, and the night passed and the morning came, but still she returned not; and so two days went by. At this he was greatly troubled and his heart fluttered for her, and hunger was sore upon him. At last he left the chamber and calling the servant of the inn, bade him carry him to the bazaar. So he carried him to the market and laid him down there; and the people of Jerusalem came round him and were moved to tears at his condition. He signed to them for somewhat to eat; so they took money from some of the merchants and bought food and fed him therewith; after which they carried him to a shop, where they laid him on a mat of palm-leaves and set a vessel of water at his head. At nightfall, they all went away, some concerned for him, and in the middle of the night, he called to mind his sister, and his sickness redbudded on him, so that he abstained from eating and drinking and became insensible. When the people of the market saw him thus, they took thirty dirhems for him from the merchants and hiring a camel, said to the driver, "Carry this sick man to Damascus and leave him at the hospital; peradventure he may be cured and recover his health." "On my head be it!" replied he; but he said to himself, "How shall I take this sick man to Damascus, and he nigh upon death?" So he carried him away and hid with him till the night, when he threw him down on the fuel-heap in the stokehole of a bath and went his way. In the morning, the stoker of the bath came to his work and finding Zoalmekan cast on his back on the fuel-heap, exclaimed, "Could they find no other place in which to throw this dead man?" So saying, he gave him a push with his foot, and he moved; whereupon quoth the stoker, "This is some one who has eaten hashish and thrown himself down at hazard." Then he looked at him and saw that he had no hair on his face and was endowed with grace and comeliness; so he took pity on him and knew that he was sick and a stranger. "There is no power and no virtue but in God!" said he. "I have sinned against this youth; for indeed the Prophet (whom God bless and preserve) enjoins hospitality to strangers." Then he lifted him up and carrying him to his own house, committed him to his wife and bade her tend him. So she spread him a bed and laid a cushion under his head, then heated water and washed his hands and feet and face. Meanwhile, the stoker went to the market and buying rose-water and sherbet of sugar, sprinkled Zoalmekan's face with the one and gave him to drink of the other. Then he fetched a clean shirt and put it on him. With this, Zoalmekan scented the breeze of recovery and life returned to him; and he sat up and leant against the pillow. At this the stoker rejoiced and exclaimed, "O my God, I beseech Thee, by Thy hidden mysteries, make the salvation of this youth to be at my hands!" And he nursed him assiduously for three days, giving him to drink of sherbet of sugar and willow-flower water and rose-water and doing him all manner of service and kindness, till health began to return to his body and he opened his eyes and sat up. Presently the stoker came in and seeing him sitting up and showing signs of amendment, said to him, "How dost thou now, O my son?" "Thanks be to God," replied Zoalmekan, "I am well and like to recover, if so He please." The stoker praised the Lord of All for this and going to the market, bought ten chickens, which he carried to his wife and said to her, "Kill two of these for him every day, one in the morning and the other at nightfall." So she rose and killed a fowl, then boiling it, brought it to him and fed him with the flesh and gave him the
broth to drink. When he had done eating, she brought hot water and he washed his hands and lay back upon the pillow; whereas she covered him up and he slept till the time of afternoon prayer. Then she killed another fowl and boiled it; after which she cut it up and bringing it to Zoulmekan, said, "Eat, O my son!" Presently, her husband entered and seeing her feeding him, sat down at his head and said to him, "How is it with thee now, O my son?" "Thanks be to God for recovery!" replied he. "May He requite thee thy goodness to me!" At this the stoker rejoiced and going out, bought sherbet of violets and rose-water and made him drink it. Now his day's earnings at the bath were five dirhems, of which he spent every day two dirhems for Zoulmekan, one for sweet waters and sherbets and another for fowls; and he ceased not to entreat him thus kindly for a whole month, till the traces of illness ceased from him and he was quite recovered; whereupon the stoker and his wife rejoiced and the former said to him, "O my son, wilt thou go with me to the bath?" "Willingly," replied he. So the stoker went to the market and fetched an ass, on which he mounted Zoulmekan and supported him in the saddle, till they came to the bath. Then he made him alight and sit down, whilst he repaired to the market and bought lotus-leaves and hapan-meal, with which he returned to the bath and said to Zoulmekan, "O my son, in the name of God, enter, and I will wash thy body." So they both entered the inner room of the bath, and the stoker fell to rubbing Zoulmekan's legs and was going on to wash his body with the lotus-leaves and powder, when there came to them a bathman, whom the keeper of the bath had sent to Zoulmekan, and seeing the stoker rubbing and washing the latter, said to him, "This is trespassing on the keeper's rights." "By Allah," replied the stoker, "the master overwhelms us with his favours!"  

1 Oriental substitutes for soap.

Then the bathman proceeded to shave Zoulmekan's head, after which he and the stoker washed and returned to the latter's house, where he clad Zoulmekan in a shirt of fine stuff and a tunic of his own and gave him a handsome turban and girdle and wound a silken kerchief about his neck. Meanwhile the stoker's wife had killed two chickens and cooked them for him; so, as soon as Zoulmekan entered and seated himself on the couch, the stoker arose and dissolving sugar in willow-water, made him drink it. Then he brought the tray of food and cutting up the chickens, fed him with the meat and broth, till he was satisfied, when he washed his hands and praised God for recovery, saying to the stoker, "It is to thee, under God the Most High, that I owe my life!" "Leave this talk," replied the stoker, "and tell us the manner of thy coming to this city and whence thou art; for I see signs of gentle breeding in thy face." "Tell me first how thou camest to fall in with me," said Zoulmekan; "and after I will tell thee my story." "As for that," rejoined the stoker, "I found thee lying on the rubbish-bheap, by the door of the stoke-house, as I went to my work, near the morning, and knew not who had thrown thee down there. So I carried thee home with me; and this is all I have to tell." Quoth Zoulmekan, "Glory to Him who quickens the bones, though they be rotten! Indeed, O my brother, thou hast not done good to one who is unworthy, and thou shalt reap the reward of this. But where am I now?" "In the city of Jerusalem," replied the stoker; whereupon Zoulmekan called to mind his strangerhood and his separation from his sister and wept. Then he discovered his secret to the stoker and told him his story, repeating the following verses:

They heaped up passion on my soul, beyond my strength to bear, And for their sakes my heart is racked with weariness and care. Ah, be ye pitiful to me, O creed that ye are, For e'en my foes do pity me, since you away did fare!
Grudge not to grant unto thee eyes a passing glimpse of you, To ease the longing of my soul and lighten my despair.
I beg you to let me see you, for your sake. "Patience was never of my wont," he answered, "so forbear!"

Then he doubled his weeping, and the stoker said to him, "Weep not, but rather praise God for safety and recovery." Quoth Zoulmech, "How far is it hence to Damascus?" "Six days' journey," answered the stoker. "Will thou send me thither?" asked Zoulmech. "O my lord," replied the stoker, "how can I let thee go alone, and thou a young lad and a stranger? If thou be minded to make the journey to Damascus, I will go with thee; and if my wife will listen to me and accompany me, I will take up my abode there; for it goes to my heart to part with thee." Then said he to his wife, "Will thou go with me to Damascus or wilt thou abide here, whilst I bring this my lord thither and return to thee? For he is bent upon going to Damascus, and by Allah, it is hard to me to part with him, and I fear for him from the highway robbers." Quoth she, "I will go with you." And he said, "Praised be God for accord!" Then he rose and selling all his own night and his wife's gear, bought a camel and hired an ass for Zoulmech, and they set out and reached Damascus at nightfall after six days' journey. They alighted there, and the stoker went to the market and bought meat and drink. They had dwelt but five days in Damascus, when his wife sickened and after a few days' illness, was translated to the mercy of God. The stoker mourned for her with an exceeding grief, and her death was no light matter to Zoulmech, for she had tended him assiduously and he was grieved over her. Presently, he turned to the stoker and finding him mourning, said to him, "Do not grieve, for we must all go in at this gate." "God require thee with good, O my son!" replied the stoker. "Surely He will compensate us with His bounties and cause our mourning to cease. What sayest thou, O my son? Shall we walk abroad to view Damascus and cheer our spirits?" "Thy will be mine," replied Zoulmech. So the stoker took him by the hand, and they walked forth and walked on, till they came to the stables of the Viceroy of Damascus, where they found camels laden with chests and carpets and brocaded stuffs and saddle-horses and Bactrian camels and slaves, white and black, and folk running to and fro and a great bustle. Quoth Zoulmech, "I wonder to whom all these camels and stuffs and servants belong!" So he asked one of the slaves, and he replied, "These are presents that the Viceroy of Damascus is sending to King Omar ben Esmann, with the tribute of Syria." When Zoulmech heard his father's name, his eyes filled with tears and he repeated the following verses:

Ye that are far removed from my dear and start, Ye that within my heart are sojourners for aye,
Your conveniences are gone and life no more for me is sweet, nor will the pains of longing pass away.
If God one day decreed reunion of our loves, How long a tale of woes my tongue will have to say?

Then he wept and the stoker said to him, "O my son, thou hast hardly yet recovered; so take heart and do not weep, for I fear a relapse for thee." And he applied himself to comfort him and cheer him, whilst Zoulmech signed and bemoaned his strangechond and separation from his sister and his family and repeated the following verses, with tears streaming from his eyes:

Provide thee for the world to come, for seeds must thou be gone; Or soon or late, for every one the lot of death is drawn.
Thy fortune in this world is but delusion and regret; Thy life in it but vanity and empty chaff and aun.
The world, indeed, is but as twere a traveller's halting-place, Who makes his camels hale at eve and faces on with the dawn.

1. i.e. death.
And he continued to weep and lament, whilst the stoker wept too for the loss of his wife, yet ceased not to comfort Zoulmecan till the morning. When the sun rose, he said to him, "Meseems thou yearnest for thy native land?"

"Even so," replied Zoulmecan, "and I may not tarry here; so I will commend thee to God's care and set out with these people and journey with them, little by little, till I come to my country." "And I with thee," said the stoker; "for I cannot bear to part with thee. I have done thee service, and I mean to complete it by tending thee on the way." At this, Zoulmecan rejoiced and said, "May God abundantly requite thee for me!" Then the stoker went out and selling the camel, bought another ass, which he brought to Zoulmecan, saying, "This is for thee to ride by the way; and when thou art weary of riding, thou canst dismount and walk." "May God bless thee and help me to requite thee!" said Zoulmecan. "Indeed, thou hast dealt with me more lovingly than one with his brother!"

Then the stoker provided himself with victual for the journey, and they waited till it was dark night; when they laid their provisions and baggage on the ass and set out on their journey.

To return to Nachet ez Zeman. When she left her brother in the khan and went out to seek service with some one, that she might earn wherewith to buy him the roast meat he longed for, she fared on, weeping and knowing not whither to go, whilst her mind was occupied with concern for her brother and with thoughts of her family and her native land. And she implor ed God the Most High to do away these afflictions from them and repeated the following verses:

The shadows darken and passion stirs up my sickness again, And longing rouseth within me the old desiring pain.

The anguish of parting hath taken its sejourn in my breast, And love and longing and sorrow have saddened heart and brain.
a girl of the Arabs (of Iraq) and a stranger, and I have a sick brother; but I will go with thee to thy daughter on one condition; that is, that I may spend the day only with her and go to my brother at night. I am a stranger and was high in honour among my people, yet am I become cast down and abject. I came with my brother from the land of Hejaz and I fear lest he know not where I am."

When the Bedouin heard this, he said to himself, "By Allah, I have gotten what I sought!" Then he turned to her and said, "There shall none be dearer to me than thou; I only wish thee to bear my daughter company by day, and thou shalt go to thy brother at nightsfall. Or, if thou wilt, bring him to dwell with us." And he ceased not to give her fair words and coax her, till she trusted in him and agreed to serve him. Then he went on before her and she followed him, whilst he winked to his men to go on in advance and harness the camels and load them with food and water, ready for setting out as soon as he should come up. Now this Bedouin was a base-born wretch, a highway-robber and a brigand, a traitor to his friend and a pest master in craft and cruelty. He had no daughter and no son, and was but a wayfarer in Jerusalem, when, by the decree of God, he fell in with this unhappy girl. He held her in converse till they came without the city, where he joined his companions and found they had made ready the camels. So he mounted a camel, taking Nushet ez Zeman up behind him, and they rode on all night, making for the mountains, for fear any should see them. By this, she knew that the Bedouin's proposal was a snare and that he had tricked her; and she gave not over weeping and crying out the whole night long. A little before the dawn, they halted and the Bedouin came up to Nushet ez Zeman and said to her, "O wretch, what is this weeping? By Allah, an thou hold not thy peace, I will beat thee to death, city faggot that thou art!" When she heard this,
My purposes are brought to naught, my loves are rent in twain By calle's vigors, and all hope is one and all said, low, 
O ye, whoso do Sennacherib, whereof my dear ones are, Bestow the news of me and say, my tears for ever flow.

When she had finished, the Bedouin came up to her and taking compassion on her, bespok her kindly and wiped away her tears. Then he gave her a cake of barley-bread and said to her, "I do not love to be answered, when I am angry; so hereunto give no more of these insolent words, and I will sell thee to an honest fellow like myself, who will use thee well, even as I have done." "It is well," answered she; and when the night was long upon her, she hunger greatly and she was little of the barley-cake. In the middle of the night, the Bedouin gave the signal for night departure; so they loaded the camel and he mounted one of them, taking Nazhet ez Zorun behind him. Then they set out and journeyed, without stopping, for three days, till they reached the city of Damascus, where they alighted at the Sultan's khan, hard by the Viceroy's Gate. Now she had lost her beauty and her charms were changed by grief and the failure of the journey, and she ceased not to weep. So the Bedouin came up to her and said, "Hark ye, city watch! By my bonnet, an thou leave not this weeping, I will sell thee to a Jew!" Then he took her by the hand and carried her to a chamber, where he left her and went to the bazaar. Here he went round to the merchants who deal in slave-girls and began to parley with them, saying, "I have with me a slave-girl, whose brother fell ill, and I sent him to my people at Jerusalem, that they might tend him till he was cured. The separation from him was grievous to her, and since then, she does nothing but weep. I would fain have whose is minded to buy her of me, speak solly to her and say, Thy brother is with me in Jerusalem, Ill; and I will be easy with him about her price." Quoth one of the merchants, "How old is she?"
- "She is a virgin, just come to the age of puberty," replied the Bedouin, and is endowed with sense and breeding and wit and beauty and grace. But from the day I sent her brother to Jerusalem, she has done nothing but grieve for him, so that her beauty is fallen away and her value lessened." When the merchant heard this, he said, "O chief of the Arabs, I will go with thee and buy this girl of thee, if she be as thou sayest; for wit and beauty and accomplishments: but it must be upon conditions, which if thou accept, I will pay thee her price, and if not, I will return her to thee." If thou wilt," said the Bedouin, take her up to Prince Sherkan, son of King Omar ben Emaan, lord of Baghdad and of the land of Khartassan, and I will agree to whatever conditions thou mayst impose on me; for when he sees her, she will surely please him, and he will pay thee her price and a good profit to boot for thyself." It happens," rejoined the merchant, "that I have just now occasion to go to him, that I may get him to sign me a patent, exempting me from customs-dues, and I desire of him also a letter of recommendation to his father King Omar. So, if he take the girl, I will pay thee down her price at once." "I agree to this," answered the Bedouin. So they returned together to the khan, where the Bedouin stood at the door of the girl's chamber and called out, saying, "Ho, Najyeh!" which was the name he had given her. When she heard him, she wept and made no answer. Then he turned to the merchant and said to him, "There she sits. Do thou go up to her and look at her and speak kindly to her, as I enjoined thee." So he went up to her courteously and said that she was wonderful lovely and graceful, especially as she was acquainted with the Arabic tongue, and he said to the Bedouin, "Verily she is even as thou saidst, and I shall get of the Sultan what I will for her." Then he said to her, "Peace be on thee, O daughtering!
How dost thou?" She turned to him and replied, "This was written in the book of Destiny." Then she looked at him and seeing him to be a man of venerable appearance, with a handsome face, said to herself, "I believe this man comes to buy me. If I hold aloof from him, I shall abide with this tyrant, and he will be my death. In any case, this man is deeply tender and makes me hope for better treatment from him than from this brute of a Bedouin. Mayhap he only comes to hear me talk; so I will give him a fair answer." All this while, she had kept her eyes fixed on the ground; then she raised them to him and said in a sweet voice, "And upon thee be peace, O my lord, and the mercy of God and His blessing! This is what is commanded of the Prophet, whom God bless and preserve! As for thine inquiry how I do, if thou wouldest know my condition, it is such as thou wouldest not with but to thine enemies." And she was silent. When the merchant heard what she said, he was beside himself for delight in her and turning to the Bedouin, said to him, "What is her price, for indeed she is illustrious?" At this the Bedouin was angry and said, "Thou wilt turn me the girl's head with this talk! Why dost thou say that she is illustrious, for all she is of the scum of slave-girls and of the refuse of the people? I will not sell her to thee." When the merchant heard this, he knew he was dull-witted and said to him, "Calm thyself, for I will buy her of thee, notwithstanding the defects thou mentionest." "And how much wilt thou give me for her?" asked the Bedouin. "None should name the child but its father," replied the merchant. "Name thy price for her." "Not so," rejoined the Bedouin; "do thou say what thou wilt give."

1 Apparently the Bedouin was angry with the merchant for praising the girl to her face and perhaps also alarmed at finding that he had kidnapped a young lady of consequence, where he only thought to have made price of a poor wench of humble condition and friendless.

Quoth the merchant in himself, "This Bedouin is an unobservant churl. By Allah, I cannot tell her price, for she has mastered my heart with her sweet speech and her beauty: and if she can read and write, it will be the finishing touch to her good fortune and that of her purchaser. But this Bedouin does not know her value." Then he turned to the latter and said to him, "O elder of the Arabs, I will give thee two hundred dinars for her, in cash, clear of the tax and the Sultan's dues." When the Bedouin heard this, he flew into a violent passion and cried out at the merchant, saying, "Begone about thy business! By Allah, were thou to offer me two hundred dinars for the piece of camel-cloth on her head, I would not sell it to thee. I will not sell her, but will keep her by me, to pasture the camels and grind corn." And he cried out to her, saying, "Come, thou stinking, I will not sell thee." Then he turned to the merchant and said to him, "I thought thee a man of judgment, but, by my bonnet, if thou be gone not from me, I will let thee hear what will not please thee!" "Verily," said the merchant to himself, "this Bedouin is mad and knows not the girl's value, and I will say no more to him about her price for the present: for by Allah, were he a man of sense, he would not say, 'By my bonnet!' By Allah, she is worth the kingdom of the Chorosia and I will give him what he will, though it be all I have." Then he said to him, "O elder of the Arabs, calm thyself and take patience and tell me what clothes she has with thee." "Clothes!" cried the Bedouin; "what should the baggage want with clothes? The camel-cloth in which she is wrapped is ample for her." "With thy leave," said the merchant, "I will lift her veil and examine her as folk examine girls whom they think of marrying: "Up and do what thou wilt," replied the other, "and God keep thy youth! Examine her, inside and out, and if thou wilt, take off her clothes and look at her naked." "God
When the merchant heard her verses, he wept and put out his hand to wipe away her tears; but she let down her veil, saying, "God forbid, my master!" The Bedouin, who was sitting at a little distance, watching them, saw her cover her face and concluded that she would have hindered him from handling her; so he rose and running to her, dealt her such a blow on the shoulders with a camel's tail that he had in his hand, that she fell to the ground on her face. Her eyebrow smote against a stone, which cut it open, and the blood streamed down her face; whenupon she gave a loud scream and fainted away. The merchant was moved to tears for her and said in himself, "I must and will buy this damsel, though I pay down her weight in gold, and deliver her from this tyrant." And he began to reproach the Bedouin, whilst Nashat eez Zeman lay insensible. When she came to herself, she wiped away her tears and bound up her head; then, raising her eyes to heaven, she sought her Lord with a sorrowful heart and repeated the following verses:

Have rath on one who once was rich and great, When villany hath brought to low estate.
She weeps with never-ceasing tears and says, "There's no recourse against the laws of Fate."

Then she turned to the merchant and said to him, in a low voice, "By Allah, do not leave me with this tyrant, who knows not God the Most High! If I pass this night with him, I shall kill myself with my own hand and save myself from him, and God will save thee from hell-fire." So the merchant said to the Bedouin, "O chief of the Arabs, this girl is none of thine affair; so do thou sell her to me for what thou wilt." "Take her," said the Bedouin, "and pay me down her price, or I will carry her back to the camp and set her to feed the camels and gather their droppings." Quoth the merchant, "I will give thee fifty thousand dinars.

1 Delight of the eye. 2 Affliction (or woe) of the age.
for her." "God will open," replied the Bedouin. "Seventy thousand," said the merchant." God will open," repeated the other; "she hath cost me more than that; for she hath eaten barley-bread with me to the value of ninety-thousand dinars." Quoth the merchant, "Thou and all thy people and thy whole tribe in all thy lands have not eaten a thousand dinars' worth of barley: but I will make thee one offer, which if thou accept, not, I will set the Vicerey of Damascus on thee, and he will take thee from thee by force." "Say on," rejoined the Bedouin. "A hundred thousand," said the merchant. "I will sell her to thee at that price," answered the Bedouin; "I shall be able to buy salt with that." The merchant laughed and going to his house, returned with the money and gave it to the Bedouin, who took it and made off, saying, "I must go to Jerusalem: it may be I shall happen on her brother, and I will bring him here and sell him." So he mounted and journeyed to Jerusalem, where he went to the khan and enquired for Z場合には, but could not find him.

Meanwhile, the merchant threw his gold-piece over Nushet ez Zeman and carried her to his house, where he Night dressed her in the richest clothes he could buy. Then he carried her to the bazar, where he bought her what jewellery she chose and put it on. Before her, saying, "This is all for thee; and I ask nothing of thee in return but that, when thou comest to the Vicerey of Damascus, thou tell him what I gave for thee and that it was little compared with thy value: and if he buy thee, tell him how I have dealt with thee and ask of him for me a royal patent, with a recommendation to his father King Omar ben Esrama, lord of Baghdad, to the intent that he may forbid the taking toll on my staffs or other goods in which I trade." When she heard his words, she wept and sobbed, and the merchant said to her, "O my mistress, I note that, every time I mention Baghdad, thine eyes fill with tears: is there any one there whom thou lovest? If it be a merchant or the like, tell me; for I know all the merchants and so forth there; and an thou wouldst send him a message, I will carry it for thee." "By Allah," replied she, "I have no acquaintance among merchants and the like! I know none there but King Omar ben Esrama." When the merchant heard this, he laughed and was greatly rejoiced and said in himself, "By Allah, I have gotten my desire!" Then he said to her, "Hast thou then been shown to him?" "No," answered she; "but I was brought up with his daughter and I hold her dear and I have much credit with him; so if thou wouldst have him grant thee a patent of exemption, give me ink-burnt and paper, and I will write thee a letter, which, when thou reachest Baghdad, do thou deliver into the King's own hand and say to him, 'Thy handmaid Nushet ez Zeman salutes thee and would have thee to know that the changing chances of the nights and days have smitten her, so that she has been sold from place to place and is now with the Vicerey of Damascus.'" The merchant wondered at her eloquence and his affection for her increased and he said to her, "I cannot think but that men have abused thine understanding and sold thee for money. Tell me, dost thou know the Koran?" "I do," answered she; "and I am also acquainted with philosophy and medicine and the precepts of Gulei the physician on the Canons of Galen, and the commentaries of Galen, and the studies of medicine, as well as other treatises. I can solve enigmas and establish parallels and discuss upon geometry and am skilled in anatomy. I have read the

\left[\text{footnote}: 1^* \text{ Or some problem.} \right]
books of the Shafs sect and the Traditions of the Prophet. I am well read in grammar and can argue with the learned, and discourse of all manner of sciences. Moreover I am skilled in logic and rhetoric and mathematics and the making of talismans and calendars and the Cabala, and I understand all these branches of knowledge thoroughly. But bring me inkhorn and paper, and I will write thee a letter that will profit thee at Baghdad and enable thee to dispense with passports." When the merchant heard this, he cried out, "Excellent! Excellent! Happy he in whose palace thou shalt be!" Then he brought her inkhorn and paper and a pen of brass and kissed the earth before her, to do her honour. She took the pen and wrote the following verses:

"What sins are these that sleep hath forsaken my eyes and gone astray? Have you then taught them to waken, after our parting day? How comes it your memory matcheth the fire in my heart to nought? It's

"that with each lover remembers a dear one far away? How sweet was the chain of the summer, that watered our days of yore! It's

"fit for, before till his pleasure my longing I could stay.

I sue to the wind and beg it to favour the slave of love. The wind that

"into the lower boughs plays of joy you convey.

A lover to you complaintareth, whose every helper fails. Indeed in parting

"are sermons would read the rock in two.

"These words are from her whom melancholy destroys and slain, watching bath waited; in her darkness there are no lights found, and she, knows not light from day. She toil from side to side on the couch of separation and her eyes are blackened with the pencil of sleeplessness; she watches the stars and strains her sight into the darkness: yé, sadness and emulation have consumed her and the setting forth of her case would be long. No helper hath she but tears and she noted the following verses:

1 One of the four great Muslim sects or schools of theology, taking its name from the Imam el Shafi. See post, p. 114, 1863.

"No tears washes on the breast, before the break of morn, But stirrs

in me a killing grief, a sadness all feelers.

No lover, longing for his love, complaineth of desire, But with a doubled

stress of wo we our heart is overborne.

Of passion I complain to one who hath so ruth on me. How soul and

body by desire are, one from other, torn!"

Then her eyes brimmed over with tears, and she wrote these verses also:

"Love-longing, the day of our parting, my body with mourning weep, And severance from my eyelids hath made sleep far remote.

I sue we wait for yonder and weep for sickness and woe. That were

it not for my speaking, thou'dst scarce my presence note.

Then she wept and wrote at the foot of the scroll, "This is from her who is far from her people and her native land, the sorrowful-hearted Nuzhet ez Zeman." She folded the letter and gave it to the merchant, who took it and reading Night what was written in it, rejoiced and exclaimed, "Glory to Him who fashioned thee!" Then he redoubled in kindness and attention to her all that day; and at nightfall, he called out to the market and bought food, wherewith he fed her; after which he carried her to the bath and said to the hire-woman, "As soon as thou hast made an end of washing her head, clothe her and send and let me know." Meanwhile he fetched food and fruit and wax candles and set them on the desk in the outer room of the bath; and when the hire-woman had done washing her, she sent to tell the merchant, and Nuzhet ez Zeman went out to the outer room, where she found the tray spread, with food and fruit. So she ate, and the hire-woman with her, and gave what was left to the people and keeper of the bath. Then she slept till the morning, and the merchant lay the night in a place apart. When he awoke, he came to her and washing her, presented her with a shift of fine silk, a tuchef worth a thousand dinars, a suit of Turkish brocade and brocade embroidered with red gold and set with...
me for ever from paying tithe on my merchandise." "I will do this," said Sherkan; "but first tell me what you paid for her." Quoth the merchant, "I bought her for a hundred thousand dinars; and her clothes cost me as much more." When the Sultan heard this, he said, "I will give thee more than this for her," and calling his treasurer, said to him, "Give this merchant three hundred and twenty thousand dinars; so will he have a hundred and twenty thousand dinars profit." Then he summoned the four Cadi and paid him the money in their presence; after which he said to them, "I call you to witness that I free this my slave-girl and purpose to marry her." So the Cadi drew up the act of enfranchisement, and the Sultan scattered much gold on the heads of those present, which was picked up by the pages and eunuchs. Then they drew up the contract of marriage between Sherkan and Nuzhet ez Zeman, after which he bade write the merchant a perpetual patent, exempting him from tax and tithe upon his merchandize and forbidding all and several to do him let or hindrance in all his government, and bestowed on him a splendid dress of honour. Then all who were present retired, and there remained but the Cadi and the merchant; whereasupon Sherkan to the former, "I wish you to hear such discourse from this damsel as may prove her knowledge and accomplishment in all that this merchant avouches of her, that we may be certified of the truth of his pretensions." "Good," answered they; and he commanded the curtains to be drawn before Nuzhet ez Zeman and her attendants, who began to wish her joy and kiss her hands and feet, for that she was become the Vicerey's wife. Then they came round her and using her of the weight of her clothes and ornaments, began to look upon her beauty and grace. Presently the wives of the Amir and Viziers heard that King Sherkan had bought a damsel unmatched for
beauty and accomplishments and versed in all branches
of knowledge, at the price of three hundred and twenty-
three thousand dinars, and that he had set her free and
married her and summoned the four Cadi's to examine her.
So they asked leave of their husbands and repaired to the
palace. When they came in to her, she rose and received
them with courtesy, welcoming them and promising them
all good. Moreover, she smiled in their faces and made
them sit down in their proper stations, as if she had been
brought up with them, so that their hearts were taken with
her and they all wondered at her good sense and fine
manners, as well as at her beauty and grace, and said to
each other, “This damsels is none other than a queen, the
daughter of a king.” Then they sat down, magnifying her,
and said to her, “O our lady, our city is illumined by thy
presence, and our country and kingdom are honoured by
thee. The kingdom indeed is thine and the palace is thy
palace, and we all are thy handmaids; so do not thou shut
us out from thy favours and the sight of thy beauty.” And
she thanked them for this. All this while the curtains
were drawn between Nuzhet ez Zeman and the women
with her, on the one side, and King Sherkan and the Cadi’s
and merchant seated by him, on the other. Presently,
Sherkan called to her and said, “O queen, the glory of
thine age, this merchant describes thee as being learned
and accomplished and asserts that thou art skilled in all
branches of knowledge, even to astrology; so let us hear
something of all this and give us a taste of thy quality.”
“O King,” replied she, “I hear and obey. The first sub-
ject of which I will treat is the art of government and the
duties of kings and what behoves governors of lawful
commandments and what is incumbent on them in respect of
pleasing manners. Know then, O King, that all men’s
works tend either to religion or to worldly life, for none
attains to religion save through this world, because it is
indeed the road to the next world. Now the world is
ordered by the doings of its people, and the doings of
men are divided into four categories, government (or the
exercise of authority), commerce, husbandry (or agriculture)
and craftsmanship. To government are requisite perfect
(knowledge of the science of) administration and just
judgment; for government is the centre (or pivot) of the
edifice of the world, which is the road to the future life,
and it is needful that each man receive of it such measure
as shall bring him to God, and that he follow not in this his
own mind and desire. If the folk would take of the goods of
the world with moderation and equity, there would be an end
of contentions; but they take thereof with violence and
iniquity and persist in following their own inclinations;
and their licentiousness and evil behaviour in this give birth
to strife and contention. So they have need of the Sultan,
that he may do justice between them and order their affairs
prudently, and if he restrain not the folk from one another,
the strong will get the mastery over the weak. And
sheikh says that religion and the kingship are twin; religion
is a treasure and the king is its keeper; and the divine
ordinances and men’s own judgment indicate that it behoves
the folk to adopt a ruler to hold the oppressor back from the
oppressed and do the weak justice against the strong and
to restrain the violence of the proud and the unjust. For
know, O King, that according to the measure of the ruler’s
good morals, even so will be the time; as says the apostle
of God (on whom be peace and salvation), ‘There are two
classes, who if they are virtuous, the people will be virtuous,
and if they be depraved, the people also will be depraved:
even princes and men of learning.’ And it is said by a
certain sage, ‘There are three kinds of kings, the king of
vol. 11.
the Faith, the king who watches over and protects those things that are entitled to respect and honour, and the king of his own inclinations. The king of the Faith constrains his subjects to follow the laws of their faith, and it behoves that he be the most pious of them all, for it is by him that they take pattern in the things of the Faith; and the folk shall do obedience to him in what he commands in accordance with the Divine ordinances; but he shall hold the discontented in the same esteem as the contented, because of submission to the Divine decrees. As for the king of the second order, he upholds the things of the faith and of the world and compels the folk to follow the Law of God and to observe the precepts of humanity; and it behoves him to conjoin the sword and the pen; for whose goeth astray from what the pen hath written, his feet slip, and the king shall rectify his error with the edge of the sword and pour forth his justice upon all men. As for the third kind of king, he hath no religion but the following his own lusts and fears not the wrath of his Lord, who set him on the throne; so his kingdom inclines to ruin, and the end of his arrogance is in the House of Perdition. And another says, 'The king has need of many people, but the folk have need of but one king; wherefore it behoves that he be well acquainted with their natures, to the end that he may reduce their difference to concord, that he may encompass them one and all with his justice and overwhelm them with his bounties.' And know, O King, that Ardashir, styled Jemeh Shēhīd, third of the Kings of Persia, conquered the whole world and divided it into four parts and let make for himself four seal-rings, one for each division of his realm. The first seal was that of the sea and the police and of prohibition, and on it was written, 'Alternatives.' The second was the seal of revenue and of the receipt of monies, and on it was written, 'Culture.' The third was the seal of the commissariat, and on it was written, 'Plenty.' The fourth was the seal of (the Court of Enquiry into) abuses, and on it was written, 'Justice.' And these remained in use in Persia until the revolution of Islam. King Chosroes, also, wrote to his son, who was with the army, 'Be not over-devout to thy troops, or they will come to have no need of thee; neither be negligent with them, or they will murmur against thee. Do thy giving soberly and confer thy favours advisedly; be liberal to them in time of adversity and stint them not in time of stress.' It is said that an Arab of the desert came once to the Khalif Mansur and said to him, 'Starve thy dog and he will follow thee.' When the Khalif heard his words, he was enraged, but Aboullabas et Tousi said to him, 'I fear that, if some other than thou should show him a cake of bread, the dog would follow him and leave thee.' Thereupon the Khalif's wrath subsided and he knew that the Bedouin had meant no offence and ordered him a present. And know, O King, that Abdalmelik ben Merwan wrote to his brother Abdalaziz, when he sent him to Egypt, as follows: 'Pay heed to thy secretaries and thy chamberlains, for the first will acquaint thee with necessary matters and the second with matters of etiquette and ceremonial observation, whilst the tribute that goes out from thee will make thy troops known to thee.' Omar ben el Khettab (whom God accepted) was in the habit, when he engaged a servant, of laying four conditions on him, the first that he should not ride the baggage-beasts, the second that he should not wear fine clothes, the third that he should not eat of the spoil and the fourth that he should not delay to pray after the proper time. It is said that there is no world better than understanding and no understanding

1 Second of the Abbaside Khalifs, A.H. 136-158.
2 The second Khalif after Mohammad (A.H. 13-23) and the most renowned for pious and just government of all the holders of the office, except perhaps his descendant Omar ben Abdalaziz (A.H. 69-102).
like common sense and prudence and no prudence like the fear of God; that there is no offering like good morals and no measure like good breeding and no profit like earning the Divine favour; that there is no piety like the observance of the limits of the Law and no science like that of meditation, no devotion like the performance of the Divine precepts, no safeguard like modesty, no calculation like humility and no nobility like knowledge. So guard the head and what it contains and the body and what it comprises and remember death and calamity. Says Ali (whose face God honour!), 'Beware of the wickedness of women and be on thy guard against them. Consult them not in aught, but be not grudging of complaisance to them, lest they be tempted to have recourse to intrigue.' And also, 'He who leaves the path of moderation and sobriety, his sins become perished.' And Omar (whom God accept) says, 'There are three kinds of women, first, the true-believing, God-fearing woman, loving and fruitful, helping her husband against fate, not helping fate against her husband; secondly, she who loves and tenders her children, but no more; and thirdly, the woman who is as a shackles that God puts on the neck of whom He will. Men also are three: the first, who is wise, when he exercises his judgment; the second, wiser than he, who, when there falls on him somewhat of which he knows not the issue, seeks fols of good counsel and acts by their advice; and the third, who is addle-headed, knowing not the right way nor heeding those who would instruct him.' Justice is indispensable in all things; even slave-girls have need of justice; and highway robbers, who live by violence, bear witness of this, for did they not deal equitably among themselves and observe fairness in their divisions, their order would fall to pieces. For the rest, the chief of

1 As a reward (in the next world) for good deeds.
1 The fourth Khalif.

noble qualities is generosity and benevolence. How well says the poet:

By largesse and mildness, the youth, chief of his tribe became, And it was easy for them to follow and do the same.

And quoth another:

In mildness stability lies and clemency wins us respect, And safety in solemnity is for him who is soothfast and frank; And he who would get himself praise and renown for his wealth from the folk, In the racourse of glory must be, for manifestly, first in the rank.

And Nuzhat ez Zaman discoursed upon the policy and behaviour of kings, till the bystanders said, 'Never heard we one reason of the duties of kings like this damsel! Mayhap she will favour us with discourse upon some subject other than this.' When she heard this, she said, 'As for the chapter of good breeding, it is wide of scope, for it is a compend of perfections. There came in one day to the Khalif Muawiya 1 one of his boon-companions, who spoke of the people of Irak and the goodness of their wit; and the Khalif's wife Meisoun, mother of Yezid, heard him. So, when he was gone, she said to the Khalif, 'O Commander of the Faithful, prithee let some of the people of Irak come in to thee and talk with them; I may hear their discourse.' So the Khalif said to his attendants, 'Who is it at the door?' And they answered, 'The Benou Teminama.' 'Let them come in,' said he. So they came in and with them Ahnaf ben Calis. 2 Now Muawiya had drawn a curtila between himself and Meisoun, that she might hear what they said without being seen herself;

1 The word rendered "good breeding" may also be translated "polite accomplishments" or "moral discipline" and has a great number of other meanings.
2 Sixth Khalif and founder of the Omeyyad dynasty (A.H. 41-60).
3 One of the most notable men of the day, chief of the great tribe of the Benou Teminama. He was a contemporary of the Prophet and was held in much esteem by Muawiya.
and he said to Ahnas, 'O Abou Behr, draw near and tell me what counsel thou hast for me.' Quoth Ahnas, 'Part thy hair and trim thy moustache and clip thy nails and pluck out the hair of thy umbilicus and shave thy pubes and be constant in the use of the toothpick, for therein are two-and-seventy virtues, and make the Friday (complete) ablution as an expiatory for what is between the two Fridays.' 'What is thy counsel to thyself?' asked Mauwyeh. 'To plant my feet firmly on the ground,' replied Ahnas, 'to move them with deliberation and keep watch over them with my eyes.' 'How,' asked the Khalif, 'dost thou carry thyself, when thou goest in to the common folk of thy tribe?' 'I lower my eyes modestly,' replied Ahnas, 'and salute them first, abstaining from what does not concern me and being sparing of words.' And how, when thou goest in to thine equals?' asked Mauwyeh. 'I give ear to them, when they speak,' answered the other, 'and do not assail them, when they err.' 'And how dost thou,' said the Khalif, 'when thou goest in to thy chiefs?' 'I salute without making any sign,' answered Ahnas, 'and await the response: if they bid me draw near, I do so, and if they bid me stand aloof, I withdraw.' 'How dost thou with thy wife?' asked the Khalif. 'Excuse me from answering this,' said the Khalif, 'O Commander of the Faithful!' replied he; but Mauwyeh said, 'I conjure thee to answer.' Then said Ahnas, 'I entertain her kindly and show her pleasant familiarity and am large in expenditure, for women were created of a crooked rib.' 'And how,' asked the Khalif, 'dost thou when thou hast a maid to lie with her?' 'I speak to her to perfume herself,' answered the other, 'and kiss her till she is moved to desire; then, if it be as thou knowest, I throw her on her back. If the seed abide in her womb, I say, 'O my God, make it blessed and let it not be a castaway, but fashion it into a goodly shape!''

Then I rise from her and betake myself to the ablution, first pouring water over my hands and then over my body and returning thanks to God for the delight He hath given me.' 'Thou hast answered excellently well,' said Mauwyeh, 'and now tell me what thou wouldst have,' Quoth Ahnas, 'I would have thee rule thy subjects in the fear of God and do equal justice amongst them.' So saying, he withdrew from the Khalif's presence, and when he had gone, Melsoun said, 'Were there but this man in Irak, he would suffice to it.' This (continued Nuzhet ez Zaman) is a small fraction of the chapter of good breeding. Know, O King, that Majeikib was intendant of the treasury during the Khalifate of Omar ben Khettab, 'One day (quoth he) the Khalif's son came to me and I gave him a dirhem from the treasury. Then I returned to my own house, and presently, as I was sitting, there came to me a messenger, bidding me to the Khalif. So I was afraid and went to him, and when I came into his presence, I saw in his hand the dirhem I had given his son. 'Hark ye, Majeikib,' said he, 'I have found somewhat concerning thy soul.' 'What is it, O Commander of the Faithful?' asked I; and he answered, 'It is that thou wilt have to render an account of this dirhem to the people of Mohammed (on whom be peace and salvation) on the Day of Resurrection.' This same Omar wrote a letter to Abou Mousa el Ashari, to the following purport, 'When these presents reach thee, give the people what is theirs and send the rest to me.' And he did so. When Othman succeeded to the Khalifate, he wrote a like letter to Abou Mousa, who did his bidding and sent him the tribute accordingly, and with it came Ziad. When the latter laid the tribute before Othman, the Khalif's son came in and took a dirhem, whereupon

1 Governor of Basra and other places under the first four Khalifs.
2 Ziad ben Abou Stefyan, illegitimate brother of the Khalif Mauwyeh, afterwards governor of Basra, Cufa and the Hejaz.
Ziad fell a-weeping. "Why dost thou weep?" asked Othman. Quoth Ziad, "I once brought Omar ben Khattab the like of this, and his son took a dirhem, whereupon Omar bade snatch it from his hand. Now thy son hath taken of the tribute, yet have I seen none robbe me nor take the money from him." And Othman said, "Where wilt thou find the like of Omar?" Again, Zeit ben Aslam relates of his father that he said, "I went out one night with Omar, and we walked on till we espied a blazing fire in the distance. Quoth Omar, "This must be travellers, who are suffering from the cold: let us join them." So we made for the fire, and when we came to it, we found a woman who had lighted a fire under a caldron, and by her side were two children, crying. "Peace on you, O folk of the light!" said Omar, for he misliked to say, "folk of the fire!" "What ails you?" Quoth she, "The cold and the night irk us." "What ails these children that they weep?" asked he. "They are hungry," replied she. "And what is in this caldron?" asked Omar. "It is what I quitted with," answered she, "and God will question Omar ben Khattab of them, on the Day of Resurrection." "And what," rejoined the Khalif, "should Omar know of their case?" "Why then," said she, "should he undertake the governance of the people's affairs and yet be unmindful of them?" Then Omar turned to me and said, "Come with me." So we both set on running till we reached the treasury, where he took out a sack of flour and a pot of fat and said to me, "Put these on my back." "O Commander of the Faithful," said I, "I will carry them for thee." "Wilt thou bear my burden for me on the Day of Resurrection?" replied he. So I put the things on his back, and we set off, running, till we came to the woman, when he threw down the sack. Then he took out some of the flour and put it in the caldron and saying to the

woman, "Leave it to me," fell to blowing the fire. Now he had a great beard and I saw the smoke issuing from the interstices thereof, till the floor was cooked, when he threw in some of the fat and said to the woman, "Do thou feed the boys whilst I cool the food for them." So they ate their fill and he left the rest with her. Then he turned to me and said, "O Aslam, I see it was indeed hunger made them weep; and I am glad I did not go away with Night out finding out the reason of the light I saw." It is said that Omar passed, one day, by a flock of sheep, kept by a slave, and asked the latter to sell him a sheep. "They are not mine," replied the shepherd. "Thou art the man I sought," said Omar and buying him of his master, set him free, whereupon the slave exclaimed, "O my God, thou hast bestowed on me the lesser emancipation; vouchsafe me now the greater!" They say also, that Omar ben Khattab was wont to give his servants sweet milk and eat coarse fare himself and to clothe them softly and wear himself coarse garments. He gave all men their due and exceeded in his giving to them. He once gave a man four thousand dirhems and added them to yet a thousand, wherefore it was said to him, "Why dost thou not favour thy son as thou favourest this man?" He answered, "This man's father stood firm in fight on the day of Uhud." El Humainy relates that Omar once came (back from an expedition) with much money and that Hafseh came to him and said, "O Commander of the Faithful, be mindful of the due of kinship!" "O Hafseh," replied he, "God hath indeed enjoined us to satisfy the dues of kinship, but of our own monies, not those of the true believers. Indeed, thou pleasest thy family, but angerest thy father." And

1 "O death.
2 A battle fought near Medina, 4/625, in which Mohammed was defeated by the Meccans under Abu Safyan.
3 One of Mohammed's widows and Omar's own daughter.
she went away, dragging her skirts. Says Omar's son, 'I implored God one year (after Omar's death) to show me my father, till at last I saw him wiping the sweat from his brow and said to him, "How is it with thee, O my father?" 'But for God's mercy," answered he, "thy father had perished.'" Then said Nuzhet ez Zaman, "Hear, O August King, the second division of the first chapter of the instances of the followers of the Prophet and other pious men. Says El Hassan of Bassora, 'Not a soul of the sons of Adam goes forth of the world, without grieving for three things, failure to enjoy what he has amassed, failure to compass what he hoped and failure to provide himself with sufficient provision for that to which he goes.' It was said to Sufyan, 'Can a man be devout and yet possess wealth?' 'Yes,' replied he, 'so he be patient under affliction and return thanks, when God gives to him.' When Abdullah ben Shaddad was on his death-bed, he sent for his son Mohammed and admonished him, saying, 'O my son, see the messenger of death calling me and so I charge thee to cherish the fear of God, both in public and private. Praise God and be true in thy speech, for the praise of God brings increase of prosperity, and piety in itself is the best of provision,' even as says one of the poets: I saw that bliss lies in killing one's chest; The God-fearing man can alone be called best. For piety wins thee increase of God; So of all men's provision 'tis surely the best.'

When Omar ben Abdullaiz succeed to the Khalifate, he went to his own house and laying hands on all that his

---

family and household possessed, put it into the public treasury. So the Omnadnes betook themselves for aid to his father's sister, Fatimah, daughter of Merwan, and she sent to Omar, saying, 'I must needs speak with thee.' So she came to him by night, and when she had made her slight from her beast and sat down, he said to her, 'O aunt, it is for thee to speak first, since it is at time instance that we meet; tell me, therefore, what thou wouldst with me.' 'O Commander of the Faithful,' replied she, 'it is thine to speak first, for thy judgment perceives that which is hidden from the senses.' Then said the Khalif, 'Of a verity God sent Mohammed as a mercy to some and a punishment to others; and He chose out for him what was with him and Night withdrew him to Himself, leaving the people a river, whereof the thirty of them might drink. After him he made Abou Bekr the Truth-teller Khalif and he left the river in its pristine state, doing what was pleasing to God. Then arose Omar and worked a work and furnished forth a strife, of which none might do the like. When Othman came, he diverted a stream from the river, and Maawiyyeh in his turn sundered several streams from it. In like manner, Yezid and the sons of Merwan, Abdalmelik and Weldi and Suleiman, ceased not to take from the river and dry up the main stream, till the commandment devolved upon me, and now I am minded to restore the river to its normal condition.' When Fatimah heard this, she said, 'I came, wishing only to speak and confer with thee, but if this be thy word, I have nothing to say to thee.' Then she returned to the Omnadnes and said to them, 'See what you have brought on you by allying yourselves with Omar ben Khettab.' When Omar was on his death-bed,
he gathered his children round him, and Meslemeh ben Abdulmelik said to him, 'O Commander of the Faithful, wilt thou leave thy children beggars and thou their protector? None can hinder thee from giving them in thy lifetime what will suffice them out of the treasury; and this indeed were better than leaving it to revert to him who shall come after thee.' Omar gave him a look of wrath and wonder and replied, 'O Meslemeh, I have defended them all the days of my life, and shall I make them miserable after my death? My sons are like other men, either obedient to God the Most High or disobedient: if the former, God will prosper them, and if the latter, I will not help them in their disobedience. Know, O Meslemeh, that I was present, even as thou, when such an one of the sons of Merwan was buried, and I fell asleep by him and saw him in a dream given over to one of the punishments of God, to whom belong might and majesty. This terrified me and made me tremble, and I vowed to God that, if ever I came to the throne, I would not do as the dead man had done. This vow I have striven to fulfill all the days of my life, and I hope to be received into the mercy of my Lord.' Quoth Meslemeh, 'A certain man died and I was present at his funeral. I fell asleep and dreamed I saw him, as clad in white clothes and walking in a garden full of running waters. He came up to me and said, "O Meslemeh, it is for the like of this that governors (or men who bear rule) should work." Many are the instances of this kind, and quoth one of the men of authority, "I used to milk the ewes in the Khalifate of Omar ben Abdalazi, and one day, I met a shepherd, among whose sheep were wolves. I thought them to be dogs, for we had never before seen wolves; so I said to the shepherd, "What dost thou with these dogs?" "They are not dogs, but wolves," replied he. Quoth I, "Can wolves be with sheep and not hurt them?" "When the head is whole," replied he, "the body is whole also."' Omar ben Abdalazi preached once from a mud pulpit, and after praising and glorifying God the Most High, said three words and spoke as follows, 'O folk, make clean your hearts, that your outward lives may be clean to your brethren, and abase from the things of the world. Know that from Adam to this present, there is no one man alive among the dead. Dead are Abdalazi and those who forewent him, and Omar also will die, and those who come after him.' Quoth Meslemeh (to this same Omar, when he was dying), 'O Commander of the Faithful, shall we set a pillow behind thee, that thou mayest lean on it a little?' But Omar answered, 'I fear lest it be a fault about my neck on the day of Resurrection.' Then he gasped for breath and fell back in a swoon; whereupon Fatimah cried out, saying, 'Ho, Maryam! Ho, Muzahim! Ho, such an one! Look to this man!' And she began to pour water on him, weeping, till he revived, and seeing her in tears, said to her, 'O Fatimah, why dost thou weep?' 'O Commander of the Faithful,' replied she, 'I saw thee lying prostrate before us and thought of thy prostration before God the Most High in death and of thy departure from the world and separation from us. This is what made me weep.' Enough, O Fatimah,' answered he; 'indeed thou exceedest.' Then he would have risen, but fell down, and Fatimah interceded for him, saying, 'Thou art to me as my father and my mother, O Commander of the Faithful. We cannot speak to thee, all of us.' Again (continued Nuhez ez Zeman), Omar ben Abdalazi wrote to the people of the festival at Mecca, as follows, 'I call God to witness, in the Holy Month, in the Holy City and

Night Word.

11. 

1 This passage apparently belongs to the previous account of Omar's death-bed, but I have left it as it stands in the text, as it would be a hopeless task to endeavour to restore this chaos of incoherent and devotional commonplace to anything like symmetry.
on the day of the Great Pilgrimages, that I am innocent of your oppression and of the wickedness of him that doth you wrong, in that I have neither commanded this nor purposed it, neither hath any report of ought thereof reached me (till now) nor have I had knowledge of it; and I trust therefore that God will pardon it to me. None hath authority from me to do oppression, for I shall assuredly be questioned (at the Last Day) concerning every one who hath been wrongfully entreated. So if any one of my officers swerve from the right and act without law or authority, ye owe him no obedience, till he return to the right way." He said also (may God accept of him), "I do not wish to be relieved from death, for that it is the supreme thing for which the true believer is rewarded." Quoth one of authority, "I went one day to the Commander of the Faithful, Omar ben Abdallah, who was then Khalif, and saw before him twelve dhrum, which he bade take to the treasury. So I said to him, "O Commander of the Faithful, thou impoverishest thy children and reducest them to beggary, leaving nothing for them. Thou wouldst do well to appoint somewhat by will to them and to those who are poor of the people of thy house." "What dost thou desire," answered he. So I drew near to him and he said, "As for thy saying, 'Thou beggarlest thy children to provide for them and for the poor of thy household,' it is without reason, for God will replace me to my children and to those who are poor of the people of my house, and He will be their guardian. Verily, they are like other men: he who fears God will provide him a happy issue, and he that is addicted to sin, I will not uphold him in his disobedience." Then he called his sons before him, and they were twelve in number. When he beheld them, his eyes filled with tears and he said to them, "Your father is between two things; either

1 Lit. with (or by) another book (i.e. Koran) nor Sunnah (i.e. the Traditions of the Prophet).

ye will be rich and he will enter the fire, or ye will be poor and he enter Paradise; and your father's entry into Paradise is fitter to him than that ye should be rich. So go, God be your helper, for to Him I commit your affair." Quoth Khalid ben Sefwah, riff Yussuf ben Omar, rif. Yussuf ben Omar accompanied me to Hisham ben Abdalmelik, rif. and I met him as he came forth with his kinsmen and attendants. He saluted and a tent was pitched for him. When the people had taken their seats, I came up to the side of the carpet (on which the Khalif was reclining) and waiting till my eyes met his, bespoke him thus, "May God fulfill His bounty to thee, O Commander of the Faithful, and direct into the right way the affairs He hath committed to thy charge, and may no harm mingle with thy cheer! O Commander of the Faithful, I have an admonition for thee, which I have gleaned from the history of the kings of time past." At this, he sat up and said to me, "O son of Sefwah, say what is in thy mind." "O Commander of the Faithful," quoth I, "one of the kings before thee went forth, in a time before thy time, to this very country and said to his companions, 'See ye ever any in the like of my state or to whom hath been given even as it hath been given unto me?' Now there was with him one of those who survive to bear testimony to the Faith and are upholders of the Truth and walkers in its highway, and he said, 'O King, thou art of a grave matter. Wilt thou give me leave to answer?' "Yes," replied the King, and the other said, "Dost thou judge thy present state to be temporary or enduring?" 'It is a temporary thing,' replied the King. 'Why then,' asked the man, 'do I see thee exult in that

1 Chief of the tribe of Temim and one of the most eminent orators of the eighth century.
2 Suramined Esh Thulqis, Governor of Yemen and Iraq; also a well-known orator, but a most cruel and fantastic tyrant.
3 Temih Khalid of the Omansid dynasty (A.D. 725-743).
which thou wilt enjoy but a little while and whereof thou wilt be questioned at length and for the rendering an account whereof thou wilt be as a pledge?" 'Whither shall I flee,' asked the King, 'and where is that I must seek?' 'Abide in thy kingship,' replied the other, 'and apply thyself to obey the commandments of God the Most High; or else let thy worn-out clothes and devote thyself to the service of thy Lord, till thine appointed hour come to thee.' Then he left him, saying, 'I will come to thee again at daybreak.' So he knocked at his door at dawn and found that the King had put off his crown and resolved to become an anchorite, for the stress of his exhortation. When Hisham heard this, he wept till his beard was drenched and putting on his rich apparel, shut himself up in his palace. Then the grandees and courtiers came to me and said, 'What is this thou hast done with the Commander of the Faithful? Thou hast marred his cheer and troubled his life!' But (continued Nuzhet ez Zeman, addressing herself to Sherkan) how many admonitory instances are there not that bear upon this branch of the subject! Indeed, it is beyond my power to report all that Night peradis to this head in one sitting; but, with length of days, O King of the age, all will be well.'

Then said the Cadis, "O King of a truth this damsel is the wonder of the time and the unique pearl of the age! Never in all our lives have we the like." And they called down blessings on Sherkan and went away. Then said he to his attendants, "Prepare the wedding festivities and make ready food of all kinds." So they addressed themselves to do his bidding, and he bade the wives of the amirs and viziers and grandees depart not until the time of the wedding-banquet and of the unwrapping of the bride. Hardly was the time of afternoon-prayer come, when the tables were spread with roast meats and geese and fowls and all that the heart can desire or that can delight the eye; and all the people ate till they were satisfied. Moreover, the King had sent for all the singing-women of Damascus and they were present, together with all the slave-girls of the King and the notables who knew how to sing. When the evening came and it grew dark, they lighted flambeaux, right and left, from the gate of the citadel to that of the palace, and the amirs and viziers and grandees defiled before King Sherkan, whilst the singers and the girls took Nuzhet ez Zeman, to dress and adorn her, but found she needed no adornment. Meanwhile King Sherkan went to the bath and coming out, sat down on his bed of estate, whilst they unveiled the bride before him in seven different dresses; after which they cast her of the weight of her dresses and ornaments and gave such injunctions as are usually given to girls on their wedding-night. Then Sherkan went in to her and took her maidenhead; and she at once conceived by him, whereas he rejoiced with an exceeding joy and commanded the sages to record the date of her conception. On the morrow, he went forth and seated himself on his throne, and the grandees came in to him and gave him joy. Then he called his private secretary and bade him write to his father, King Omar ben Einanaan, a letter to the following effect: "Know that I have bought me a damsel, who excels in learning and accomplishment and is mistress of all kinds of knowledge. I have set her free and married her and she has conceived by me. And needs must I send her to Baghdad to visit my brother Zouuneen and my sister Nuzhet ez Zeman." And he went on to praise her wit and salute his brother and sister, together with the Vizier Dendan and all the amirs. Then he sealed the letter and despatched it to his father by a courier, who was absent a whole month, after which time he returned with the old King's answer. Sherkan took it and read as follows, after the usual preamble, "In the name of God," etc., "This is from the afflicted and distraught, him who
bath lost his children and is (as it were) an exile from his native land, King Omar ben Emmanan, to his son Sherkan. Know that, since thy departure from me, the place is become contracted upon me, so that I can no longer have patience nor keep my secret: and the reason of this is as follows. It chanced that Zonmekan sought my leave to go on the pilgrimage, but I, fearing for him the shifts of fortune, forbade him therefrom until the next year or the year after. Soon after this, I went out to hunt and was absent a whole month. When I returned, I found that thy brother and sister had taken a share of money and set out by stealth with the caravan of pilgrims. When I knew this, the wide world became strait to me, O my son; but I waited the return of the caravan, hoping that they would return with it. Accordingly, when the caravan came back, I questioned the pilgrims of them, but they could give me no news of them; so I put on mourning apparel for them, being heavy at heart and sleepless and drowned in the tears of my eyes.

Then followed these verses:

This image is never absent a breathing while from my breast; I have made it within my bosom the place of the honored guest,
But that I look for their coming, I would not live for an hour, And but that I see them in dreams, I never should lie down to rest.

The letter went on (after the usual salutations to Sherkan and those of his court), "Do not thou therefore neglect to seek news of them, for indeed this is a dishonour to us." When Sherkan read the letter, he mourned for his father, but rejoiced in the loss of his brother and sister. Now Nuzhet ez Zeman knew not that he was her brother nor that she was his sister, although he paid frequent visits, both by day and by night, till the months of her pregnancy were accomplished and she sat down on the stool of delivery. God made the delivery easy to her and she gave birth to a daughter, whereupon she sent for Sherkan and said to him, "This is thy daughter, name her as thou will." Quoth he, "Folk use to name their children on the seventh day." Then he bent down to kiss the child and saw, hang about her neck, a jewel, which he knew at once for one of those that the princess Atirizh had brought from the land of the Greeks. At this sight, his senses fled, his eyes rolled and wrath seized on him, and he looked at Nuzhet ez Zeman and said to her, "O damsel, whence hadst thou this jewel?" When she heard this, she replied, "I am thy lady and the lady of all in thy palace. Art thou not ashamed to say to me, 'O damsel'? Indeed, I am a queen, the daughter of a king; and now concealment shall cease and the truth be made known. I am Nuzhet ez Zeman, daughter of King Omar ben Emmanan." When Sherkan heard this, he was seized with trembling and bowed his head towards the earth, whilst his heart throbbed and his colour paled, for he knew that she was his sister by the same father. Then he lost his senses; and when he revived, he abode in amazement, but did not discover himself to her and said to her, "O my lady, art thou indeed the daughter of King Omar ben Emmanan?" "Yes," replied she; and he said, "Tell me how thou camest to leave thy father and be sold for a slave." So she told him all that had befallen her, from first to last, how she had left her brother sick in Jerusalem and how the Bedouin had lured her away and sold her to the merchant. When Sherkan heard this and was certified that she was indeed his sister, he said to himself, "How can I have my sister to wife? By Allah, I must marry her to one of my chamberlains; and if the thing get wind, I will avouch that I divorced her before consummation and married her to my chief chamberlain." Then he raised his head and said, "O Nuzhet ez Zeman, thou art my very sister; for I am Sherkan, son of King Omar ben Emmanan, and may God forgive us the sin into which we have fallen!" She looked

1 i.e. slave-girl.
at him and seeing that he spoke the truth, became as one bereft of reason and wept and buffeted her face, explaining, "There is no power and no virtue but in God! Verily, we have fallen into grievous sin! What shall I do and what answer shall I make my father and my mother, when they say to me, 'Whence hast thou thy daughter?'"

Quoth Sherkan, "I purpose to marry thee to my chief chamberlain and let thee bring up my daughter in his house, that none may know thee to be my sister. This hath befallen us was ordained of God for a purpose of His own, and there is no way to cover ourselves but by thy marriage with the chamberlain, ere any know." Then he fell to comforting her and kissing her head, and she said to him, "What wilt thou call the child?" "Call her Karia Feke," replied he. Then he gave her in marriage to the chief chamberlain, and they reared the child in his house, on the laps of the slave-girls, till, one day, there came to King Sherkan a courier from his father, with a letter to the following purport: "In the name of God, etc. Know, O pious King, that I am sore afflicted for the loss of my children: sleep fails me and wakefulness is ever present with me. I send thee this letter that thou mayst make ready the tribute of Syria and send it to us, together with the damsels whom thou hast bought and taken to wife; for I long to see her and hear her discourse; because there has come to us from the land of the Greeks a devout old woman, with five damsels, high-bosomed maids, endowed with knowledge and accomplishments and all fashions of learning that best mortals; and indeed the tongue fails to describe this old woman and her companions. As soon as I saw the damsels, I loved them and wished to have them in my palace and at my commandment, for none of the kings possesses the like of them; so I asked the old woman their price, and she replied, 'I will not sell them

but for the tribute of Damascus.' And by Allah, this is but little for them, for each one of them is worth the whole price. So I agreed to this and took them into my palace, and they remain in my possession. Wherefore do thou expedite the tribute to us, that the old woman may return to her own country: and send us the damsels, that she may strive with them before the doctors; and if she overcome them, I will send her back to thee with the year's revenue of Baghdad." When Sherkan read this letter, he went in to his brother-in-law and said to him, "Call the damsel to whom I married thee." So she came, and he showed her the letter and said to her, "O my sister, what answer wouldst thou have me make to this letter?" "It is for thee to judge," replied she. Then she recalled her people and her native land and yearned after them; so she said to him, "Send me and my husband the Chamberlain to Baghdad, that I may tell my father how the Bedouin seized me and sold me to the merchant, and how thou boughtest me of him and gavest me in marriage to the Chamberlain, after setting me free!" "Be it so," replied Sherkan. Then he made ready the tribute in haste and gave it to the Chamberlain, bidding him make ready for Baghdad, and furnished him with camels and mules and two travelling litters, one for himself and the other for the princess. Moreover, he wrote a letter to his father and committed it to the Chamberlain. Then he took leave of his sister, after he had taken the jewel from her and hung it round his daughter's neck by a chain of fine gold; and she and her husband set out for Baghdad the same night. Now their caravan was the very one to which Zoumekekan and his friend the stoker had joined themselves, as before related, having waited till the Chamberlain passed them, riding on a dromedary, with his footmen around him. Then Zoumekekan mounted the stoker's ass and said to the latter, "Do thou mount with me." But he said, "Not so; I will be
thy servant." Quoth Zoulmekan, "Needs must thou ride awhile," "It is well," replied the stoker; "I will ride when I grow tired." Then said Zoulmekan, "O my brother, thou shalt see how I will do with thee, when I come to my own people." So they journeyed on till the sun rose, and when it was the hour of the noonday rest, the Chamberlain called a halt, and they alighted and rested and watered their camels. Then he gave the signal for departure and they journeyed for five days, till they came to the city of Hernah, where they made a three days' halt; then set out again and fired on, till they reached the province of Diarbekir. Here there blew on them the breezes of Baghdad, and Zoulmekan bethought him of his father and mother and his native land and how he was returning to his father without his sister; so he wept and sighed and complained, and his regrets increased on him, and he repeated the following verses:

How long wilt thou delay from me, beloved one? I wait; And yet there comes no messenger with tidings of thy fate.

Ah, the time of love-delight and peace was brief indeed! Ah, that the days of parting thus would of their length abate!

Take thou my hand and put aside my mantle and shower sad My body wasted sore; and yet I hide my sad fate.

And if thou bid me be consoled for thee, "By God," I say, "I'll never forget thee till the Day that calls up small and great!"

"Leave this weeping and lamenting," said the stoker, "for we are near the Chamberlain's tent." Quoth Zoulmekan, "Needs must I recite somewhat of verse, so haply it may allay the fire of my heart." "God on thee," cried the stoker, "leave this lamentation, till thou come to thine own country; then do what thou wilt, and I will be with thee, wherever thou art." "By Allah," replied Zoulmekan, "I cannot forbear from this!" Then he set his face towards Baghdad and began to repeat verses. Now the moon was shining brightly and shedding her light on the place, and Nuzhet ez Zeman could not sleep that night, but was wakeful and called to mind her brother and wept. Presently, she heard Zoulmekan weeping and repeating the following verses:

The southern lightning gleams in the air And roves in me the old despair,
The grief for a dear one, lost and loved, Who kissed me the cup of joy while we were,

It mingled her who fled away And left me friendless and sick and bare. O soft-shining lightnings, tell me true, Are the days of happiness past forever?

Child not, O blower of me, for God hath cursed me with two things hard to bear,

A friend who left me to pine alone, And a fortune whose smile was but a snare.

The sweet of my life was gone for aye, When fortune against me did declare;

She armyed me a cup of grief unsalted, And I must drink it and never spare.

Or ever our meeting tide, sweetheart, Met him as of some dear despair, I pitied, mourned, wept back the days When we were a happy childish pair

The days when we from the shafts of fate, That since have pleased us, in sadness were!

Ah, when shall succour the wretched, Who passes the night in dread and care.

And the day in mourning for her whose name, Delight of the Age, beheld her fair?

The hands of the tufaceous sons of shame Have doomed us the webs of woe to wear.

Then he cried out and fell down in a swoon, and when Nuzhet ez Zeman heard his voice in the night, her heart was solaced and she rose and called the chief eunuch, who said to her, "What is thy will?" Quoth she, "Go and fetch him who recited verses but now." "I did not hear him," replied he; "the people are all asleep." And she said, "Whomsoever thou findest awake, he is the man." So he went out and sought, but found none awake but the stoker; for Zoulmekan was still insensible, and

Nuzhet ez Zeman.
going up to the former, said to him, "Art thou he who recited verses but now, and my lady heard him?" The stoker concluded that the lady was wrath and was afraid and replied, "By Allah, I was not right!" "Who then was it?" rejoined the eunuch. "Point him out to me. Thou must know who it was, seeing that thou art awake." The stoker feared for Zoulmakan and said in himself, "Maybe the eunuch will do him some hurt." So he answered, "I know not who it was." "Ey Allah," said the eunuch, "thou liest, for there is none awake here but thou! So needs must thou know him." "By Allah," replied the stoker, "I tell thee the truth! It must have been some passer-by who recited the verses and disturbed me and aroused me, may God requite him!" Quoth the eunuch, "If thou happen upon him, point him out to me and I will lay hands on him and bring him to the door of my lady's litter; or do thou take him with thine own hands." "Go back," said the stoker, "and I will bring him to thee." So the eunuch went back to his mistress and said to her, "None knows who it was; it must have been some passer-by." And she was silent. Meanwhile, Zoulmakan came to himself and saw that the moon had reached the zenith and felt the breath of the breeze that goes before the dawn; whereon his heart was moved to longing and sadness, and he cleared his throat and was about to recite verses, when the stoker said to him, "What wilt thou do?" "I have a mind to repeat somewhat of verse," answered Zoulmakan, "that I may allay therewith the fire of my heart." Quoth the other, "Thou knowest not what befell me, whilst thou wast awsoon, and how I only escaped death by begging the eunuch." "Tell me what happened," said Zoulmakan. "Whilst thou wast awsoon," replied the stoker, "there came up to me but now an eunuch, with a long staff of almond-tree wood in his hand, who looked in all the people's faces, as they lay asleep, and finding

none awake but myself, asked me who it was recited the verses. I told him it was some passer-by; so he went away and God delivered me from him; else he killed me. But first he said to me, 'If thou hear him again, bring him to us.' When Zoulmakan heard this, he wept and said, 'Who is it would forbide me to recite? I will surely do so, come what may; for I am near my own country and care for no one.' "Dost thou wish to destroy thyself?" asked the stoker; and Zoulmakan answered, "I cannot help reciting verses." "Verily," said the stoker, "I see this will bring about a parting between us here, though I had promised myself not to leave thee, till I had brought thee to thy native city and re-united thee with thy mother and father. Thou hast now been with me a year and a half, and I have never baulked thee or harmed thee in aught. What ails thee then, that thou must needs recite, seeing that we are exceeding weary with travel and watching and all the folk are asleep, for they need sleep to rest them of their fatigue?" But Zoulmakan answered, "I will not be turned from my purpose." Then grief moved him and he threw off disguise and began to repeat the following verses:

Halt by the camp and halt the roused heads by the brake, And call on her name aloud; mayhap she will answer make.

And if for her absence the night of sadness darken on thee, Light is in its gloom a fire with longings for her sake.

Though the make of the sand-hills kiss, small matter is it to me If it aisle me, so I the fair with the lips of crimson take.

O Paradise, left perfurer of the spirit but that I hope For ease in the musings of bliss, my heart would surely break.

And these also:

Time was when fortune was to us even as a servant is, And in the loveliest of lands our happy lives did kiss.

Ah, who shall give me back the abode of my belov'd, wherein The Age's Joy? and Place's Light? erst dwelt in peace and him.

1 Nasir ol 'Eman.
2 Eininoshtah.
Then he cried out three times and fell down senseless, and the stoker rose and covered him. When Zuleik or Zeman heard the first verses, she called to mind her mother and father and brother; and when she heard the second, mentioning the names of herself and her brother and their sometime home, she wept and calling the eunuch, said to him, "Out on thee! But now I heard him who recited the first time do so again, and that hard by. So, by Allah, an thou fetch him not to me, I will cause the Chamberlain on thee, and he shall beat thee and turn thee away. But take these hundred dinars and give them to him and do him no hurt, but bring him to me gently. If he refuse, give him this purse of a thousand dinars and leave him and return to me and tell me, after thou hast informed thyself of his place and condition and what countries he is. Return quickly and do not linger, and beware lest thou come back and say, 'I could not find him.' So the eunuch went out and fell to examining the people and treading amongst them, but found none awake, for the folk were all asleep for weariness, till he came to the stoker and saw him sitting up, with his head uncovered. So he drew near him and seizing him by the hand, said to him, "It was thou dost recite the verses!" The stoker was affrighted and repined, "No, by Allah, O chief of the people, it was not I!" But the eunuch said, "I will not leave thee till thou show me who it was; for I fear to return to my lady without him." Thereupon the stoker feared for Zuleik and wept sore and said to the eunuch, "By Allah, it was not I, nor do I know who it was. I only heard some passer-by recite verses; so do not thou commit sin on me, for I am a stranger and come from Jerusalem, and Abraham the Friend of God be with thee!" "Come thou with me," rejoined the eunuch, "and tell my lady this with thine own mouth, for I see none awake but thee." Quoth the stoker, "Hast thou not seen me sitting here and dost thou not know my station? Thou knowest none can stir from his place, except the guards seize him. So go thou to thy mistress and if thou hear any one reciting again, whether it be near or far, it will be I or some one whom I shall know, and thou shalt not know of him but by me?" Then he kissed the eunuch's head and spoke him fair, till he went away; but he made a circuit and returning secretly, came and hid himself behind the stoker, fearing to go back to his mistress empty-handed. As soon as he was gone, the stoker aroused Zuleik and said to him, "Awake and sit up, that I may tell thee what has happened." So Zuleik sat up, and the stoker told him what had passed, and he answered, "Let me alone; I will take no heed of this and I care for none, for I am near my own country." Quoth the stoker, "Why wilt thou obey thine own inclinations and the promptings of the devil? If thou fearest no one, I fear for thee and myself; so God on thee, recite no more verses, till thou come to thine own country! Indeed, I had not thought thee so self-willed. Dost thou not know that this lady is the wife of the Chamberlain and is minded to chide thee for disturbing her. Behold, she is ill or restless for fatigue, and this is the second time she hath sent the eunuch to look for thee." However, Zuleik said no heed to him, but cried out a third time and repeated the following verses:

The carping tribe I must see; Their railing chafes my misery. They blame and censure me at once. They do but for the blame in me. "She is concealed," they say. And I, "Can one conceal for country her? Quoth they, "How beautiful she is!" And I, "How dear-beld she is!" "How high her rank!" say they; and I, "How base is my humility!" Now God forbid! I leave to love. Deep though I think of envy! Nor will I heed the railing ones. Who care at me for loving thee?"

Hardly had I made an end of these verses when the eunuch, who had heard him from his hiding, came up to him; whereupon the stoker fled and stood afar off, to see
what passed between them. Then said the eunuch to Zoulmeikan, "Peace be on thee, O my lord!" "And on Night thee be peace," replied Zoulmeikan, "and the mercy of God and His blessing!" "O my lord," continued the eunuch, "this is the third time I have sought thee this night, for my mistress bids thee to her." Quoth Zoulmeikan, "Whence comest this bethat that seeketh for me? May God curse her and her husband too!" And he began to revile the eunuch, who could make him no answer, because his mistress had charged him to do Zoulmeikan no violence nor bring him, save of his free will, and if he would not come, to give him the thousand dinars. So he began to speak him fair and say to him, "O my lord, take this (purse) and go with me. We will do thee no unright nor wrong thee in aught; but we would have thee bend thy gracious steps with me to my mistress, to speak with her and return in peace and safety; and thou shalt have a handsome present." When Zoulmeikan heard this, he arose and went with the eunuch, stepping over the sleeping folk; whilst the stoker followed them at a distance, saying to himself, "Alas, the pity of his youth! To-morrow they will hang him. How base it will be of him, if he say it was I who bade him recite the verses!" And he drew near to them and stood, watching them, without their knowledge, till they came to Nuzhet ez Zeman's tent, when the eunuch went in to her and said, "O my lady, I have brought thee him whom thou mostest, and he is a youth, fair of face and bearing the marks of gentle breeding." When she heard this, her heart flattered and she said, "Let him recite some verses, that I may hear him near at hand, and after ask him his name and extraction." So the eunuch went out to Zoulmeikan and said to him, "Recite what verses thou knowest, for my lady is here hard by, listening to thee, and after I will ask thee of thy name and extraction and condition." "Willingly," replied he;

"but as for my name, it is blotted out and my trace among men is passed away and my body wasted. I have a story, the beginning of which is not known nor can the end of it be described, and behold, I am even as one who hath exceeded in drinking wine, till he hath lost the mastery of himself and is afflicted with distempers and wanders from his right mind, being perplexed about his case and drowned in the sea of melancholy." When Nuzhet ez Zeman heard this, she broke out into loud weeping and sobbing and said to the eunuch, "Ask him if he have lost a beloved one, such as his father or mother." The eunuch did as she bade him, and Zoulmeikan replied, "Yes, I have lost all whom I loved; but the dearest of all to me was my sister, from whom Fate hath parted me." When Nuzhet ez Zeman heard this, she exclaimed, "May God the Most High reunite him with those he loves!" Then said she to Nuzhet the eunuch, "Tell him to let me hear somewhat on the subject of his separation from his people and his country." The eunuch did so, and Zoulmeikan sighed heavily and repeated the following verses:

Ah, would that I knew they were ware Of the worth of the heart they have won! Would I knew through what passes they fare, From what quarter they look on the sun? Are they living, or dead? Can it be that their life's race is run? Ah, the lover is ever distraught And his life for misgivings undone!

And also these:

I vow, if ever the place shall bless my longing sight, Wherein my sister dwells, the age's dear delight, I'll take my fill of life and all the sweets of peace, Mirth and trees and flowing streams and maidens fair and bright. The love's enacting tones shall soothe me to repose, What while I canst full cups of wine like living light And honeyed dews of love suck from the deep-red lips Of lovelings sleep-eyes, with tresses black as night.

1. Nuzhet ez Zeman.
When he had finished, Nuzhet ez Zeman lifted up a corner of the curtain of the litter and looked at him. As soon as her eyes fell on him, she knew him for certain and cried out, "O my brother! O Zoulmekan!" He looked at her and knew her; and cried out, "O my sister! O Nuzhet ez Zeman!" Then she threw herself upon him, and he received her in his arms, and they both fell down in a swoon. When the eunuch saw this, he wondered and throwing over them somewhat to cover them, waited till they should recover. After awhile, they came to themselves, and Nuzhet ez Zeman rejoiced exceedingly: grief and anxiety left her heart and joys decked upon her and she repeated the following verse:

Fate swore 'twould never come to plague my life and make me rue.

Then hast not kept thine oath, O Fate; so lack thou penance do.

Gladness is come and my well-beloved is here to succour me. So rise unto the summer of joys, and quickly too.

I had no faith in Paradise of olden time, until I won the nectar of its stream from lips of chaste love.

When Zoulmekan heard this, he pressed his sister to his breast, whilst, for the excess of his joy, the tears streamed from his eyes and he repeated the following verses:

Long time have I bewailed the absence of our loves, With tears that from my lips streamed down like running rain.

And vowed that, if the days should resume us two, My lips should never speak of sorrow or pain.

Joy hath overwhelmed me so that, for the very stress of that which gladdens me, I weep now and again.

Tears are become to you a habitation, O my eyes! So that ye weep alike for gladness and for pain.

They sat awhile at the door of the litter, conversing, till she said to him, "Come with me into the litter and tell me all that has befallen thee, and I will do the like." So they entered and Zoulmekan said, "Do thou begin." Accordingly, she told him all that had happened to her since their separation and said, "Praised be God who hath vouchsafed thee to me and ordained that, even as we left our father together, so we shall return to him together! Now tell me how it has fared with thee since I left thee." So he told her all that had befallen him and how God had sent the stoker to him, and how he had journeyed with him and spent his money on him and tended him night and day. She praised the stoker for this, and Zoulmekan added, "Indeed, O my sister, the man hath dealt with me in such benevolent wise as would not a lover with his mistress or a father with his son, for that he fasted and gave me to eat, and went afoot, whilst he made me ride; and I owe my life to him." "God willing," said she, "we will requite him for all this, according to our power." Then she called the eunuch, who came and kissed Zoulmekan's hand, and she said, "Take thy reward for glad tidings, O face of good omen! It was thy hand reunited me with my brother; so the purse I gave thee and its contents are thine. But now go to thy master and bring him quickly to me." The eunuch rejoiced and going to the Chamberlain, summoned him to his presence. Accordingly, he came in to his wife and finding Zoulmekan with her, asked who he was. So she told him all that had befallen them, first and last; and added, "Know, O Chamberlain, that thou hast gotten no slave-girl to wife, but the daughter of King Omar ben Ennunam: for I am Nuzhet ez Zeman, and this is my brother Zoulmekan." When the Chamberlain heard her story, he knew it for the manifest truth and was certified that he was become King Omar ben Ennunam's son-in-law and said to himself, "I shall surely be made governor of some province." Then he went up to Zoulmekan and gave him joy of his safety and reunion with his sister, and bade his servants forthwith make him ready a tent and one of the best of his own horses to ride. Then said Nuzhet ez Zeman,
"We are now near my country and I would fain be alone with my brother, that we may enjoy one another's company and take our fill of each other, before we reach Baghdad; for we have been long parted." "Be it as thou wilt," replied the Chamberlain and going forth, set them wax candles and various kinds of sweetmeats, together with three costly suits of clothes for Zoulinekan.

Then he returned to the litter, and Nasheet ez Zeman said to him, "Bid the eunuch find the stoker and give him a horse to ride and provide him a tray of food morning and evening, and let him be forbidden to leave us." The Chamberlain called the eunuch and charged him accordingly: so he took his pages with him and went out in search of the stoker, whom he found at the tail of the caravan, saddling his ass and preparing for flight. The tears were running down his cheeks, out of fear for himself and grief for his separation from Zoulinekan, and he was saying to himself, "Indeed, I warned him for the love of God, but he would not listen to me. O that I knew what is become of him!" Before he had done speaking, the eunuch came up and stood behind him, whilst the pages surrounded him. The stoker turned and seeing the eunuch, every nerve for alarm, exclaimed, "Verily, he knows not the value of the good offices I have done him! I believe he has denounced me to the eunuch and made me an accomplice in his offence." Then the eunuch cried out at him, saying, "Who was it recited the verses? Lest that thou art, why didst thou tell me that thou knewest not who it was, when it was thy companion? But now I will not leave thee till we come to Baghdad, and what betides thy comrade shall be thine." Quoth the stoker, "Verily, what I feared has fallen on me." And he repeated the following verse:

*Tis even as I feared it would be: We are God's and to Him return we.

Then said the eunuch to the pages, "Take him off the ass." So they took him off the ass and setting him on a horse, carried him along with the caravan, surrounded by the pages, to whom said the eunuch, "If a hair of him be missing, it shall be the worse for you." But he bade them prissily treat him with consideration and not humiliate him. When the stoker saw himself in this case, he gave himself up for lost and turning to the eunuch, said to him, "O chief, I am neither this youth's brother nor anywise akin to him; but I was a stoker in a bath and found him lying asleep on the fuel-heap." Then the caravan halted, and the stoker wept and imagined a thousand things in himself, whilst the eunuch walked by his side and told him nothing, but said to him, "You disturbed our mistress by reciting verses, thou and the lad; but have no fear for thyself." This he said, laughing at him the while in himself. When the caravan halted, they brought them food, and he and the eunuch ate from one dish. Then the eunuch let bring a gagglet of sherbet of sugar and after drinking himself, gave it to the stoker, who drank; but all the while his tears ceased not flowing; out of fear for himself and grief for his separation from Zoulinekan and for what had befallen them in their strangerhood. So they travelled on with the caravan, whilst the Chamberlain now rode by the door of his wife's litter, in attendance on Zoulinekan and the princess, and now gave an eye to the stoker, and Nasheet ez Zeman and her brother occupied themselves with converse and mutual condolence; and so they did till they came within three days' journey of Baghdad. Here they alighted at eventide and rested till the morning, when they woke and were about to load the beasts, when behold, there appeared afar off a great cloud of dust, that obscured the air, till it became as dark as night. Therefore the Chamberlain cried out to them to stay their preparations for departure, and mounting with his officers, rode forward.
in the direction of the dust-cloud. When they drew near it, they perceived under it a numerous army, like the following sea, with drums and flags and standards and horsemen and footmen. The Chamberlain marvelled at this; and when the troops saw him, there came forth from amongst them a troop of five hundred horse, who fell upon him and his suite and surrounded them, five for one; whereupon said he to them, “What is the matter and what are these troops, that ye use us thus?” “Who art thou?” asked they. “Whence comest thou and whither art thou bound?” And he answered, “I am the Chamberlain of the Viceroy of Damascus, King Sherkan, son of King Omar ben Ennuman, Lord of Baghdad and of the land of Khorsassan, and I bring tribute and presents from him to his father in Baghdad.” When the horsemen heard speak of King Omar, they let their kerciefs fall over their faces and wept, saying, “Alas! King Omar is dead, and he died poisoned. But fare ye well,—no harm shall befall you,—and join his Grand Vizier Dindan.” When the Chamberlain heard this, he wept sore and exclaimed, “Alas, our disappointment in this our journey!” Then he and his suite rode on, weeping, till they reached the main body of the army and sought access to the Vizier Dindan, who called a halt and causing his pavilion to be pitched, sat down on a couch therein and commanded to admit the Chamberlain. Then he bade him be seated and questioned him; and he replied that he was the Viceroy’s Chamberlain of Damascus and was bound to King Omar with presents and the tribute of Syria. The Vizier wept at the mention of King Omar’s name and said, “King Omar is dead by poison, and the folk fell out amongst themselves as to whom they should make king after him, so that they were like to come to blows on this account; but the notables and grandees interposed and restored peace, and the people agreed to refer the matter to the decision of the four Calis, who adjudged that we should go to Damascus and fetch thence the late king’s son Sherkan and make him king over his father’s realm. Some of them would have chosen his second son Zoulmkan, were it not that he and his sister Nuzhet ez Zeman set out five years ago for Mecca, and none knows what has become of them.” When the Chamberlain heard this, he knew that his wife had told him the truth and grieved more for the death of King Omar, what while he was greatly rejoiced, especially at the arrival of Zoulmkan, for that he would now become King of Baghdad in his father’s room. So he turned to the Vizier and said to him, “Verily, Night your affair is a wonder of wonders! Know, O chief Vizier, that here, where you have encountered me, God giveth you rest from fatigue and brigeth you that you desire after the easiest of fashions, in that He restoreth to you Zoulmkan and his sister Nuzhet ez Zeman, whereby the matter is settled and made easy.” When the Vizier heard this, he rejoiced greatly and said, “O Chamberlain, tell me their story and the reason of their having been so long absent.” So he repeated to him the whole story and told him that Nuzhet ez Zeman was his wife. As soon as he had made an end of his tale, the Vizier sent for the amirs and viziers and grandees and acquainted them with the matter; whereas they rejoiced greatly and wondered at the happy chance. Then they went in to the Chamberlain and did their service to him, kissing the earth before him; and the Vizier Dindan also rose and stood before him, in token of respect. After this, the Chamberlain held a great council, and he and the Vizier sat upon a throne, whilst all the amirs and officers of state took their places before them, according to their several ranks. Then they dissolved sugar in rose-water and drank, after which the amirs sat down to hold council and gave the rest mount and rode forward leisurely, till they should make an end.
of their deliberations and overtake them. So the officers kissed the earth before them and mounting, rode onward, preceded by the standards of war. When the amirs had finished their conference, they mounted and rejoined the troops; and the Chamberlain said to the Vizier Dandan, "I think it well to ride on before you, that I may notify Zoulinecan of your coming and choice of him as Sultan over the head of his brother Sherkan, and that I may make him ready a place befitting his dignity." "It is well thought," answered the Vizier. "Then the Chamberlain rose and Dandan also rose to do him honour; and brought him presents, which he assured him to accept. On like wise did all the amirs and officers of state, calling down blessings on him and saying to him, "Mayhap thou will make mention of our case to King Zoulinecan and speak to him to continue us in our dignities." The Chamberlain promised what they asked and the Vizier Dandan sent with him tents and bade the tent-pitchers set them up at a day's journey from the city. Then the Chamberlain mounted and rode forward, full of joy and saying in himself, "How blessed is this journey!" And indeed his wife was exalted in his eyes; she and her brother Zoulinecan. They made all haste, till they reached a place distant a day's journey from Baghdad, where he called a halt and bade his men alight and make ready a sitting place for the Sultan Zoulinecan, whilst he rode forward with his pages and alighting at a distance from Nushet ez Zeman's litter, commanded the cauchs to ask the princess's leave to admit him. They did so and she gave leave; whereupon he went in to her and her brother and told them of the death of their father, King Omar ben Ezzaman, and how the heads of the people had made Zoulinecan king over them in his stead; and he gave them joy of the kingdom. When they heard this, they both wept for their father and asked the manner of his death.

"The news rests with the Vizier Dandan," replied the Chamberlain, "who will be here to-morrow with all the troops; and it only remains for thee, O prince, to do what they counsel, since they have chosen thee King; for if thou dost not this, they will crown another, and thou cannot be sure of thyself with another king. Happily he will kill thee, or discord may befall between you and the kingdom pass out of your hands." Zoulinecan bowed his head awhile, then raised it and said, "I accept;" for indeed he saw that the Chamberlain had counselled him rightly and that there was no refusing. "But, O uncle, how shall I do with my brother Sherkan?" "O my son," replied the Chamberlain, "thy brother will be Sultan of Damascus, and thou Sultan of Baghdad; so gird up thy resolution and prepare to do what befits thy case." Then he presented him with a suit of royal raiment and a dagger of state, that the Vizier Dandan had brought with him, and leading him, returned to the tent-pitchers and bade them choose out a spot of rising ground and pitch thereon a spacious and splendid pavilion, wherein the Sultan might sit to receive the amirs and grandees. Then he ordered the cooks to make ready rich food and serve it up and the water-carriers to set up the water-troughs. They did as he bade them and presently there arose a cloud of dust and spread till it obscured the horizon. After awhile, the breeze dispersed it, and there appeared under it the array of Baghdad and Khorasun, led by the Vizier Dandan, all rejoicing in the accession of Zoulinecan. Now Zoulinecan had donned the royal robes and gilt himself with the sword of state: so the Chamberlain brought him a steed and he mounted, surrounded by the rest of the company on foot, and rode between the tents, till he came to the royal pavilion, where he entered and sat down, with the royal dagger across his thighs, whilst the Chamberlain stood in attendance on him and his servants stationed themselves
in the vestibule of the pavilion, with drawn swords in their hands. Presently, up came the troops and sought admittance to the King's presence; so the Chamberlain went in to Zoulmeckan and asked his leave, whereupon he bade admit them, ten by ten. Accordingly, the Chamberlain went out to them and acquainted them with the King's orders, to which they replied, "We hear and obey." Then he took ten of them and carried them, through the vestibule, into the presence of the Sultan, whom when they saw, they were awed; but he received them with the utmost kindness and promised them all good. So they gave him joy of his safe return and invoked God's blessing upon him, after which they took the oath of fealty to him, and kissing the earth before him, withdrew. Then other ten entered and he received them in the same manner; and they ceased not to enter, ten by ten, till none was left but the Vizier Dendan. So he went in and kissed the earth before Zoulmeckan, who rose to meet him, saying, "Welcome, O noble Vizier and father! Verily, thine acts are those of a precious counsellor, and judgment and foresight are in the hands of the Subtle, the All Wise." Then he commanded the Chamberlain to go out and cause the tables to be spread at once and bid the troops thereto. So they came and ate and drank. Moreover, he bade Dendan call a ten days' halt of the army, that he might be private with him and learn from him the manner of his father's death. Accordingly, the Vizier went forth and transmitted the King's wishes to the troops, who received his commands with submission and wished him eternity of glory. Moreover, he gave them leave to divert themselves and ordered that none of the lords in waiting should go in to the king for his service for the space of three days. Then Zoulmeckan waited till nightfall, when he went in to his sister Nazhet ez Zeman and said to her, "Dost thou know the fashion of my father's death or not?" "I have no knowledge of it," replied she, and drew a silken curtain before herself, whilst Zoulmeckan seated himself without the curtain and sending for the Vizier, bade him relate to him in detail the manner of King Omar's death. "Know then, O King," replied Dendan, "that King Omar ben Eunuman, when he returned to Baghdad from his hunting excursion, enquired for thee and thy sister, but could not find you and knew that you had gone on the pilgrimage, whereas he was greatly concerned and angered, and his breast was contracted. He abode thus a whole year, seeking news of you from all who came and went, but none could give him any tidings of you. At the end of this time; as we were one day in attendance upon him, there came to us an old woman, as she was a devotee, accompanied by five damsels, high-bosomed maids, like moons, endowed with such beauty and grace as the tongue fails to describe; and to crown their perfections, they knew the Koran by heart and were versed in various kinds of learning and in the histories of bygone peoples. The old woman sought an audience of the King, and he bade admit her; whereupon she entered and kissed the ground before him. Now I was then sitting by his side, and he, seeing in her the signs of devotion and asceticism, made her draw near and sit down by him. So she sat down and said to him, 'Know, O King, that with me are five damsels, whose like no king possesses, for they are endowed with beauty and grace and wit. They know the Koran and the traditions and are skilled in all manner of learning and in the history of bygone peoples. They are here before thee, at thy disposal; for it is by proof that folk are prized or disdained.' Thy late father looked at the damsels and their favour pleased him; so he said to them, 'Let each of you tell me something of what she knows of the history of bygone folk and peoples of times past.' Therewith one of them came forward and kissing the earth before
him, spoke as follows, "Know, O King, that it behoves the man of good breeding to eschew impiety and adorn himself with excellencies, observing the Divine precepts and shunning mortal sins; and to this he should apply himself with the assiduity of one who, if he stray therefrom, is lost; for the foundation of good breeding is virtuous behaviour. Know that the chief reason of existence is the endeavour after life everlasting and the right way thereto is the service of God; so it behoves thee to deal righteously with the people; and sware not from this rubric; for the mighty folk are in dignity, the more need they have of prudence and foresight; and indeed kings need this more than common folk, for the general cast themselves into affairs, without taking thought to the issue of them. Be thou prodigal both of thyself and thy treasure in the way of God and know that, if an enemy dispute with thee, thou mayst litigate with him and refute him with proof and ward thyself against him; but as for thy friend, there is none can judge between thee and him but righteousness and fair-dealing. Wherefore, choose thy friend for thyself, after thou hast proved him. If he be a man of religion, let him be zealous in observing the external letter of the Law and vested in its inner meaning, as far as may be: and if he be a man of the world, let him be free-born, sincere, neither ignorant nor perverse, for the ignorant man is such that even his parents would flee from him, and a liar cannot be a true friend, for the word 'friend' is derived from 'truth,' a that emanates from the bottom of the heart; and how can this be the case, when falsehood is manifest upon the tongue? Know, therefore, that the observance of the Law profits him who practises it: so love thy brother, if he be after this fashion, and do not cast him off, even if thou see in him that which thou mislikest; for a friend is not like a wife, whom one

..."
better than perseverance in error. Then he should study the precedents and the law of the case; and do equal justice between the suitors, fixing his eye upon the truth and committing his affair to God, to whom belong might and majesty. Let him require proof of the complainant, and if he adduce it, let him put the defendant to his oath; for this is the ordinance of God. He should receive the testimony of competent Muslim witnesses, one against another, for God hath commanded judges to judge by externals. He Himself taking charge of the secret things. It behoves the judge also to avoid giving judgment, whilst suffering from stress of pain or hunger, and that in his decisions between the folk he seek to please God, for he whose intent is pure and who is at peace with his conscience, God shall guarantee him against what is between him and the people. Quoth Za Zahr, "There are three things, which if they be found in a Cadi, he should be deposed; namely, if he honour the base, love praise and fear dismissal." It is related that Omar ben Abdalaziz once deposed a Cadi, who asked him why he had done so. "It has come to my knowledge," replied Omar, "that thy speech is greater than thy condition." It is said also that 'Iskender' said to his Cadi, "I have invested thee with this function and committed to thee in it my soul and my honour and manhood; so do thou guard it with thy soul and thine understanding." To his cook he said, "Thou art the governor of my body; so look thou tend it." To his secretary he said, "Thou art the controller of my wit; so do thou watch over me in what thou writest for me."

Night

With this the first damsel retired and a second one came forward and kissing the earth seven times before the King.

1. Mohammed Ibn Shibab ez Zahr, a celebrated traditionalist and juriscultist of Medina in the seventh and eighth centuries.
2. Alexander.
“whose lusts master his manhood and whose mind exceeds in the pursuit of objects of high emprise, so that his knowledge increases and his excuse diminishes; and how excellent is what the poet says:

The freest of all men from need of the poorest workman am I. The God who’s unguided of God and judges the flock all over;

For wealth and good gifts are a boon and each man at last shall be clad.

As it were in a mantle, with that which hid in his bosom death lies.

If thou enter on night by a door that is other than right, thou wilt err;

But the right door will lead thee aright, for sure, if thou enter thereby.”

As for anecdotes of devotees (continued the maiden), quoth Hisham ben Besheer, “I said to Omar ben Ubed, ‘What is true devotion?’ and he answered, ‘The prophet (whom God bless and preserve) hath expounded it, when he says, ‘The devout is he who takes thought to death and calamity and prefers that which is eternal to that which passes away, who counts not the morrow as of his days, but reckons himself among the dead.’’” And it is related that Abou Dherr1 used to say, “Poverty is dearer to me than riches and sickness than health.” Quoth one of the listeners, “May God have mercy on Abou Dherr! For my part, I say, ‘He who puts his trust in the goodness of the election of God the Most High should be content with that condition of which the Almighty hath made choice for him.”’ Quoth one of the Companions (of the Prophet), “Ibn Al Awaf2 prayed with us the morning prayer one day. When he had done, he read the seventy-fourth chapter (of the Koran), beginning, ‘O thou that covetest thyself!’ till he came to where God says, ‘When the trumpet is blown, and fell down dead.” It is said that Thabit ibn ‘Abani wept till he wept

1 One of the Companions of the Prophet.
2 One of the contemporaries of Mohammed and a noted Tradislator (or repeater of the sayings of the Prophet) at Caes in the seventh century.

night lost his eyes. They brought him a man to tend him, who said to him, “I will cure thee, provided thou do my bidding.” “In what respect?” asked Thabit. “In that thou leave weeping,” replied the physician. “What is the use of my eyes,” rejoined Thabit, “if they do not weep?” Said a man to Mohammed ibn Abdullah, “Exhort me.” Night: “I exhort thee,” replied he, “to be an abstinent possessor in this world and a greedy slave in the next.” “How so?” asked the other; and Mohammed said, “The abstinent man in this world possesses both this world and the world to come.” Quoth Gauth ben Abdullah, “There were two brothers among the people of Israel, one of whom said to the other, ‘What is the worst thing thou hast done?’ ‘One day,’ answered the other, ‘I came upon a nest of young birds; so I took out one and threw it back into the nest; but the others drew apart from it. This is the worst thing I ever did; so now tell me what is the worst thing thou hast ever done.’ ‘When I betake myself to prayer,’ rejoined the first, ‘I am fearful to have done so only for the sake of the reward. This is the worst thing I have done.’ Now their father heard what they said and exclaimed, ‘O my God, if they speak the truth, take them to Thyself!’ Quoth one of the wise men, ‘Verily these were of the most virtuous of children.’” Quoth Said ben ‘Ubeid3, “I was once in company with Fuzaih ibn Ubeid and said to him, ‘Give me some good counsel.’ ‘Bear in mind these two things,’ replied he, ‘Attribute no partner to God, and do no hurt to any of His creatures.’ And he repeated the following verses:

Be as thou wilt and banish dread and care, For God is bountiful and beneficent.

So of two things, doing harm to men And giving God a partner, thou beware.”

3 A noted Tradislator and expounder of the Koran in the first century of the Muslim era. He was a black and a native of Cufa.
And how well saith the poet:

If thou neglect with pious works for death to furnish thee And after meet with one equipped with store of piety,
Then wilt, when all too late, repent that thou wast not like him And didst not for the other world make ready as did he.

Then the second damsel withdrew and a third came forward and spoke as follows. "Indeed, the chapter of piety is a very wide one; but I will mention what occurs to me thereof, concerning pious men of old time. Quoth a certain holy man, "I rejoice in death, though I am not assured of ease therein, save that I know death interposes between a man and his works; so I hope for multiplication of good works and cessation of evil ones." Itaa es Secha, when he had made an end of his exhortation, was wont to tremble and weep sore. It was asked him why he did this and he replied, "I purpose (or am about) to enter upon a grave matter, and it is the standing up before God the Most High, to do in accordance with my exhortation." In like manner Zein el Aabidin 1 was wont to tremble when he rose to pray. Being asked the reason of this, he replied, "Do ye not know before whom I stand and to whom I address myself?" It is said that there lived near Sufyan el Thauri 2 a blind man who, when the month of Ramazan came, went out with the folk to pray, but remained silent and hung back (in repeating the prayers). Said Sufyan, "On the Day of Resurrection, he shall come with the people of the Koran 3 and they will be distinguished from their fellows by excess of honour." Quoth Sufyan, "Were the soul established in the heart as it befits, it would fly away, for joy and longing for Paradise and grief and fear of hell-fire." It is related also of Sufyan that he said, "To look upon the face of a tyrant is a sin."

Then the third damsel retired and a fourth came forward, who said, "I will treat of sundry traditions of pious men. It is related that Bishr el Hafl 4 said, "I once heard Khalid say, 'Beware of secret hypocrisy.' Quoth I, 'What is secret hypocrisy?' He answered, 'When one of you, in praying, prolongs his inclinations and prostrations till a cause of impurity come upon him.'" Quoth one of the sages, "The doing of good works expiates evil deeds." Quoth ibrahim ben Adhem, "I sought assiduously of Bishr el Hafl that he should acquaint me with some of the theological mysteries; but he said, 'O my son, it behoves us not to teach this knowledge to every one; of every hundred, five, even as the poor-rate upon money.' I thought his answer excellent, and when I went to pray, I saw Bishr praying: so I stood behind him, inclining myself in prayer, till the Muezzin made his call. Then rose a man of poor appearance and said, 'O folk, beware of truth, when it is harmful, for there is no harm in beneficial falsehood, and in compulsion is no choice: speech profits not in the absence of good qualities nor is there any hurt in silence, when they exist.' Presently I saw Bishr drop a diwine 5 so I picked it up and exchanged it for a dirhem, which I gave him. 'I will not take it,' said he. Quoth I, 'It is a fair exchange,' but he answered, 'I cannot barter the riches of the world to come for those of this world.'" It is reported also that Bishr's sister once went to Ahmed ben Hanbel 6 Night and said to him, "O Imam of the Faith, we are a family that

---

1. Son of the martyr Hussein and grandson of the Khalif Ali.
2. A very eminent doctor of the law and traditionist of the eighth century. He was a native of Cufa and was regarded as one of the great exemplars of the true believers.
3. i.e. those who love and obey the precepts of the Koran.
4. i.e. Barfoot. A native of Merv and a famous ascetic of the eighth and ninth centuries.
5. Neespecting a fresh ablution, before the prayer can be ended.
6. Another noted ascetic of the time.
7. About a penny.
8. A well-known legist and devotee of the eighth and ninth centuries at Bagdad, founder of one of the four great orthodox Muslim schools.
work for our living by day and spin thread by night; and
often times, the cressets of the watch of Bagdad pass by
and we on the roof spinning by their light. Is this for-
bidden to us?" "Who art thou?" asked Ahmed. "I am
the sister of Bishir el Hafir," replied she. "O house hold
of Bishir," rejoined the Imam, "I shall never cease to quaff
full draughts of piety and continence from your hearts."-
Quoth one of the learned, "When God wills well to any
man, he opens upon him the gate of action." Malik Ibn
Dinar, when he passed through the bazaar and saw aught
that he wished for, was wont to say, "O soul, take patience,
for I will not accord to thee what thou desirest."  4 He said
also (may God accept of him), "The salvation of the soul
lies in resistance to its desires and its ruin in submission
unto them." Quoth Mnassour ben Ammar, 5 "I set out one
year on the pilgrimage and was making for Mecca by way
of Cufa, when, one overcast night, I heard a voice crying
out from the womb of the night and saying, 'O my God,
by Thy power and Thy glory, I mean not by my dis-
obedience to transgress against Thee, for indeed I am not
ignorant of Thee; but my fault is one Thou didst fore-
ordain to me from all eternity; so do Thou pardon me
my sin, for indeed I disobeyed Thee of my ignorance!'
When he had made an end of his prayer, he recited
aloud the verse, 'O ye who believe, keep yourselves and
your households from the fire whose fuel is men and
stones!'" 6 Then I heard a fall, but knew not what it was
and passed on. On the morrow, as we went our way, we
fell in with a funeral train, followed by an old woman,
whose strength had left her. I questioned her of the dead,
and she replied, 'This is the funeral of a man who passed
by us yesterday, whilst my son was standing at prayer.'

1 A famous theologian and devotee of the eighth century at Basora.
2 A noted preacher and traditionist of Khorasan in the sixth century.
3 Koran, liv, 6.
4 A traditionalist of Medina, who flourished in the eighth century.

The latter recited a verse from the Book of God the Most
High, when behold the man's gall-bladder burst and he
died."

Thereafter the fourth damsel retired and the fifth, coming
forward, spoke as follows: "I also will repeat what occurs
to me in the way of devotional anecdotes. Meslemeh ben
Dinar used to say, "The making sound the secret thoughts
covers sins, both great and small, and when the believer
is resolved to leave sinning, help comes to him." Also,
"Every piece of good fortune, that does not draw one
nearer to God, is a calamity, for a little of this world
disturbs from a great deal of the world to come and a great
deal of the first makes thee forget the whole of the latter."
It was asked of Abou Hazim, 7 "Who is the most fortunate
of men?" "He who spends his life in the service of God," he
replied. "And who is the most foolish of mankind?"
asked the other. "He who sells his part in the world to
come for the worldly goods of others," answered Abou
Hazim. It is reported that Moses (on whom be peace),
when he came to the waters of Midian, exclaimed, "O my
Lord, indeed I am in need of that which Thou sendest
down to me of good!" And he asked of his Lord and
not of his folk. There came two damsels and he drew
water for them and gave not precedence to the shepherds.
When they returned to their father Jethro (on whom be
peace) they told him, and he said to one of them, "Haply,
he is hungry; go back to him and bid him hither." So
she covered her face and returning to Moses, said to him,
"My father bids thee to him, that he may reward thee for
having drawn water for us." Moses was averse to this and
unwilling to follow her. Now she was a woman large in
the buttocks, and the wind blowing upon her gown,
discovered this; which when Moses saw, he lowered his eyes
and said to her, "Do thou walk behind me." So she fol-

1 A traditionalist of Medina, who flourished in the eighth century.
Night bade him, till he came to Jethro's house, where the even-
ning meal was ready. "O Moses," said Jethro, "I desire
to reward thee for having drawn water for them." But he
answered, "I am of a people who sell nothing of the
fashion of the next world for earthly gold and silver."
"O youth," rejoined Jethro, "nevertheless thou art my
guest, and it is my wont and that of my fathers to do
honour to the guest by setting food before him." So
Moses sat down and ate. Then Jethro hired Moses for
eight pilgrimages, that is to say, eight years, and appointed
him to hire the hand of his daughter, and Moses' ser-
vice to him was to stand for her dowry. As says the Holy
Writ of him (quoth Jethro), "I am minded to marry thee
to one of these my daughters, on condition that thou serve
me eight years, and if thou serve out the ten, it will be of
thine own will, for I do not wish to press hardly on
thee." A certain man once said to one of his friends,
"Thou hast made me desolate, for that I have not seen
thee this long while." Quoth the other, "I have been dis-
tracted from thee by Ibn Shihab; dost thou know him?"
"Yes," replied the first: "he hath been my neighbour these
thirty years, but I have never spoken to him." "Indeed,"
rejoined his friend, "thou forgettest God in forgetting thy
neighbour! If thou lovest God, thou wouldst love thy
neighbour. Knowest thou not that a neighbour has a claim
upon his neighbour, even as the right of kindred?" Quoth
Hudheifah. "We entered Mecca with Ibrahim ben Adhem,2
and whilst making the prescribed circuits about the Ka'bah,
we met with Shéké the Balkhi. Quoth Ibrahim to Shéké,
What is thy fashion in thy country?" "When we are vouchsafed [food]," replied he, "we eat, and when we suffer
hunger, we take patience." This is the fashion of the
1 This paragraph is part extract from and part paraphrase of the
Koran, xxvii. 22–27.
2 A well-known priest of the eighth century.

dogs of Balkh," rejoined Ibrahim. "But we, when we are
blest with plenty, do honour to God, and when we suffer
famine, we praise Him." And Shéké seated himself before
Ibrahim and said to him, "Thou art my master." Quoth
Mohammed ben Amran, "A man once asked of Hatim el
Asenn,1 'What maketh thee to trust in God?' 'Two
things,' replied he. 'I know that what God has appointed
for my daily bread shall be eaten by none but myself; so my
heart is at rest as to that; and I know that I was not created
without God's knowledge and am abashed before Him.'"

Then the fifth damsel retired and the old woman came forward and kissing the earth before thy father nine times,
spoke as follows: 'Thou hast heard, O King, what these
all have said on the subject of piety; and I will follow
their example in relating what I have heard of the famous
men of times past. It is said that the Imam Es Shafi
divided the night into three portions, the first for study,
the second for sleep and the third for prayer. The Imam
Abun Hensifeh2 was wont also to pass half the night in
prayer. One day a man pointed him out to another, as he
passed, and said, "Vonder man watches the whole night."
Quoth Abun Hensifeh, "When I heard this, I was abashed
before God, to hear myself praised for what was not in me;
so, after this, I used to watch the whole night." Er Rebya
relates that Es Shafi used to recite the whole Koran seventy
times over during the month of Ramazan, and that in
prayer. Quoth Es Shafi (may God accept of him!) "For
ten years I never ate my fill of barley-bread, for saluty
hardens the heart and deadens the wit and induces sleep
and enfeebles one from standing up (to pray)." It is
reported of Abdallah ben Mohammed es Sekrî that he said,

1 Abun Hensifeh (the Deal), a famous Balkh theologian of the
ninth century.
2 Two of the most famous theologians of the second century of the
Hegira, and the founders of two of the four great Mohammedan schools.
“I was once talking with Omar, and he said to me, ‘Never saw I a more God-fearing or eloquent man than Mohammed ben Iriris es Shafi.’ I went out one day with El Harith ben Lebib es Suffer, who was a disciple of El Museni and had a fine voice, and he read the saying of the Most High, ‘On that day, they shall not speak nor shall it be permitted to them to excuse themselves.’ 1 I saw Es Shafi’s colour change; his skin shuddered, and he was violently moved and fell down senseless. When he revived, he said, ‘I seek refuge with God from the seed of the liars and the fate of the negligent! O my God, the hearts of the wise abuse themselves before Thee. O my God, of Thy goodness, accord to me the remission of my sins, adorn me with Thy protection and pardon me my shortcomings, by the magnanimity of Thine essence!’ Then I rose and went away.” Qaath, one of the pious, “When I entered Bagdad, Es Shafi was there. I sat down on the river-bank, to make the ablution before prayer; and as I was thus occupied, there came up one who said to me, ‘O youth, make thine ablution well and God will make it well for thee in this world and the world to come.’ I turned and saw a man, with a company of people after him. So I hastened to finish my ablutions and followed him. Presently, he turned and said to me, ‘Dost thou want aught?’ ‘Yes,’ answered I; ‘I desire that thou teach me somewhat of that which God the Most High hath taught thee.’ ‘Know, then,’ said he, ‘that he who believes in God the Most High shall be saved and he who is jealous of his faith shall be delivered from destruction, and he who practises abstinence in this world, his eyes shall be solaced on the morrow (of death). Shall I tell thee any more?’ ‘Assuredly,’ replied I. Abstain

1 Ismail ben Yehya el Museni, a famous Egyptian doctor of the law, a pupil of Es Shafi and Imam of the Shafiite school in the ninth century.

2 Koran, loc. cit., 35. 36.

from the things of this world,’ continued he, ‘and be greedy of the good of the world to come. Be sincere and faithful in all thy dealings, and thou shalt be saved with the elect.’ Then he went on and I asked about him and was told that he was the Imam es Shafi.” Es Shafi was wont to say, “I would have the folk profit by this wisdom (of mine), on condition that none of it be attributed to me.” Also, “I Night never disputed with any one, but I would that God the Most High should give him the knowledge of the Truth and aid him to expound it; nor did I ever dispute with any, but for the showing forth of the Truth, and I recked not whether God should manifest it by my lips or his.” He said also (may God accept of him!), “If thou fear to grow conceited of thy learning, bethink thee Whose grace thou seest and what good it is thou yearnest after and what punishment thou dreadest.” It was told to Abu Henifeh that the Commander of the Faithful Abu Jaafar el Men sour had named him Cadi and ordered him a present of ten thousand dirhems; but he would not accept of this; and when the day came on which the money was to be paid, he prayed the morning prayer, then covered his head with his cloak and spoke not. When the Khalif’s messenger came with the money, he went in to the Imam and accosted him, but he would not speak to him. Quoth the messenger, “This money is lawfully mine,” “I know that it is lawfully mine,” replied the Imam; “but I abhor that the love of tyrants should take hold upon my heart.” “Canst thou not go in to them and guard thyself from loving them?” asked the other. “Can I look to enter the sea, without wetting my clothes?” answered Abu Henifeh. Another of Es Shafi’s sayings is as follows:

O soul, if thou be fain to do as I shall say, Thou shalt be free from need and great of grace for eye. Put far away from these ambitions and desires, For he, how oft a wish to death hath led the way!
Among the sayings of Sufyan ibn Tha'wri, with which he admonished Ali ben el Hassan es Selimi, was the following: "Look that thou practise sincerity and beware of falsehood and treachery and hypocrisy and presumption, for God annuls good works with either of these things. How he comands be one who will cause thee to abstain from the world. Let the thought of death be ever present with thee and be constant in asking pardon of God and beseeching of Him peace for what remains of thy life. Give loyal counsel to every true-believer, when he asks thee concerning the things of his faith, and beware of betraying a believer, for he who betrays a believer betrays God and His apostle. Avoid dissension and litigation and leave that which awakens doubt in thee, betaking thyself rather to those things that will not disquiet thee; so shalt thou be at peace. Enjoin that which is just and forbid that which is evil, so shalt thou be beloved of God. Make thine inner man, and God shall make fair thy outer man. Accept the excuse of him who excuses himself to thee and hate none of the true-believers. Draw near unto those that reject thee and forgive those that oppress thee; so shalt thou be the companion of the prophets. Commit thine affair to God, both in public and in private, and fear Him with the fear of one who knows that he must die and be raised again to stand before the Almighty, remembering that thou art destined for one of two dwellings, either Paradise the glorious or the flaming fire." Having spoken thus, the old woman sat down beside the damsel.

When the late King thy father heard their discourse, he knew that they were the most accomplished of the people of their time and seeing their beauty and grace and the greatness of their learning, he showed them all favour. Moreover, he turned to the old woman and entreated her with honour, setting apart for her and her damsels the palace that had been the lodging of the Princess Abirizah, to which he let carry all that they needed of the best. Here they abode ten days, and whenever the King visited them, he found the old woman absorbed in prayer, watching by night and fasting by day; wherefore love of her took hold upon his heart and he said to me, 'O Visier, verily this old woman is a pious soul, and reverence for her is strong in my heart.' On the eleventh day, the King visited her, that he might pay her the price of the five damsel; but she said to him, 'O King, know that the price of these passes the competence of men, for I seek for them neither gold nor silver nor jewels, but little or much.' The King wondered at this and said, 'O my lady, what is their price? I will not sell them to thee,' replied she, 'save on condition that thou fast a whole month, watching by night and fasting by day for the love of God the Most High; but if thou wilt do this, they are thine, to use as thou pleasest.' The King wondered at the perfectness of her piety and devotion and abnegation and she was magnified in his eyes, and he said, 'May God make this pious old woman to profit us!' So he agreed to her proposal, and she said to him, 'I will help thee with my prayers.' Then she called for a guglet of water and muttered over it words in an unknown language and abode awhile, speaking over it things that we understood not. Then she covered it with a cloth and sealing it up, gave it to the King, saying, 'When thou hast fasted ten days, break thy fast on the eleventh night with what is in this cup, for it will root out the love of the world from thy heart and fill it with light and faith.' As for me, I purpose to go out to-morrow to visit my brethren of the invisible world, for I years after them, and I will return to thee when the ten days are past.' So the King took the guglet and setting it apart in a closet of his palace, locked the door and put the key in his pocket. Next day, the old woman departed and the
Night King entered upon his fast. When he had accomplished
the first ten days thereof, he opened the gullet and drank
what was therein and found it cordial to his stomach.
Within the next ten days, the old woman returned, bring-
ing sweetmeats wrapped in a green leaf, like no leaf of
a tree. She went in to the King and saluted him; and
when he saw her, he rose to meet her, saying, 'Welcome,
O pious lady!' 'O King,' said she, 'the spirits salute thee,
for I told them of thee, and they rejoiced in thee and have
sent thee this cake, which is of the sweetmeats of the other
world. Do thou break thy fast on it at the end of the day.'
The King rejoiced greatly at this and exclaimed, 'Praised
be God who hath given me brethren of the invisible world!' And
he thanked the old woman and kissed her hands and
entreated her and the damsels with exceeding honour.
Then he fasted till twenty days were past, at the end of
which time the old woman came to him and said, 'Know,
O King, that I told the spirits of the love that is between
thee and me and how I had left the damsels with thee,
and they were glad that the damsels should belong to a
King like thee; for they were wont, when they saw them,
to be strenuous in offering up effectual prayer on their
behalf. So I would fain carry them to the spirits, that
they may benefit by their favours; and they shall surely not
return to thee without some treasure of the treasures of the
earth, that thou, after the completion of thy fast, mayst
occupy thyself with their dress and help thyself to the
fulfilment of thy wishes with that which they shall bring
thee.' The King thanked her and said, 'But that I fear
to cross thee, I would not accept the treasure or aught
else: but when wilt thou set out with them?' 'On the
seven-and-twentieth night,' replied she; 'and I will bring
them back to thee at the end of the month, by which time
thou wilt have accomplished thy fast and they will have
had their courses and be free from impurity. Then they
shall become thine and be at thy disposal. By Allah, each
one of them is worth many times thy kingdom!' 'I know
it, O pious lady,' replied the King. Then said the old
woman, 'If there be any one in thy palace who is dear
to thee, thou wouldst do well to send her with me, that
she may find solace and seek a blessing of the spirits.'
Quoth the King, 'I have a Greek slave called Sufiyeh, by
whom God hath vouchsafed me two children, a son and a
daughter; but they were lost years ago. Take her with thee,
that she may get the spirits' blessing: it may be they
will pray God for her, that her children may be restored
to her.' 'It is well,' replied the old woman; for indeed
this was what she most desired. The King gave not over
fasting till the seven-and-twentieth night, when the old
woman said to him, 'O my son, I am about to go to the
spirits; so bring me Sufiyeh.' Accordingly, he sent for
her and delivered her to the old woman, who placed her
with the other damsels. Then she went in to her chamber
and bringing out a sealed cup, presented it to the King,
saying, 'On the thirtieth day, do thou go to the bath and
when thou comest out, enter one of the closets in thy
palace and drink the liquid that is in this cup. Then sleep,
and thou shalt attain what thou seestest, and peace be
on thee!' The King was glad and thanked her and kissed
her hands. Quoth she, 'I commend thee to God,' and he
said, 'When shall I see thee again, O pious lady? Indeed
I love not to part with thee.' Then she called down
blessings on him and departed with the five damsels and
the Princess Sufiyeh, whilst the King fasted other three
days, till the end of the month, when he went to the bath
and coming out, shut himself up in a closet, commanding
that none should go in to him. Then he drank what was
in the cup and lay down to sleep. We sat awaiting him
till the end of the day, but he did not come out and we
said, 'Belike he is tired with the bath and with watching
by night and fasting by day, and sleeps." So we waited till next day; but still he did not come out. Then we stood at the closest-door and cried aloud, so haply he might awake and ask what was the matter. But nothing came of this: so at last we lifted the door off its hinges and going in, found the King dead, with his flesh torn into strips and his bones broken in pieces. When we saw him in this case, it was grievous to us, and we took up the cup and found in its cover a piece of paper, on which was written the following, "He who does evil leaves no regrets behind him. This is the reward of him who plays the traitor with kings' daughters and debauches them: and we make known to all who happen upon this scroll that Sherkan, when he came to our country, debauched our Princess Abdish; nor did this suffice him, but he must take her from us and bring her to you. Then he [Omar ben Ennuman] [debauched her and] sent her away, in company of a black slave, who slew her and we found her lying dead in the desert. This is none of kings' fashion, and he who did this is requited with nought but his deserts. So do ye suspect none of having killed him, for none slew him but the cunning witch, whose name is Dhat ed Dewali. And behold, I have taken the King's wife, Sufiyeh and have carried her to her father King Africjan of Constantinople. Moreover, we will assuredly make war upon you and kill you and take your land from you, and ye shall be cut off even to the last man, nor shall there be left of you a living soul, no, nor a blower of the fire, except he serve the Cross and the Girdle." When we read this, we knew that the old woman had cheated us and carried out her plot against us: so we cried out and buffeted our faces and wept sore. However, weeping availed us nothing and the troops fell out as to whom they should make Sultan. Some would have thee and others thy brother Sherkan; and we ceased not to wrangle about this for the space of a month, at the end of which time certain of us drew together and agreed to repair to thy brother Sherkan. So we set out and journeyed on till we fell in with thee: and this is the manner of the death of King Omar ben Ennuman."

When the Vizier had made an end of his story, Zoulmekan and his sister wept, and the Chamberlain wept also. Then said the latter to Zoulmekan, "O King, weeping will profit thee nothing; nor will aught avail thee but that thou fortify thy heart and strengthen thy resolution and establish thy power; for verily he is not dead who leaves the like of thee behind him." So Zoulmekan gave over weeping and raising his throne to be set up without the pavilion, commanded the army to pass in review before him. Then he sat down on the throne, with the Chamberlain by his side and all the arm-bearers behind him, whilst the Vizier Dendan and the rest of the amirs and grandees stood before him, each in his several room. Then said Zoulmekan to Dendan, "Acquaint me with the particulars of my father's treasures." Dendan answered, "I hear and obey," and gave him to know the amount and nature of the late King's treasure and what was in the treasury of money and jewels and other precious things. So Zoulmekan gave largesse to the army and bestowed a sumptuous dress of honour on the Vizier Dendan, saying, "I confirm thee in thine office." Whereupon Dendan kissed the earth before him and wished him long life. Then he bestowed dresses of honour on the Amirs, after which he turned to the Chamberlain and said, "Bring out before us the triptych of Damascus, that is with thee." So he laid before him the chests of money and jewels and raiments, and he took them and divided them all amongst the troops, till there was nothing left. And the amirs kissed the ground before Night fell and wished him long life, saying, "Never saw we a truer king, who gave the like of these gifts." Then they all went away to their own tents, and when it was morning,
Zoolmekan gave orders for departure. So they set out and journeyed for three days, till on the fourth day they drew near to Baghdad. When they entered the city, they found it decorated, and King Zoolmekan went up to his father's palace and sat down on the throne, whilst the amirs of the army and the Vizier Deylan and the Chamberlain of Damascus stood before him. Then he bade his private secretary write a letter to his brother Sherkan, acquainting him with all that had passed and adding, "As soon as thou hast read this letter, make ready thine affairs and join us with thine army, that we may make war upon the infidels and take vengeance on them for our father and wipe out the stain upon our honour." Then he folded the letter and sealed it and said to Deylan, "None shall carry this letter but thou; and I would have thee speak my brother fair and say to him, 'If thou have a mind to thy father's kingdom, it is thine, and thy brother shall be Viceroy for thee in Damascus; for to this effect am I instructed by him.'" So the Vizier went out from before him and proceeded to make ready for his journey. Then Zoolmekan set apart a magnificent house for the stoker and furnished it with sumptuous furniture and lodged him therein. One day, he went out a-hunting and as he was returning to Baghdad, one of the amirs presented him with horses of fine breeds and damsels whose beauty beggars description. One of the damsels pleased him; so he went in to her and lay with her, and she conceived by him forthwith. After a while, the Vizier Deylan returned from Damascus, bringing him news of his brother Sherkan and that he was then on his way to him, and said to him, "Thou wouldst do well to go out to meet him." Zoolmekan replied, "I hear and obey;" and riding forth with his grandees a day's journey from Baghdad, pitched his tents and halted to await the coming of his brother. Next morning, the army of Syria appeared, with King Sherkan in its midst, a bold cavalier, a fierce lion and a warrior against whom none might make head. As the squadrons drew nigh and the dust-clouds neared and the troops came up with banners flying, Zoolmekan and his attendants rode forward to meet Sherkan; and when the King saw his brother, he would have dismounted, but Sherkan conjured him not to do so and himself set foot to the ground and walked towards him. As soon as he reached Zoolmekan, the latter threw himself upon him, and they embraced and wept and consoled with one another. Then they mounted and rode onward, they and their troops, till they reached Baghdad, where they alighted and went up to the royal palace and passed the night there. Next morning, Zoolmekan went forth and bade proclaim a holy war and summon the troops from all parts. They abode a whole month, awaiting the coming of the levies, whilst the folk poured in from all parts of the kingdom, and every one who came they entreated with honour and munificence and promised him all manner of good. Then Sherkan said to Zoolmekan, "O my brother, tell me thy history." So he told him all that had befallen him, first and last, including the benevolent dealing of the stoker with him. "Hast thou requited him his kindness to thee?" asked Sherkan. "Not yet," replied Zoolmekan; "but, God willing, I will surely do so, as soon as I return from this expedition and am at leisure to attend to him." Thenceforth, Sherkan was certified that his sister Nushet æ Zeman had told him the truth; but he concealed what had passed between them and contented himself with sending his salutation to her by her husband the Chamberlain. She returned his greeting in the same fashion, calling down blessings on him and enquiring after her daughter Kuma Feke, to which he replied that the child was well and in all health and safety. Then he went to his brother to take counsel with him for departure; and Zoolmekan said, "O my brother, we will set out as soon
as the army is complete and the Arabs have come in from all parts." So he bade make ready the wheat and other provisions and munitions of war and went in to his wife, who was now five months gone with child; and he put under the hand mathematicians and astrologers, to whom he appointed stipends and allowances. Then, three months after the arrival of the army of Syria, as soon as the troops were all assembled and the Arabs had come in, he sat out, at the head of his troops, with his brother Shekhan on his right and his brother-in-law the Chamberlain on his left hand. The name of the general of the army of the Medes was Rustem and that of the general of the army of the Turks Behram. So the squadrons broke up and marched forward and the companies and battalions filed past in battle array, till the whole army was in motion. They ceased not to fare on for the space of a month, halting three days a week to rest, by reason of the greatness of the host, till they came to the country of the Greeks; and as they drew near, the people of the villages and harmless took fright at them and fled to Constantinople.

To return to Dhah ed Dewahi. As soon as she reached her own country and felt herself in safety, she said to her son, King Herodoub: "Be consoled; for I have avenged thy daughter Abrizel and killed King Omar ben Ennuunam and brought back the Princess Sulayeb. So now let us go to the King of Constantinople and carry him back his daughter and tell him what has happened, that he may be on his guard and prepare his forces and that we may do the like; for I know that the Muslims will not delay to attack us." "Let us wait till they draw near our country," replied Herodoub, "that we may make us ready meantime and assemble our power." Accordingly they fell to lorrying their forces and preparing for war, so that by the time the news of the Muslims' advance reached them, they were ready for defence. Then King Herodoub and his mother set out for Constantinople, and King Afridoun, hearing of the arrival of the King of the Greeks, came forth to meet him and asked how it was with him and the cause of his visit. So Herodoub acquainted him with the doings of his mother Dhah ed Dewahi, how she had slain the Muslim king and recovered the Princess Sulayeb, and that the Muslims had assembled their forces and were on their way to attack them, wherefore it behoved that they two should join powers and meet them. King Afridoun rejoiced in the recovery of his daughter and the death of King Omar and sent to all countries, to seek succour and acquaint the folk with the reason of the slaying of King Omar. So the Christian troops flocked to him from all quarters, and before three months were past, the army of the Greeks was complete, besides which there joined themselves to him the French and Germans and Ragusaans and Genoese and Venetians and all the hosts of the Pale Faces and warriors from all the lands of the Franks, and the earth was straitened on them by reason of their multitude. Then Afridoun, the Great King commanded to depart; so they set out from Constantinople and ceased not to deal throught the city for the space of ten days. They fared on till they reached a spacious valley, hard by the salt sea, where they halted three days; and on the fourth day, they were about to set out again, when news came to them of the approach of the Army of Islam and the defenders of the faith of the Best of Men.1 So they halted either three days, and on the seventh day, they espied a great cloud of dust, which spread till it covered the whole country; nor was an hour of the day past, before the dust lifted and melted away into the air; and its darkness was pierced and dispersed by the starry sheen of lance-points and spear-heads and the flashing of sword-blades. Presently, there appeared the banners of Islam and the Mohammedan emblems and

1 Mohammed.
the mailed horsemen surged forward, like the lashing lores of the billows of the sea clad in cuirasses as they were clouds girdled about moons. Thereupon the Christian horsemen rode forward and the two hosts met, like two seas clashing together, and eyes fell upon eyes. The first to spar into the fight was the Vizier Dendan, with the army of Syria, thirty thousand cavaliers, followed by Rustem, the general of the Medes, and Behram, the general of the Turks, with other twenty thousand horse, behind whom came the men of the sea-coast, sheathed in glittering mail, as they were full moons passing through a night of clouds. Then the Christian host called upon Jesus and Mary and the defiled Cross, and fell upon the Vizier Dendan and the army of Syria. Now this was in pursuance of a stratagem devised by Elht ed Dewahi; for, before his departure, King Afridoun had gone in to her and said, “It is thou hast brought this great stress on us; so do thou advise me how I shall do and what plan I shall follow.” “O great King and mighty priest,” replied she, “I will teach thee a shift; which would battle thou thyself, though he should call to his aid against it all his grisly hosts. It is that you send fifty thousand men in ships to the Mountain of Smoke and there let them land and sit not till the standards of Islam come upon you, when do you up and at them. Then let the troops from the seaward rally out upon the Muslims and take them in rear, whilst you confound them from the landward. So not one of them shall escape, and our stress shall cease and shaming peace ensue to us.” Her counsel commended itself to King Afridoun and he replied, “It is well: thy counsel shall be followed, O princess of cunning old women and recourse of kings warning for their blood-revenge!” So when the array of Islam came upon them in that valley, of a sudden the flames began to run among the tents and the swords to play upon men’s bodies. Then came up the army of Baghdad and Khorassan, six score thousand horse, with Zoulmkan at their head. When the host of the infidels that lay by the sea saw them, they came out and followed in their steps, and Zoulmkan, seeing this, cried out to his men, saying, “Turn back to the infidels, O people of the Chosen Prophet, and fall upon those who deny and transgress the authority of the Compassionate, the Merciful.” So they turned and fought with the Christians, and Sherkan came up with another wing of the Muslim army, near six score thousand men, whilst the infidels numbered nigh upon sixteen hundred thousand. When the Muslims mingled in the mêlée, their hearts were strengthened and they cried out, saying, “God hath promised to succour us and abandon the infidels!” And they clashed together with swords and spears. As for Sherkan, he made himself a passage through the ranks and raged among the masses of the foe, fighting so fiercely a battle that it would have made children grow grey for fear; nor did he leave to tourney among the infidels and work havoc upon them with the keen-edged scimitar, shooting, “God is most great!” till he drove them back to the brink of the sea. Then the strength of the foe failed and God gave the victory to the faith of Submission, and they fought, drunken without wine, till they slew of the infidels forty and five thousand in that encounter, whilst of the Muslims but three thousand and five hundred fell. Moreover, the Lion of the Faith, King Sherkan, and his brother Zoulmkan slept not that night, but occupied themselves with leeching to the wounded and heartening their men with assurance of victory and salvation and promise of a recompense in the world to come.

Meanwhile King Afridoun assembled the captains of his host and said to them, “Verily, we had accomplished our intent and had solaced our hearts, but for our over-confidence in our numbers: it was that which undid us.” But
Dhat ed Dewali said to them, "Assuredly nought shall profit you, except ye seek the favour of the Messiah and put your trust in the True Faith; for by the virtue of the Messiah, the whole strength of the Muslims lies in that devil, King Sherkan!" "To-morrow," said Afridoun, "I will draw out in battle array and send out against them the famous cavalier, Luca ben Shemlout; for if King Sherkan come out to join with him, he will slay him and the other champions of the Muslims, till not one is left; and I purpose this night to sacrifice you all by fumigation with the Holy Incense." When the emirs heard this, they kissed the earth before him. Now the incense in question was the excrement of the Chief Patriarch, which was sought for with such instance and so highly valued, that the high priests of the Greeks used to mix it with musk and ambergris and send it to all the countries of the Christians in silken sachets; and kings would pay a thousand dinars for every grain of it, for they sought it to perfume their wives and the chief of them were wont to use a little of it in ointment for the eyes and as a remedy in sickness and colic. But the priests used to mix their own excrement with it, for that the excrement of the Chief Patriarch could not suffice for half a score countries.

So, as soon as the day broke and the morning appeared with Night, Afridoun summoned the chief of his knights and nobles and invested them with dresses of honour. Then he made the sign of the cross on their foreheads and incensed them with the incense aforesaid; after which he called for Luca ben Shemlout, summoned the Sword of the Messiah, and after incensing him and rubbing his palate with the holy excrement, damped and smeared his cheeks and anointed his moustaches with the remainder. Now there was no stouter champion in the land of the Greeks than this accursed Luca, nor any dauntless at bowshot or smiling with swords or thrusting with spears in the mellow; but he was fool of favour, for his face was as the face of a jackass, his shape that of an ape and his look as the look of a malignant serpent, and the being near unto him was more grievous than parting from the beloved. Moreover, he was black as night and his breath was fetid as that of the lion; he was crooked as a bow and grim-visaged as the pard, and he was branded with the mark of the infidels. He kissed Afridoun's feet and the King said to him, "It is my wish that thou go out against Sherkan, King of Damascus, and hasten to deliver us from this affliction." Quoth Luca, "I hear and obey." And the King made the sign of the cross on his forehead and felt assured of speedy help from heaven, whilst Luca went out and mounted a scored horse. Now he was clad in a red tunic and a hauberk of gold set with jewels and bore a three-barbed spear, as he were Obis the accursed on the day of marshalling his hosts to battle. Then he rode forward, he and his troop of infidels, as they were driving to the Fire, preceded by a herald, crying aloud in the Arabic tongue and saying, "Ho, followers of Mohammed, let none of you come out this day but your champion Sherkan, the Sword of Islam, lord of Damascus of Syria!" Hardly had he made an end of speaking, when there arose a mighty tumult in the plain, all the people heard its voice, that called to mind the Day of Weeping. The cowards trembled and all necks turned towards the sound, and behold, it was King Sherkan. For, when Zoulmekan saw that accursed infidel spurned into the plain, he turned to Sherkan and said to him, "Of a surety they seek for thee." "Should it be so," replied Sherkan, "it were pleasing to me." So when they heard the herald, they knew Luca to be the champion of the Greeks. Now he was one of the greatest of villains, one who made hearts to ache, and had sworn to clear the land of the Muslims; and indeed the Medes and Turks and Kurds feared his
mischief. So Sherkan drove at him like an angry lion, mounted on a charger like a wild gazelle, and coming nigh to him, shook his javelin in his hand, as it were a darting viper, and recited the following verses:

I have a four-footed horse, right swift and crafty to guide. Shalt give thee of its might what thou mayst ill abide.

And, and a limber spear I have, full keen of point, As were the points of death's sharp dart they did ride;

And the sword of Ind, which when I draw, Thou'lt deem that loveliness flashed and darted far and wide.

Luca understood not what he said nor did he apprehend the vehemence of the verse, but he smote his forehead with his hand, in honour of the cross borne thereon, and kissed it, then ran at Sherkan with lance pointed at him. When he came within spear-shot, he threw the javelin into the air, till it was lost to sight, and catching it with the other hand, as do the jugglers, hurled it at Sherkan. It sped from his hand, like a shooting star, and the people clambered and feared for Sherkan: but as it drew near him, he put out his hand and caught it in full flight, to the amazement of the beholders. Then he shook it, till it was well-nigh broken, and hurled it up into the air, till it disappeared from sight. As it descended, he caught it again, in less than the twinkling of an eye, and cried out from the bottom of his heart, saying, "By the virtue of Him who created the seven heavens, I will make this accursed fellow the byword of the world!" Then he hurled the javelin at Luca ben Shencut, who thought to do as Sherkan had done and catch it in mid-flight, but Sherkan made haste and sped another dart at him, which smote him on the forehead, amidst the sight of the cross, and God hurried his soul to the Fire and the Ill Stead. 1 When the infidels saw Luca fall dead, they buffeted their faces, crying, "Alas!" and "Woe worth the day!" and called for aid upon the priests of the monasteries, saying, "Where are the crosses?"

So the monks offered up prayer and the Christians all drew together against Sherkan and brandishing their swords and lances, rushed forward to the attack. Army met army and men's breasts fell under the hoofs of the horses, whilst the sword and the spear met and arms and wrists grew weak and it was as if the horses had been made without legs; nor did the herald of war cease to call to battle, till all arms were weary and the day departed and the night came with the darkness. So the two hosts drew apart, whilst every warrior staggered like a drunken man, for stress of war and much thrusting and smiting, and the ground was hidden with the slain; sore were the wounds and the hurt knew not by whom he died. Then Sherkan joined his brother and the Chamberlain and the Vizier Dendani and said to them, "Verily God hath opened a door for the destruction of the infidels, praised be the Lord of the Two Worlds!" "Let us never cease to praise God," replied Zooleen, "for that he had dispelled trouble from the Arabs and the Persians. Indeed the folk, generation after generation, shall tell of thy prowess against the accursed Luca, the falsifier of the Evangel, of thy catching the javelin in mid-flight and smiting the enemy of God among men; and thy report shall endure until the end of time." Then said Sherkan, "Hakey, O grand Chamberlain and doughty captain!" "At thy service," answered he. Qoth Sherkan, "Take the Vizier Dendani and twenty thousand men and lead them, by a forced march, seven parasangs towards the sea, till ye come near the shore, at two parasangs' distance from the foe. Then hide

1 Mohammed pretended that his coming had been foretold in the Gospels and that the Christians had falsified the passage (John xvi. 7) promising the advent of the Comforter (pneumatopous) by substituting the latter word for ioudaros, glorious, renowned, praised, i.e. Mohammed.
in the hollows of the ground, till ye hear the tumult of the infidels disembarking from the ships; and when the swords have begun to play between us and them and ye see our troops falling back, as if defeated, and all the infidels following them, as well those in front as those from the seaward and the tents, do ye lie in wait for them; and as soon as ye see the standard with the words, 'There is no god but God, and Mohammed is His Apostle,' up with the green banner and fall on their rear, shouting, 'God is most great!' and do your endeavor, that they may not interpose between the retreating army and the sea.' The Chamberlain agreed to this, and he and the Vizier Dandan took twenty thousand men and set out at once, even as Shekhan had commanded. As soon as it was morning, the troops donned their armour and drawing their swords, set their spears in rest and sprang to horse. Then the Christians drew out in battle array upon the hills and plains and the priests cried out and all heads were uncovered. Moreover, those who were in the ships hoisted the cross at their mast-heads and making from all sides towards the shore, landed their horses and addressed them to the fray, whilst the swords glittered and the javelins glanced like serpents against the cuirasses. So they all joined battle, and the mill-wheels of death rushed round over footmen and horsemen: heads flew from bodies and tongues grew mute and eyes dim; gall-bladders burst and skulls were cloven in ander and wrists shorn in twain; whilst the horses splashed in pools of blood and men gripped each other by the beards. The host of Islam called out, 'Peace and blessing on the Prince of Mankind and glory and praise in the highest to the Compassionate One!' whilst the infidels shouted, 'Glory to the Cross and the Girdle and the Vine-juice and the Fressor and the Priests and the Monks and the Festival of Palms and the Metropolitan!' Presently, Zoulmechan and Sherkan held back and their troops gave way and signified to retreat before the infidels, who pursued them, deeming them routed, and made ready to cut and thrust. Then the host of the Muslims began to chant the first verses of the Chapter of the Cow, whilst the slain were trampled under the hoofs of the horses and the heralds of the Greeks cried out, 'Ho, servants of the Messiah! Ho, people of the True Faith! Ho, followers of the Prophet! Verily the divine grace shines upon you, for see, the hosts of Islam incline to fleé! So turn ye not your backs to them, but let your swords bite on their necks, and hold not your hands from them, else are ye outcasts from the Messiah, son of Mary, who spoke even in the cradle!' Thereupon Africun thought that the infidels were victorious, knowing not that this was but a stratagem of the Muslims, and sent to King Herodoub, to give him the glad tidings of success, adding, 'It was nought but the excrement of the Arch-Patriarch that availed us, in that the fragrance of it exalted from the beards and moustaches of the servants of the Cross near and far; and I swear, by the Miracles of the Messiah and by the Waters of Baptism, that I will not leave upon the earth a single defender of Islam!' So the messenger betook himself to King Herodoub whilst the infidels called to each other saying, 'Let us take our wreak for Luca!' and King Herodoub cried out, 'Vengeance for Abualeh!' With this, King Zoulmechan cried out to his men, saying, 'Ho, servants of the Repenting King! Up and smite the children of blasphemy and disobedience with the white of the sword and the brown of the spear!' So the Muslims turned upon the infidels and plied them with the keen-edged scimitar, whilst their herald cried aloud, 'Up, ye lovers of the chosen prophet and at the enemies

---

1 The second chapter of the Koran, beginning, 'This is the Book, etc.'
2 It appears by what follows that Africun, supposing the victory to be gained, returned to Constantinople immediately after sending this message and left the command of the army to King Herodoub.
of the Faith! Now is the time for those, who hope for salvation on the Day of Reckoning, to win the favour of the Bountiful, the Forgiving One, for verily Paradise is under the shadow of swords!" So Sherkan and his men fell upon the infidels and cut off their retreat and tourned among the ranks, when lo, a cavalier of godly presence opened a passage through the army of the Greeks and circled hither and thither amongst them, cutting and thrusting and covering the ground with heads and bodies, so that the infidels feared him and their necks bent under his blows. He was girt with two swords, that of his glances and a scimitar, and armed with two lances, one of cane and the other the straightness of his shape; over his shoulders flowed down his hair, whose beauty might have stood him in stead of many warriors, even as says the poet:

Flowing hair, as I deem, is not fair to the sight, Except it be spread, on the day of the fight.
O'er a youth with a spear that he giveth to drink Of the blood of fallen many a heart-bearing knight.

Or as says another:

I turned to him, what while he girt his sabion on, and said, "Sarazly, the sabions of thy looks should stand thee in sword's stead."
Quoth he, "The sabions of my looks I keep for those who love. My sword for those who have no wit of passion's goodwill.

When Sherkan saw him, he said to him, "Ho, champion of the champions! I conjure thee, by the Koran and the attributes of the Compassionate One, tell me who thou art: for verily by thy deeds this day thou hast pleased the Requiting King, whom one thing distresses not from another, in that thou hast discomfited the children of impiety and disbelief." Quoth the horseman, "Thou art he who sworest brotherhood to me but yesterday: how quickly thou hast forgotten me!" Then he uncovered his face, so that what was hidden of his beauty was disclosed, and lo, it was none other than Zoolmakan! When Sherkan knew his brother, he rejoiced in him, except that he feared for him from the throng of adversaries and the overtopping of the champions; and this for two reasons, the first, his tender age and exposure to the evil eye, and the second, that his life was the mainstay of the empire. So he said to him, "O King, thou art the fairest of thy people, and indeed I am in fear for thee from the foe; so join thy horse to mine, and thou wouldst do well not to hazard thyself for any of these squadrions, that we may shoot at the enemy with thine uncerring shaft."

Quoth Zoolmakan, "I wish to equal thee in battle and I will not spare myself before thee in fight." Then the host of Islam rushed upon the infidels and encompassing them on all sides, waged a right holy war on them and broke the power of the children of impiety and pride and corruption. King Hendoub sighed when he saw the evil case that had fallen on the Greeks, and they turned their backs and addressed themselves to flight, making for the ships, when lo, there came out upon them from the sea-shore a new army, led by the Vizier Dandan, him who was wont to make the champions bite the dust, and the Chamberlain of Syria, with twenty thousand doughty cavaliers, and fell upon their rear with sword and spear, whilst the array of Islam pressed them in front and flank. Then some of the Muslims turned against those that were in the ships and rained perditions on them, till they threw themselves into the sea, and they slew of them much people, more than a hundred thousand knights, nor did one of their champions escape, great or small. Moreover, they took their ships, with all the baggage and treasure therein, and the Muslims got that day booty, the like of which was never gotten of time past; nor did ever ear hear of such a battle. But twenty of the ships escaped, and amongst the booty were fifty thousand horses, besides treasure and spoil past count or reckoning, whereas the Muslims rejoiced with an ex-
ceeding joy and thanked God for the aid and protection He had vouchsafed them.

Meanwhile, the news reached Constantinople that King Afridoun had gotten the victory over the Muslims, and Dhat ed Dewahi said, “I know that my son King Herdoub is no runagate and that he has sought to fear from the hosts of Islam, but will bring the whole world to the Nazarene faith.” Then she commanded the city to be decorated, and the people held high festival and drank wines, knowing not what God had decreed to them. Whilst they were in the midst of their rejoicings, behold, the raven of affliction croaked against them and up came the twenty ships of fugitives, amongst them the King of Cæsarea. King Afridoun met them on the sea-shore, and they told him all that had befallen them, weeping sore and lamenting, whereupon rejoicing was turned into dismay, and King Afridoun was filled with consternation and knew that there was no repairing their mischance. The women gathered together to make moan and lament; and the city was filled with mourning; all hearts failed, whilst the hired mourners cried aloud and weeping and wailing arose on all sides. When King Herdoub met King Afridoun, he told him the truth of the case and how the flight of the Muslims was but a straggle and said to him, “Look not to see any of the troops, save those that have already reached thee.” When Afridoun heard this, he fell down in a swoon, with his nose under his feet; and as soon as he revived, he exclaimed, “Solely the Messiah was wroth with the army, that he delivered them thus into the hands of the Muslims!” Then came the Arch-Patriarch sadly to King Afridoun, who said to him, “O our father, destruction hath overtaken our army and the Messiah hath punished us!” “Grieve not nor be concerned,” replied the Patriarch; “for it cannot be but that one of you has sinned against the Messiah, and all have been punished for his sin; but now we will read prayers for you in the churches, that the Mohammedan hosts may be repelled from you.” After this, Dhat ed Dewahi came to Afridoun and said to him, “O King, verily the Muslims are many, and we shall never prevail against them, save by wile: wherefore I purpose to work upon them by stratagem, and repair to the army of Islam, haply I may be able to carry out my intent against their leader and slay their champion, even as I slew his father. If I succeed, not one of them shall return to his native land, for all their strength lies in him; but I wish to have some Christians of Syria, such as go out from time to time to sell their goods, to help me in carrying out my plan.” “Be it so, wheras thou wilt,” replied the King. So she bade fetch a hundred men, natives of Nejran in Syria; and said to them, “Ye have heard what has befallen the Christians with the Muslims?” “Yes,” replied they; and the King said, “This woman has devoted herself to the Messiah and purposes to go forth with you, disguised as Mohammedans, to work out a device, which shall profit us and hinder the Muslim host from us; so if ye also are willing to devote yourselves to Christ, I will give you a quintal of gold. Those of you who escape shall have the money, and those of you who are slain Christ will reward.” “O King,” replied they, “we devote ourselves to the Messiah, and we will be thy sacrifice.” Then the old woman took drugs and simples and boiled them in water, till the black essence of them was extracted. She waited till it was cold, then dipped the end of a handkerchief therein [and coloured her face therewith]. Moreover, she put on, over her clothes, a long gauze-dress with an embroidered border and taking in her hand a rosary, went in to King Afridoun, who knew her not nor did any of his companions know her, till she discovered herself to them, when they all praised her for her cunning and her son rejoiced and said, “May the Messiah never fail thee!”
Then she took with her the Syrian Christians, and set out for Night the army of Baghdad. Now this accursed old woman was a witch of the witches, past mistress in sorcery and deception, knavish, crafty, debauched and perverted, with foul breath, red eyelids, sallow cheeks, pale face, bleared eyes, mangy body, grizzled hair, humped back, withered complexion and running nostrils. She had studied the scriptures of Islam and made the pilgrimage to the Holy House of God, to come to the knowledge of the Mohammedan ordinances and the doctrines of the Koran; and she had professed Judaism in Jerusalem two years' space, that she might perfect herself in the magical arts of men and Jin; so that she was a plague of plagues and a calamity of calamities, utterly depraved and having no religion. Now the chief reason of her sojourn with her son, King Herod, was on account of the maidens at his court; for she was given to tribulation and could not exist without it: so if any damsel pleased her, she was wont to teach her the art and rub saffron on her, till she fainted away for excess of pleasure. Whoso obeyed her, she used to favour and make interest for her with her son; and whoso repelled her, she would contrive to destroy. This was known to Merjanah and Rihanah and Uriyah, the handmaids of Abrizesh, and the princess loathed the old woman and abhorred to lie with her, because of the ill smell from her armpits and the stench of her wind, more feit than carnion, and the roughness of her body, coarser than palm fibre. She was wont to herbe those who served her desires with jewels and instruction; but Abrizesh held aloof from her and sought refuge with the Wise, the Omniscient; for well does the poet say:

O thou that abasest thyself to those that are rich and great And londest it with disdain o'er those of low estate,
Then that thine to gild thy graces by gathering gold, The scenting of aught that's foul skills not its stench to abate!

1 As Mecca.
her feet, till she drew near the Muslim camp, when she unwound them, leaving the marks of the cords deeply embedded in the flesh. Then she anointed the weals with dragon's blood and bade her companions treat her severely and lay her in a chest. "How can we beat thee?" replied they. "Who art our sovereign lady and mother of the supreme King?" Quoth she, "We blame not nor reproach him who goeth to the jakes, and in time of necessity, forbidden things become lawful. When ye have laid me in the chest, set it on the back of one of the mules and pass on with it and the other goods through the Muslim camp, crying aloud the profession of the Faith of Unity. If any hinder you, give up the mules and their lading and betake yourselves to their King Zoulnaean and cast yourselves on his protection, saying: We were in the country of the infidels and they took nothing from us, but wrote us a passport, that none should hinder us; so why do ye seize upon our goods? See, here is the letter of the King of the Greeks, commanding that none shall do us let or hindrance." If he say to you, 'What profit had ye of your commerce in the land of the Greeks?' answer him, 'We profited in that it was given to us to accomplish the deliverance of a pious man, who had lain fifteen years in a dungeon under the earth, crying out for help, yet none helped him. On the contrary, the infidels tortured him night and day. We knew not of this: but after we had sojourned awhile in Constantinople, having sold our goods and bought others in their stead, we made ready to set out and return to our native land. We spent the night before our departure, conversing about our journey, and when the day broke, we saw a figure painted upon the wall; and behold, as we drew nigh it, it moved and said, 'O Muslims, is there amongst you one who is minded to gain the favour of the Lord of the two worlds?' 'How so?' asked we.

"Know," replied the figure, "that God hath made me speak to you, to the intent that your belief may be fortified and that your faith may inspire you and that you may go forth of the country of the infidels and repair to the camp of the Muslims, where ye shall find the Sword of the Compassionate One, the Champion of the Age, KingSherkan, by whom He shall conquer Constantinople and destroy the followers of the Christian heresy. On the third day of your journey, you will come to [a town, in which stands] a hermitage known as the hermitage of Metrouhena. Make for it with a pure intent and do your utmost endeavour to come hither the hermitage, for therein is a true believer from Jerusalem, by name Abdallah, one of the holiest of men, whom God hath blessed with supernatural powers, such as dispel doubts and obscurity. Him certain of the monks seized by fraud and shut in an underground dungeon, where he has lain many a year. So, if ye desire to gain the favour of the Lord of the Faithful, ye cannot accomplish a more acceptable work than the deliverance of this holy man." When we heard what the figure said, Night

I awake with my heart, for anguish that's well-nigh eight in twain, And there ebbs and flows in my bosom a flooding sea of pain.

Indeed, there is no deliverance, and death is near at hand; Yet death

than long affliction were kinder and more safe.

O lightning, if thou visit my native land and fold, If for the fair ones' lustre thine own red brilliance wave,
When once ye have brought me into the Muslim camp," added the old woman, "I know how I will make shift to beguile them and slay them all, even to the last man." When the Christians heard what she said, they kissed her hands and laid her in a chest, after they had beaten her grievously, in obedience to her commands, seeing it to be incumbent on them to do her bidding in this, then made for the Muslim camp.

Meanwhile, the Muslims sat down to converse with each other, after they had made an end of the battle and the pillage, and Zoulmекан said to his brother, "Verily, God hath given us the victory, because of our just dealing and concord amongst ourselves; therefore, O Shekkan, do thou continue to obey my commandment, in submission to God (to whom belong might and majesty), for I mean to slay ten kings and fifty thousand of the Greeks, in revenge for my father, and enter Constantinople." "My life be thy ransom against death!" replied Shekkan. "Needs must I follow forth the Holy War, though I tarry many a year in the infidels' country. But, O my brother, I have in Damascus a daughter called Kuzia Fekan, who is one of the marvels of the time, and I love her heartily." "And I also," said Zoulmекан, "have left my wife with child and near her time, nor do I know what God will vouchsafe me by her. But, O my brother, promise me that, if she bring me a son, thou wilt grant me thy daughter for my son and pledge me thy faith thereon." "With all my heart," replied Shekkan and put out his hand to his brother, saying, "If thou be blessed with a son, I will give him my daughter Kuzia Fekan to wife." At this Zoulmекан rejoiced, and they fell to giving each other joy of the victory, whilst the

Vizierデン дан also congratulated them and said to them, "Know, O Kings, that God hath given us the victory, for that we have devoted ourselves to Him (to whom belong might and majesty) and have left our homes and families: and it is my counsel that we follow up the foe and press upon them and harass them; it may be God shall bring us to our desire and we shall destroy our enemies. If it please you, do ye embark in the ships and sail upon the sea, whilst we fare forward by land and bear the brunt of the battle." And he ceased not to urge them to action, repeating the following verses:

The goodliest of delights it is one's foes to slayAnd on the banks of steeds the spoil to bear away.

Off comes a messenger with promise of a friend, And the friend comes himself without a trying-day.

And these also:

As I live, I will make of war my mother and the spear My brother and the sword my father, and for love
I will take each shag-haired warrior that meets death with a smile, As if to die in battle were 'en his wish most dear!

"Glory be to God," continued he, "Who hath vouchsafed us His allmighty aid and hath given us spoil of silver and fine gold!" Then Zoulmekan commanded to depart; and the army set out and fared on, by forced marches, towards Constantinople, till they came to a wide and blooming champagne, full of all things fair, with wild cattle frisking and gazelles passing to and fro. Now they had traversed great deserts and had been six days cut off from water, when they drew near this meadow and saw therein waters welling and trees laden with ripe fruits and the land as it were Paradise; it had doffed its adornments and decked itself.1 The branches of its trees swayed gently to and fro, drunken with the new wine of the dew, and therein were conjoined the fresh sweetness of the fountains of

1 Koran, x. 25.
Paradise and the soft breathings of the zephyr. Mind and eye were confounded with its beauty, even as says the poet:

*Look on the verdant smiling mead, with flowers and herbs beseen, As were the spring thenceone had spread a mantle all of green.*

If thou beheld it with the eye of sense alone, thou'dt see Naught but a lake wherein the water waves, I ween:

But with thy mind's eye look; thou'll see a glory in the trees And lo, amidst the boughs above, the waving barmes shew them!

Or as another says:

The river's a cheek that the sun has rosy made; For ringlets k' borrows the isla's crimson state.

The water makes anklets of silver about the legs Of the boughs, and the flowers for crowns o'er all are laid.

When Zouzlkean saw this champaign, with its thick-leaved trees and its blooming flowers and warbling birds, he turned to his brother Sherkan and said to him, "O my brother, verily Damascus hath not in it the like of this place. We will abide here three days, that we may rest ourselves and that the troops may regain strength and their souls be fortified to encounter the accursed infidels." So they halted and pitched their camp there. Presently, they heard a noise of voices afar, and Zouzlkean enquiring the cause thereof, was told that a caravan of Syriac merchants had halted there to rest and that the Muslim troops had come on them and had haply seized some of their goods, that they had brought from the country of the infidels. After a while, up came the merchants, crying out and appealing to the King for redress. So Zouzlkean bade bring them before him, and they said to him, "O King, we have been in the country of the infidels and they spoiled us of nothing: why then do our brothers the Muslims de-spoil us of our goods, and that in their own country? When we saw your troops, we went up to them, thinking no evil, and they robbed us of what we had with us." Then they brought out to him, the letter of the King of Constantinople, and Sherkan took it and reading it, said to them, "We will restore you what has been taken from you; but it behooved you not to carry merchandise to the country of the infidels." "O our lord," replied they, "of a truth, God moved us to go thither, that we might win what never champion won the like of; no, not even thou in all thy battles." "What was it that ye won?" asked Sherkan. "O King," replied they, "we will not tell thee, except in private; for if this thing be noised among the folk, it may come the ears of the King of Constantinople, and this will be the cause of our ruin and of the ruin of all Muslims that resort to the land of the Greeks." (Now they had hidden the chest wherein was Dhar ed Dowahi). So Zouzlkean and his brother brought them to a private place, where they repeated to him the story of the devotee, even as the old woman had lassomed them, and went till they made the two kings weep. Thereithal Sherkan's heart yearned to the devotee and he was moved to play for him and seal for the service of God the Most High. So he said to the Syrians, "Did ye rescue the holy man or is he still in the hermitage?" Quoth they, "We delivered him and slew the hermit, fearing for ourselves; after which we made haste to fly, for fear of death; but a trusty man told us that in this hermitage are quintals of gold and silver and jewels." Then they fetched the chest and brought out the accursed old woman, as she were a caudia pod, for excess of blackness and leanness, and laden with fetters and shackles. When Zouzlkean and the bystanders saw her, they took her for a man of the flower of God's servants and the most excellent of devotees, more by token of the shining of her forehead for the ointment with which she had anointed it. So Zouzl-
mcken and Sherkan wept sore and kissed her hands and feet, sobbing aloud: but she signed to them and said, "Give over weeping and hear my words." So they left weeping, in obedience to her, and she said, "Know that I was content to accept what my Lord did unto me, knowing that the affliction that befall me was a trial from Him (to whom belong might and majesty): since that for him who is not patient under trial and affliction there is no coming to the delights of Paradise. I had indeed besought Him that I might return to my native land, yet not for impatience of the sufferings decreed to me, but that I might die under the hoods of the horses of the warriors of the Faith, who, being slain in battle, live again without suffering death; " and she repeated the following couplet:

The fortress is Satan's self and the fire of war burns free. And thou art Moses and this the time appointed to thee.

Throw down thy rod, for lo, it shall swallow up all they make! And fear not; I saw the ropes of the false serpent be (\textsuperscript{3})

Read these the lines of the fee for chapters, the day of the fight, And let thy sword mark on their necks the verses, what while they flee.

Then her eyes ran over with tears and her forehead shone like glistening light, and Sherkan rose and kissed her hand and caused food to be set before her; but she refused it, saying, "I have not broken my fast (till sunset) for fifteen years; and how should I do so now, whereas my Lord hath been bountiful to me in delivering me from the captivity of the infidels and doing away from me which was more grievous than the fiery torment? I will wait till sun-

\(^{4}\) *Say not of those who are slain in the way (service) of God that they are dead; nay, they are living.*—\textit{Koran}, ii. 149.

\(^{5}\) Apparently Constantinople.

\(^{6}\) This verse alludes to the gilded version of the miracle of Aaron's rod, given in the Koran, which attributes the act to Moses and makes the Egyptian sorcerers throw down their rods, to which by their art they give the appearance of serpents.

\(^{1}\) *i.e.* of the Koran.

down." So at nightfall Sherkan and Zoulmakan came to her with food and said, "Eat, O pious man." But she said, "This is no time for eating; it is the hour for doing my service to the Requiting King." Then she took up her station in the prayer-niche and stood praying till the night was spent; and she ceased not to do thus for three days and nights, sitting not but at the time of salutation. When Zoulmakan saw this her behaviour, belief in her took firm hold upon his heart and he said to Sherkan, "Cause a tent of perfumed leather to be pitched for this holy man and appoint a servant to wait upon him." On the fourth day, she called for food; so they brought her all kinds of meats that could allure the sense or delight the eye; but of all this she ate but one cake of bread with salt. Then she turned again to her fast, and when the night came, she rose anew to pray: and Sherkan said to Zoulmakan, "Verily, this man carries renunciation of the world to the utmost extreme, and were it not for this holy war, I would join myself to him and worship God in his service, till I came before His presence. And now I would fain enter his tent and talk with him awhile." "And I also," said Zoulmakan, "To-morrow we sally forth against Constantinople, and we shall find no time like the present." "And I also," said the Vizier Donda, "desire to see this holy man; nay, he will pray for me that I may find my death in this holy war and come to the presence of my Lord, for I am weary of the world." So as soon as night had darkened on them, they repaired to the tent of the witch Dhat ed Dewali and finding her standing praying, fell a-woeeping, for pity of her; but she said no heed to them, till the night was half spent, when she ended her devotions by pronouncing the salutation (to the guardian angels). Then she turned to them and greeted them, saying,
“Wherefore come ye?” “O holy man,” said they, “dost thou not hear us weeping round thee?” “To him who stands before God,” replied she, “there remains but sight nor hearing for the things of this world.” Quoth they, “We would have thee tell us the manner of thy captivity and offer up prayer for us this night, for that will profit us more than the possession of Constantinople.” “By Allah,” answered she, “were ye not the leaders of the Muslims, I would not tell you aught of this; for I complain not but to God alone. However, to you I will relate the circumstance of my captivity. Know, then, that I was in Jerusalem with certain saints and ascetics, and did not magnify myself among them, for that God had endowed me with humility and abnegation, till one night I chanced to go down to the lake and walked upon the water. Therewith I entered into me pride, whence I know not, and I said to myself, ‘Who can walk upon the water, like unto me?’ And from that time my heart became hardened and God afflicted me with the love of travel. So I journeyed to the land of the Greeks and visited it in every part during a whole year, leaving no place but I worshipped God therein. When I came to the place (where the Syrians found me) I ascended the mountain and saw there a hermitage, inhabited by a monk called Metonhemi. When he saw me, he came out to me and kissed my hands and feet, saying, ‘Verily, I have seen thee, since thou camest into the land of the Greeks, and thou hast filled me with longing for the land of Islam.’ Then he took my hand and carrying me into the hermitage, brought me to a dark place, where he took me unawares and locking the door on me, left me there forty days, without meat or drink; for it was his intent to kill me by starvation. One day, it chanced that a knight called Decianus came to the hermitage, accompanied by ten squires and his daughter Temathil, a girl of incomparable beauty. The monk told them of me, and Decianus said, ‘Bring him out, for surely there is not a bird’s nest of ashes left on him.’ So they opened the door of the dungeon and found me standing erect in the niche, praying and reciting the Koran and glorifying God and humbling myself to Him. When they saw this, the monk exclaimed, ‘This man is indeed a sorcerer of the sorcerers!’ Then they all came in on me, and Decianus and his company beat me grievously, till I desired death and reproached myself, saying, ‘This is the reward of him who glorifies himself and takes credit for that which God hath bestowed upon him, beyond his own competence! For, indeed, O my soul, pride and arrogance have crept into thee. Dost thou not know that pride angers the Lord and hardens the heart and brings men to the fire?’ Then they laid me in fetters and returned me to my place, which was a dungeon under the earth. Every three days, they threw me down a cake of barley bread and a draught of water; and every month or two, came Decianus to the hermitage, with his daughter Temathil, who is now grown up, for when I first saw her, she was nine years old, and I abode fifteen years in the dungeon, so that she must be now four-and-twenty years of age. There is not in our land nor in the land of the Greeks a fairer than she, and her father feared lest the King (of Constantinople) should take her from him; for she had vowed herself to the service of the Messiah and rode with Decianus in the habit of a cavalier, so that none who saw her knew her for a woman. In this hermitage her father had laid up his treasures, for all who had sought of price were wont to deposit it there, and I saw there all manner of gold and silver and jewels and precious vessels and rarities, none may keep count of them save God the Most High. Ye are more worthy of these riches than the infidels; so do ye lay hands on that which is in the hermitage and divide it among the Muslims, especially among those who wage the holy war. When these mer-
chants came to Constantinople and sold their merchandise, the image on the wall spoke to them, by God's special grace to me; so they made for the hermitage and tortured Metrouhena, after the most grievous fashion, and dragged him by the beard, till he showed them where I was, when they took me and fled for fear of death. To-morrow, Temashil will visit the hermitage as of wont, and her father and his squires will come after her, to protect her; so an ye would be witness of these things, take me with you and I will deliver to you the treasure and the riches of the knight Decianus, that are stored up in that mountain; for I saw them bring out vessels of gold and silver to drink in and heard a damsel of their company sing to them in Arabic. Alas, that so sweet a voice should not be busied in reciting the Koran! So, an ye will, I will bring you to the hermitage and ye shall hide there, against the coming of Decianus and his daughter. Then take her, for she is only fit for the king of the age, Sheskan, or for King Zoulmecan." When they heard her words, they all rejoiced, with the exception of the Vizier Dendan, who put no faith in her story, for her words took no hold on his reason and his was confounded at her discourse and signs of doct and disbelief appeared in his face; but he feared to speak with her, for awe of the King. Then she said, "I fear lest Decianus come and seeing the troops encamped here, he shall to enter the hermitage." So Zoulmecan resolved to despatch the army towards Constantinople and said, "I mean to take a hundred horse and many mules and make for the mountain, where we will lead the mules with the treasure." Then he sent for the Chamberlain and for the captains of the Turks and Medes and said to them, "As soon as it is day, do ye strike camp and set out for Constantinople. Then, O Chamberlain, shall fill my place in council and command, and thou, O Rustem, shalt be my brother's deputy in battle. Let none know that we are not with you, and after three days we will rejoin you." Then he chose out a hundred of the stoutest cavaliers, and he and Sherkan and Dendan set out for the hermitage, with Night mules and chests for the transport of the treasure. As soon as it was morning, the Chamberlain gave the signal for departure, and the troops set out, thinking that the two Kings and the Vizier were with them. Now the Syrians that were with Dhat ed Dewahi had taken their departure privately, after they had gone in to her and kissed her hands and feet and gotten her leave and taken her orders. Then she waited till it was dark night and going in to Zoulmecan and his companions, said to them, "Come, let us set out for the mountain, and take with you a few men." They obeyed her and left five horsemen at the foot of the mountain, whilst the rest rode on before Dhat ed Dewahi, to whom new strength seemed given for excess of joy, so that Zoulmecan said to his companions, "Glory be to God who sustains this holy man, whose like we never saw!" Now she had written a letter to the King of Constantinople and despatched it by a carrier-pigeon, acquainting him with what had passed and adding, "Do thou send me ten thousand horsemen of the stoutest of the Greeks and let them come stealthily along the foot of the mountains, lest the Muslim host get sight of them, to the hermitage and hide themselves there, till I come to them with the Muslim King and his brother, for I have inveigled them and will bring them thither, together with the Vizier Dendan and a hundred horse, no more, that I may deliver to them the crosses that are in the hermitage. I am resolved to slay the monk Metrouhena, since my scheme cannot be carried out but at the cost of his life. If my plot work well, not one of the Muslims shall return to his own country, no, not a living soul nor a blower of the fire; and Metrouhena shall be a sacrifice for the followers of the Christian faith and the servants of the Cross, and praise be to the
When Zoulmekan saw them, he was sure that they were a mighty host and said, "Who can have given these troops advice of us?" "O my brother," replied Sherkan, "this is no time for talking; but for smiting with swords and shooting with arrows; so gird up your courage and strengthen your hearts, for this pass is like a street with two gates: though, by the virtue of the Lord of the Arabs and the Persians, were not the place so strait, I would bring them to nought, though they were a hundred thousand men!"

"Had we known this," said Zoulmekan, "we would have brought with us fire thousand horses." "If we had ten thousand," rejoined the Vizier, "they would avail us nothing in this narrow place; but God will succour us against them. I know this defile and its straitsness, and there are many places of refuge in it; for I have been here on an expedition with King Omar ben Enumman, what while we laid siege to Constantinople. We camped in this place, and there is here water colder than snow. So come, let us win out of this pass, ere the infidels increase on us and get the start of us to the mountain-top, that they may hurl down rocks upon us and we be powerless to come at them."

So they hurried on, to get out of the defile; but Dhat ed Dewah looked at them and said, "What is it ye fear, ye who have vowed yourselves to God the Most High, to work His will? By Allah, I was imprisoned underground for fifteen years, yet never gained I God in might He did me with me! Fight ye in the way of God; whoseo of ye is killed, Paradise shall be his abode, and whoseo kills, his endeavour shall be for his glory." When they heard her words, their concern and anxiety ceased from them and they stood firm, awaiting the onset of the infidels, who fell on them from all sides, whilst the swords played upon their necks and the cup of death went round amongst them. The Muslims fought right valiantly for the service of God and brought upon His enemies with stroke of sword and
push of pike; whilst Zoumelenan smote upon the men and made the champions bite the dust and their heads fly from their bodies, five by five and ten by ten, till he had done to death a number of them past count. Presently, he looked at the old woman and saw her waving her sword and heartening them, and all who feared fled to her for shelter; but (in secret) she was beckoning to the infidels to kill Sherkan. So troop after troop rushed on him to slay him: but each troop he charged and drove back, with the sword in their loins; and indeed he thought it was the holy man's blessing that gave him the victory over them and said in himself, "Verily God looks on this holy man with eyes of favour and strengthens my prowess against the infidels with the purity of his intent: for I see that they fear me and cannot stand against me, but every one who attacks me turns tall and flees." So they battled the rest of the day, and when the night fell, the Muslims took refuge in a cave, being hard pressed and weary with stress of battle; and five-and-forty of them were slain that day by rocks that the infidels rolled down on them. When they were gathered together, they sought the devotees, but could find no trace of him. This was grieferous to them and they said, "Belike, he hath died a martyr." Quoth Sherkan, "I saw him heartening the men with divine instances and sacriing them with verses of the Koran." Whilst they were talking, behold, the accursed old woman stood before them, with the head of the captain of the ten thousand horse, a noble knight, a fierce champion and an obstinate devil, in her hand. Now one of the Turks had slain him with an arrow, and God hurried his soul to the fire: and when the infidels saw what the Muselm had done with their leader, they all fell on him and hewed him in pieces with their swords, and God hastened with his soul to Paradise. Then the old woman cut off the knight's head and carrying it to Sherkan and Zoumelenan and the Vizier, threw it at their feet; whereupon Sherkan exclaimed, "Praised be God that we see thee in safety, O holy man and devout champion of the Faith!" "O my son," replied she, "I have sought a martyr's death this day, throwing myself midmost the host of the infidels, but they feared me. When ye separated, a holy jealousy seized me for you; so I rushed on the knight his captain, though he was reckoned a match for a thousand horse, and smote him and severed his head from his body. Not one of the infidels could come near me; so I took his head and have brought it to you, that you may be heartened in the holy strife and work out the will of the Lord and the Faithful with your swords. And now I will leave you to strive against the infidels, whilst I go to your army, though they be at the gates of Constantinople, and return with twenty thousand horse to destroy these unbelievers." Quoth Sherkan, "How wilt thou win to them, O holy man, seeing that the valley is blocked up by the infidels on all sides?" "God will veil me from their eyes," replied she, "and they shall not see me; nor if any saw me, would he dare to attack me, for I shall be absorbed in God and He will fend off His enemies from me." "Thou sayst sooth, O holy man," rejoined Sherkan, "for indeed I have been witness of this; and, if thou cannot set out at the first of the night, it will be the better for us." "I will set out at twilights," replied she; "and, an thou wilt, thou shalt go with me, and none shall see thee. If thy brother also have a mind to go, we will take him, but none else; for the shadow of a saint can cover but two." "As for me," said Sherkan, "I will not leave my comrades; but, if my brother please, he will do well to go with thee and win free of this strait; for he is the stronghold of the Muslims and the sword of the Lord of the two worlds; and if it be his pleasure, let him take with him the Vizier Dandan, or whom else he may choose, and send us ten thousand horse to succour us against these villains." So
they agreed to this and Dhat ed Dewahi said, "Wait till I go on before you and look if the infidels be asleep or awake." Quoth they, "We will go with thee and trust our affair to God." "If I do your bidding," replied she, "do not blame me, but blame yourselves; for it is my counsel that you wait till I have spied you out the state of the case." Then said Sherkan, "Go and return quickly, for we shall be awaiting thee." So she went out and Sherkan turned to his brother and said, "Were not this holy man a miracle-worker, he had never slain yonder doughty knight. This is a sufficient measure of his power; and indeed the strength of the infidels is broken by the slaying of their leader, for he was a fierce warrior and a stubborn devil." Whilst they were thus devising the power of the devotee, behold, the cursed old woman returned and promised them victory over the unbelievers; whereupon they thanked her, and she said, "Where is the king of the age, Zoulmekan?" "Here am I," replied he. "Take thy Vizier," said she, "and follow me, that we may win out to Constantinople." Now she had acquainted the infidels with the cheat she had put on the Muslims, and they rejoiced mightily and said, "We shall not be content till we have slain their king in return for the death of our general; for we had no stronger cavalier than he; but when thou bringest him to us, we will carry him to King Afridoun." Then she went out with Zoulmekan and Dendan and walked on before them, saying, "Fare on with the blessing of the Most High God!" They did as she bade them, for the arrow of fate and destiny had fallen on them, and she led them on, through the midst of the Christian camp, till they came to the narrow pass aforesaid, whilst the enemy watched them, but did them no hindrance; for the old woman had enjoined this on them. When Zoulmekan and Dendan saw that the infidels did them no hindrance, the Vizier exclaimed, "By Allah, this is one of the holy man's miracles! Without doubt he is of the elect." "By Allah," said Zoulmekan, "I think the infidels must be blind, for we see them, and they see us not." Whilst they were thus praising the holy man and recounting his virtues, behold, the infidels fell upon them from all sides and seized them, saying, "Is there any one else with you, that we may seize upon him?" Quoth Dendan, "See ye not another man that is before us?" "By the Messiah and the Monks and the Primate and the Metropolitian," replied they, "we see none but you!" And Zoulmekan said, "By Allah, this is a chastisement decreed to us by God!" Then the Christians laid shackles on their feet and set men to guard them during the night, whilst Dhat ed Dewahi fared on and disappeared from their sight. So they fell to lamenting and said, "Verily, the gain saying of pious men leads to greater stress than this, and we are punished by the strait into which we have fallen."

Meanwhile, Sherkan passed the night in the cavern with his companions, and when the day broke, he arose and prayed the morning prayer. Then he and his men made ready to do battle with the infidels, and he encouraged them and promised them all good. Then they sallied out against the Christians, who cried out to them from afar, as soon as they saw them, saying, "O Muslims, we have taken your Sultan and your Vizier that has the ordering of your affairs; and except ye leave fighting us, we will slay you to the last man, but if ye yield to us, we will take you to our king, who will make peace with you, on condition that you leave our country and return to your own land and do us no harm, and we will do you no harm. If you accept, it will be well for you; but if you refuse, you have nothing to hope for but death. So now we have told you, and this is our last word to you." When Sherkan heard this and was certified of the captivity of his brother and the Vizier Dendan, he was greatly troubled and wept; his strength
failed him and he made sure of death, saying inwardly, "I wonder what was the cause of their capture? Did they fail of respect to the holy man or disobey him, or what?"

Then they rushed upon the unbelievers and slew great plenty of them. The valiant, that day, was known from the faint-hearted, and the swords and spears were dyed with blood; for the infidels flocked on them from all sides, as flies flock to wine; but Sherkan and his men ceased not to wage the fight of those who fear not death nor let it hinder them from the pursuit of victory, till the valley ran with blood and the earth was full of the slain. So fought they on till nightfall, when the two parties separated, each to his own place, and the Muslims returned to the grotto, where both victory and loss were manifest to them, and there was no dependence for them but on God and the sword. That day there had been slain of them five-and-thirty men of the chief amirs, and they had put to the sword thousands of the infidels, both horse and foot. When Sherkan saw this, the case was grievous to him, and he said to his comrades, "What shall we do?" "That which God wills," replied they. On the morning of the second day, Sherkan said to the remnant of his troop, "If ye go forth to fight, not one of you will remain alive and we have but little food and water left; so meesee ye would do better to draw your swords and stand at the door of the grotto, to hinder any from entering. Peradventure the holy man may have traversed the Christian host, without being seen of the unbelievers, and may win to Constantinople and return with ten thousand horse, to succour us against the infidels." "This is the better course," replied they, "and there is no doubt of its expediency." So they went out and held the opening of the grotto, standing in its sides; and every one of the infidels who sought to come in, they slew. Thus did they fend off the enemy from the door of the cavern and make head against all their assaults, till the day departed and the night came. With the shadows, by which time King Sherkan had but five-and-twenty men left. Then said the Christians to each other, "When shall these battles have an end? We are weary of fighting the Muslims." And one of them said, "Up and let us fall on them, for there be but five-and-twenty of them left. If we cannot prevail on them to fight, let us light a fire upon them; and if they submit and yield themselves up, we will take them prisoners: else we will leave them to serve as fuel to the fire, so that they shall become a warning to men of understanding. May the Messiah have mercy on their fathers and may the sojourn of the Christians be no abiding place for them!"

So they repaired to the cavern and keeping up faggots in the door-way, set fire to them. Thereupon, Sherkan and his companions made sure of death and yielded themselves up. The unbelievers thought to kill him, but the knight their captain said to those who counselled this, "It is for none but King Afidoun to kill them, that he may quench thereby his thirst for vengeance; wherefore it behoves us to keep them prisoners till the morrow, when we will journey with them to Constantinople and deliver them to King Afidoun, who shall deal with them as he pleases." "This is the right course," replied they; and he commanded to pinion the prisoners and set guards over them. Then, as soon as it was dark, the infidels gave themselves up to feasting and merry-making and called for wine and drink, till they all fell backward. Presently, Sherkan turned to his brother Zoolmekan and said to him, "O my brother, how shall we get free?" "By Allah," replied Zoolmekan, "I know not: for we are here like birds in a cage." At this Sherkan was angry and sighed for excess of wrath and stretched himself, till his bonds broke; whereasupon he went up to the captain of the guard, and taking from his bosom the keys of the fetters, freed Zoul-
mechan and Dendan and the rest of the prisoners. Then
said he, “Let us slay three of these infidels and don their
clothes, we three; so shall we be disguised as Greeks and
pass through them, without their knowing us, and win out
to our army.” “This is no safe counsel,” replied Zoull-
mechan, “for if we kill them, I fear some of our comrades
may hear their groans and the enemy be roused upon us
and kill us. It were better to make our way out of the
pass.” So they agreed upon this and set out. When they
had left the head of the defile a little way behind, they saw
horses picketed and their riders sleeping by them; and
Sherkan said to his brother, “Let us each take one of
these steeds.” So they took five-and-twenty horses, one
for each man, and mounted and rode on till they were out
of reach, whilst God sent sleep upon the infidels for a
secret purpose of His own. Meanwhile, Sherkan gathered
as many swords and spears as he could from the sleepers
and faring on after his comrades, found them awaiting
him, on coast of fire on his account, and said to them,
“Have no fear, since God protects us. I have that to
propose, which messmates will advantage us.” “What is
it?” asked they, and he said, “It is that we all climb to
the mountain top and cry out with one voice, ‘God is most
great!’ The army of Islam is upon you! God is most
great!’ If we do this, their company will surely be dis-
solved, for they are too drunken to find out the trick, but
will think that the Muslim troops have encompassed them
on all sides and have become mingled with them; so they
will fall on one another with their swords, in the confusion
of drunkenness and sleep, and we will cleave them in
sunder with our own brands and the sword will go round
amongst them till the morning.” “This plan is not good,”
replied Zoullmechan. “We should do better to make our
way to our army and keep silence; for, if we cry out, ‘God
is most great!’ they will wake and fall on us, and not one
of us will escape.” “By Allah,” rejoined Sherkan, “though
they be roused on us, I desire urgently that ye fall in with
my plan, for nothing but good can come of it!” So they
agreed and ascending the mountain, shouted out, “God is
most great!” And the hills and trees and stones cried
out with them, “God is most great!” for the fear of the
Almighty. When the unbelievers heard this, they started
up from sleep and did on their armour, crying out to one
another and saying, “By the Messiah, the enemy is upon
us!” Then they fell on each other and slew of their own
men more than any knows save God the Most High. As
soon as it was day, they sought for the captives, but found
them not, and their captains said, “It was the prisoners
who did this; so up and hasten after them, till ye overtake
them, when we will make them quaff the cup of punish-
ment; and let not trouble nor panic possess you.” So
they sprang to horse and rode after the fugitives, nor was
it long before they overtook them and surrounded them.
When Zoullmechan saw this, he was seized with terror and
said to his brother, “What I feared is come upon us, and
now it only remains for us to fight for the faith.” But
Sherkan held his peace. Then Zoullmechan and his com-
panions rushed down from the hill top, crying out, “God
is most great!” and addressed themselves to fight and
sell their lives in the service of the Lord of the Faithful,
when, behold, they heard many voices crying out, “There
is no god but God! God is most great! Peace and salva-
tion upon the Bringer of Glad Tidings, the Admonisher of
Mankind!” So they turned towards the sound and saw a
company of Muslims picking towards them, wherupon
their courage revived and Sherkan ran at the Christians,
crying out, “There is no god but God! God is most
great!” so that the earth shook as with an earthquake
and the unbelievers broke asunder and fled into the moun-

1 i.e. Mohammed.
tains, whither the Muslims followed them with sword and spear and made their heads fly from their bodies, till the day departed and the night came with the darkness. Then the Muslims drew together and passed the night rejoicing; and when the day broke and the morning arose with its light and shine, they saw Behram, the captain of the Medes, and Rustem, the captain of the Turks, advancing to join them, with twenty thousand cavaliers, as they were fierce lions. As soon as they saw Zonilekan, the chief dismounted and saluting him, kissed the earth before him; and he said to them, "Rejoice ye in the glad news of the victory of the Muslims and the discomfiture of the unbelievers!" Then they gave each other joy of their deliverance and of the greatness of the reward that awaited them in the world to come.

Now the manner of the coming of the succours was as follows. When Behram and Rustem and the Chamberlain came in sight of Constantinople, with the Muslim army, they saw that the Christians had manned the walls and towers and set all their strength in order of defence, for that they knew of the approach of the host of Islam through the craft and perfidy of the old woman Dhat ed Dewali. So, when they heard the clash of arms and tramp of horse-hoofs and saw the Mohammedan standards and the ensigns of the Faith of the Unity of God emerging from the dust-clouds and heard the voices of the Muslims chanting the Koran aloud and glorifying the Compassionate One, and the army of Islam drew near, as it were the swollen sea, for the multitude of footmen and horsemen and women and children, they poured forth like a flight of locusts or the streaming of water from the rain-clouds; and the captain of the Turks said to the captain of the Medes, "O Amir, of a truth, we are in jeopardy from the multitude of the foe on the walls. Look at yonder forts and at the folk like the tempestuous sea with its clashing billows. Indeed the infidels out-

number us a hundred times and we cannot be sure but that some spy may inform them that we are without a leader. Verily, we are in peril from those enemies, whose number may not be told and whose extent is limitless, especially in the absence of King Zonilekan and his brother Sherkan and the illustrious Vizier Dandan. If they know of this, they will be emboldened to attack us in their absence and will cut off us to the last man; not one of us will escape alive. So it is my counsel that we each take ten thousand horse and repair to the hermitage of Metrouhana and the meadow of Melonkhan in quest of our brothers and our chief. If thou follow my counsel, it may be we shall be the cause of their deliverance, in case they be hard pressed by the infidels; and if not, no blame will rest on me. But, if we go, it were well that we return quickly, for suspicion is part of prudence." The other fell in with his counsel; so they took twenty thousand horse and set out for the hermitage by cross roads.

To return to Dhat ed Dewali. As soon as she had delivered Zonilekan and his companions into the hands of the infidels, she mounted a swift horse, saying to the Christians, "I mean to rejoin the Muslim army before Constantinople and contrive for their destruction; for I will tell them that their chiefs are dead, and when they hear this, their alliance will be dissolved and their confederation broken up and their host dispersed. Then will I go to King Afridoan and my son King Herlob, and they will sally forth on them with their troops and destroy them, nor leave one of them alive." So she mounted and fared on across country all that night, and at daybreak she sighted the army of Behram and Rustem advancing towards her. So she turned aside into a wayside copse and alighting there, hid her horse among the trees, saying to herself, "Belike they are returning, routed, from the assault of Constantinople." However, as she drew near, she saw
that their standards were not reversed and knew that they were not retreating because of defeat, but that they feared for their king and their chiefs. When she was assured of this, she hastened up to them, running at the top of her speed, like a stubborn Satan as she was, and cried out, "Hasten, O soldiers of the Merciful One, hasten to the holy war against the hosts of Satan!" When Behram saw her, he dismounted and kissing the earth before her, said, "What is behind thee, O friend of God!" Do not ask of evil case and sore disasters," answered she. "Know that, when our comrades had taken the treasure from the hermitage and were on their way back to Constantinople, there came out on them a great host and a fierce of unbelievers." And she repeated to them the story, in such wise as to fill them with trouble and terror, and added, "The most of them are dead, and there are but five and twenty left." "O holy man," said Behram, "when didst thou leave them?" "But last night," replied she. "Glory be to God," exclaimed he, "Who hath rolled up the distance for thee like a carpet, so that thou hast sped thus, walking upon thy feet and leant upon a palm-tree staff? But thou art one of the friends of God, that fly like birds, when possessed by the stress of His commandment!" Then he mounted his horse, perplexed and confounded for that which he had heard from the lying old bald man and saying, "There is no power and no virtue but in God the Most High! Verily our labour is lost and our hearts are heavy within us, for our king is a prisoner and those who are with him!" Then they fared on in haste and stayed not the whole of that day and night, till at daybreak they reached the head of the pass and heard Zoulmekean and Sherkan shouting, "There is no god but God! God is most great!" Whereupon they drove at the unbelievers and overwhelmed them, as the torrent overwhelms the plains,

1 *i.e.*, "What news bringsest thou, O valiant?"
He joined us, his vengeance to wreak on all that believe not in God; indeed, it is known to the folk what came of our stride and our fray. They slew us some, but they wove on the morrow in Paradise, each lodged in a palace on high, whereasunder a river stray.

When Zoulinekan had made an end of reciting these verses, his brother Sherkan gave him joy of his safety and forced marches to rejoin their array.

Meanwhile, Dhat ed Dowabi, after he had spoken with Rustem and Behram, returned to the coppice, where she took her horse and mounting, sped on, till she drew near the host of the Muslims that lay leaguer before Constantinople, when she lighted down from her steed and led it to the Chamberlain's pavilion. When she saw her, he signed to her with his hand and said, “Welcome, O pious recluse!” Then he questioned her of what had befallen, and she repeated to him her disquieting and deluding report, saying, “Indeed I fear for the Amir Rustem and Behram, for that I met them on the way and sent them and their following to the King and his companions. They are but twenty thousand horse, and the unbelievers are more in number than they; so I would now have thee send of the rest of thy troops in haste to their succour, lest they be slain to the last man.” And she said to them, “Hasten! Hasten!” When the Chamberlain and the Muslims heard these her words, their hearts sank within them and they wept; but she said to them, “Ask aid of God and be patient under this affliction, taking example by those that have been before you of the people of Islam; for God hath prepared Paradise, with its palaces, for those who die martyrs; and needs must all die, but death is most praiseworthy, when it comes in fighting for the Faith.”

When the Chamberlain heard this speech of the accursed old woman, he called for the Amir Behram's brother, a cavalier named Terkash, and choosing out for him ten thousand intrepid veterans, bade him set out at once. So he departed forthright and marched all that day and the next night, till he neared the Muslims. When the day dawned, Sherkan saw the dust of them and feared for his companions, saying, “If these troops that are nearing us be Muslims, our victory is assured; but if they be Christians, there is no gain saying the decrees of Fate.” Then he turned to his brother Zoulinekan and said to him, “Fear not, for I will ransom thee with my life from destruction. If these be Muslim troops, then were it an increase of God's favours; but if they be our foes, there is nothing for it but to fight them. Yet do I long to see the holy man once again before I die, so he may pray for me that I may not die except as a martyr.” Whilst he was thus speaking, behold, there appeared the banners with the words, “There is no god but God and Mohammed is His Apostle,” inscribed on them, and he cried out to the new-comers, saying, “How is it with the Muslims?” “They are in weal and safety,” replied they; “and we come not hither but out of concern for you.” Then the chief of the successors dismounted and kissing the earth before Sherkan, said, “O my lord, the Sultan and the Vizier Daudan and Rustem and my brother Behram, are they all in safety?” “They are all well,” answered the prince; “but who brought thee tidings of us?” “It was the holy man,” said Terkash. “He told us that he had met my brother Behram and Rustem and had sent them to you and also that the infidels had encompassed you and were more in number than you; yet means you the case is the contrary of this and that you are victorious.” “And how did the holy man reach you?” asked Sherkan. “Walking on his feet,” replied the Amir; “and he had compassed, in the space of a single day and night, ten days' journey for a diligent horseman.” “Verily, he is a friend of God,” said Sherkan; “but where is he now?” Quoth Terkash, “We left him with our troops,
the people of the Faith, encouraging them to do battle with the infidels and rebels." Therewith Sherkan was glad and thanked God for their own deliverance and that of the holy man and commended the deed to the mercy of God, saying, "This was written in the Book of Fate." Then they set out for Constantinople by forced marches, and whilst they were on the road thither, behold, a cloud of dust arose before them and spread till the prospect was hidden and the day darkened by it. Sherkan looked at it and said, "Verily, I fear lest this be the infidels who have routed the army of Islam, for that this dust covers the country and biets out the two horizons." Presently there appeared midmost the dust a pillar of darkness and came towards them, blacker than the blackness of (evil) fortune and more dreadful than the terrors of the Day of Judgment. Home and foot hastened up to look at it and know its meaning, when, behold, they saw it to be the recluse aforesaid; so they crowded round him to kiss his hands, and he cried out, "O people of the best of men, the lamp of the darkness, the infidels have overcome the Muslims by craft, for they fell upon them in their tents, whilst they deemed themselves in safety, and made a sore slaughter of them; so hasten to the aid of the believers in the unity of God and deliver them from those that deny Him!" When Sherkan heard this, his heart was sore troubled and he alighted from his horse, in amazement, and kissed the recluse's hands and feet. In like wise did his brother Zoulmekan and the rest of the troops, except the Vizier Dendan, who dismounted not, but said, "By Allah, my heart revolts from this devotee, for I never knew aught but evil come of these that make a show of devotion to religion. Leave him and hasten to rejoin your comrades, for this fellow is of those that are outcast from the gate of the mercy of the Lord of the Two Worlds! How often have I come out to war with King Omar ben Emunman and trodden the earth of those lands!" "Put away from thee this foul thought," said Sherkan. "Hast thou not seen this holy man excite the faithful to battle, reckoning nought of spears and swords? Wherefore, slander him not, for slander is blameworthy and the flesh of pious folk is poisoned. Look how he encourages us to battle, and did not God love him, He had not rolled up the distance for him (like a carpet), after He had aforetime cast him into grievous torment." Then Sherkan let bring a Nubian mule for her riding and said to her, "Mount, O pious man, God-fearing and holy!" But she refused, saying self-denial, that she might attain her end; and they knew not that the pretended devotee was such an one as he of whom the poet says:

He prayeth and fasteth awh' for an end that he hath in view. When once he has gained his end, fasting and prayer, adieu!

So she walked among the horsemen and the footmen, like a crafty fox meditating an assault, and began to uplift her voice, chanting the Koran aloud and celebrating the praises of the Compassionate One. Then they pressed forward till they reached the Mohammedan camp, where Sherkan found the Muslims in a state of confusion and the Chamberlain upon the brink of retreat, whilst the sword wrought havoc among the faithful, good and bad. Now Night
Greeks, saying, "Throw me down a cord that I may tie thereunto this letter, which do ye carry to King Afridoun and my son King Heredoub, that they may read it and do as is written therein." So they let down a string and she tied thereto a letter, to the following purport, "From the chiefest of calamities and the greatest of afflictions, Dhat ed-Dewali, to King Afridoun. Know that I have contrived a device for the destruction of the Muslims; so rest you quiet. I made their Sultan and the Vizier Dandari prisoners and returned to their camp and acquainted them therewith, whereupon their power was broken and their strength weakened. Moreover, I have conferred on them to send ten thousand men under the Amir Torkash to the succour of the captives, and there be now but few men left with the besiegers. Wherefore, it is my counsel that ye sally forth, with all your power, whilst it is yet day, and fall on them in their tents and slay them to the last man; for the Messiah looks down upon you and the Virgin favours you; and I hope that the Messiah will not forget this that I have done." When this letter came to King Afridoun, he rejoiced greatly and sending at once for King Heredoub, read the letter to him, whereby he was exceeding glad and said, "See the craft of my mother; verily it dispenses with swords, and her aspect stands in stead of the terrors of the Day of Fear." "May the Messiah not bereave us of her," rejoined Afridoun, "nor deprive her of her craft and knavery!" Then he gave orders for the sally, and the news was noise abroad in the city. So the Christian troops and soldiers of the Cross drew their keen sabres and saluted forth of the city, shouting out their impious war-cries and blaspheming the Lord of all creatures. When the Chamberlain saw them, he said, "Behold, the Chris-
tents; whereupon the Muslims were about to break and retreat, when behold, up came Sherkan, with the rest of their troops and the standards of the believers in the Unity of God, and fell upon the infidels, followed by Zoulmekan and the Vizier Dandam and the Amir Behram and Rustem and Torkash. When the Christians saw this, they lost their senses and their reason fled, and the dust clouds rose till they covered the country, whilst the true believers joined their pious comrades. Then Sherkan accosted the Chamberlain and praised him for his steadfastness, and he in turn gave him joy of his timely succour. Therewith the Muslims rejoiced and their hearts were fortified; so they rushed upon the foe and devoted themselves to God, in the battle for the Faith. When the infidels saw the Mohammedan standards and read thereon the words proclaiming the Unity of God, they shrieked aloud and said, "Wo"! and "Rain!" and besought succour of the priests and monks. Moreover they fell to crying upon Jesus and Mary and the abhorrent Cross and stayed their hands from the battle, whilst King Afridoun went up to King Herdoub (to consult with him), for the two kings stood one at the head of each wing. Now there was with them also a famous cavalier named Lawijn, who was in command of the centre, and the infidels drew out in battle-array; but indeed they were full of alarm and disquiet. Meanwhile, the Muslims armed their forces and Sherkan came to his brother Zoulmekan and said to him, "O king of the age, doubtless they mean to joust, and that is also what we desire; but it is my wish to set in our vanward battle the stoutest-hearted of our men; for wise ordering is the half of life." "As thou wilt, O man of good counsel," replied the Sultan. "It is my wish," added Sherkan, "to be myself in the centre of the line, with the Vizier Dandam on my left and thee on my right, whilst Behram and Rustem command the right and left wings; and thou, O mighty King, shalt be under the standards and the ensigns, for that thou art our stay and upon thee, after God, is our dependence, and we will all be thy ransom from ought that can harm thee." Zoulmekan thanked him and the battle-cries arose and the sabres were drawn; when, behold, there came forth a cavalier from the Grecian ranks and as he drew near, they saw that he was mounted on a slow-paced mule, fleeting with her master from the shock of swords. Her housings were of white silk, surmounted by a carpet of Cashmere stuff, and on her back sat a grey-bearded old man of comely and reverend aspect, clad in a gown of white wool. He spurred her on till he came to the Muslims, to whom said he, "I am an ambassador to you, and all an ambassador has to do is to deliver his message; so give me a safe conduct and the right of speech, that I may do my errand to you." "Thou art in safety," replied Sherkan; "fear neither stroke of sword nor thrust of lance." Thereupon the old man dismounted and taking the cross from his neck, (laid it) before the Sultan and carried himself humbly to him, after the fashion of one who hopes for fair treatment. Then said the Muslims to him, "What is thy news?" He answered, "I am an ambassador from King Afridoun, whom I counselled to avert the destruction of all those many bodies and images of the Compassionates; and it seemed good to him to stop the shedding of blood and limit the strife to the encounter of two horsemen in battle. So he agreed to this and says to you, 'Verily, I will ransom my troops with my life; so let the Muslim king do likewise and ransom his army with his life. If he kill me, there will be no stability left in the army of the Greeks, and if I kill him, it will be the like with the Muslims.'" When Sherkan heard this, he said, "O monk, we agree to this, for it is just; and behold I will joust with him, for I am champion of the Muslims, even
as he of the Christians; and if he slay me, he will have gained the victory and there will remain for the Muslim army nothing but flight. So return to him, O monk, and tell him that the combat shall be for to-morrow, seeing that to-day we are weary with our journey; but after rest there shall be neither reproach nor blame." So the monk returned, relecing, to King Afridoun and King Herdoub and told them what Sherkan had said, whereas Afridoun was exceeding grieved and lightened of anxiety and trouble and said in himself, "No doubt but this Sherkan is the hardest hitter of them with the sword and the darest at push of pike; and when I have slain him, their hearts will fail them and their strength will be broken." Now Dhat ed Dewahi had written to King Afridoun of this and told him that Sherkan was a cavailer of cavaliers and a champion of champions and had warned him against him; but Afridoun was a stalwart cavailer, who fought in many a fashion; he could hurl stones and javelins and smite with the iron mace and feared not the doughtiest of prowess in the dint of war. So when he heard from the monk that Sherkan agreed to joust, he well-nigh lost his reason for stress of joy, for that he had confidence in himself and deemed that none could stand against him. Then the infidels passed the night in joy and merry-making and wine-drinking, and as soon as it was day, the two armies drew out in battle array, with their brown spears and white swords. Presently, they saw a cavailer pricking out into the plain, mounted on a stout and swift charger equipped for war: he was of great stature and was clad in a cuirass of steel made for stress of battle. On his breast he wore a jewelled mirror and in his hand he bore a keen scimitar and a lance of kheleng wood of curious Frankish workmanship. He uncovered his face and cried out, saying, "Whoso knoweth me not shall see who I am. I am Afridoun, he who is overcome by the blessing of Shewah Dhat ed Dewahi." Before he had made an end of speaking, Sherkan, the champion of the Muslims, spurred out to meet him, mounted on a sorrel horse worth a thousand dinars of red gold, with housings embroidered in pearls and jewels, and girt with a sword of Warren's indi steel, that shone through necks and made hard ventures easy. He drove his charger between the two armies, whilst the horsemen all gazed on him, and cried out to Afridoun, saying, "Out on thee, O accursed one, doth thou think me as one of the horsemen thou hast met, that cannot stand against thee in the joust?" Then they rushed upon one another and came together like two mountains crashing or two seas breasting each against each. So they advanced and retreated and drew together and parted and ceased not to joust and battle with stroke of sword and thrust of spear, whilst the two armies looked on. Some said, "Afridoun will conquer," and other some, "Sherkan;" and they stayed not their hands from the battle, till the clamour of the bystanders subsided and the dust-clouds rose and the day waned and the sun began to grow pale. Then King Afridoun cried out to Sherkan, saying, "By the virtue of the Messiah and the True Faith, thou art a doughty horseman and a stalwart fighting man, but thou art guileful and thy nature is not that of the free-born and mescemeth thy fashion is other than praiseworthy nor is thy fighting that of a prince; for see, thy people even thee with slaves and bring thee on a charger other than thine, that thou mayst (mount him and) return to the battle. But by the virtue of the Messiah, thy fighting fatigues me and I am weary of cutting and thrusting with thee; and if thou wast purposed to do battle with me to-

1 See Vol. I. p. 159 note.
night, thou wouldst not change aught of thy harness nor thy horse, till thou hadst shown the cavaliers thy valour and skill in fight." When Sherkan heard him say that his own folk esteemed him with slaves, he was angry and turned towards his men, meaning to sign to them and bid them not prepare him change of armour or horse, when, behold, Afridoun shook his javelin in the air and hurled it at Sherkan. Now, when the latter turned, he found none behind him and knew that this was a trick of the accursed infidel; so he wheeled round in haste and seeing the javelin coming at him, swerved from it, till his head was level with the pommel of his saddle. The javelin grazed his breast and pierced the skin, for Sherkan was high-bosomed: so he gave one cry and swooned away. Then the accursed Afridoun was glad, thinking that he had slain him, and called to the Christians to rejoice, whereas the infidels were encouraged and the true believers wept. When Zoumnek saw his brother reeling from side to side in his saddle, so that he had well-nigh fallen, he went cavaliers to his succour; whereupon the infidels drove at the Muslims and the two hosts joined battle, whilst the keen Yemen blades played among them. The first to reach Sherkan were Dandan and Rustem and Behram, who found him on the point of falling off his horse; so they stayed him in his saddle and carried him to Zoumnek; then giving him in charge to his servants, returned to the battle. Then the strife redoubled and the weapons clashed, and there was nought to be heard but the roar of the battle nor to be seen but blood flowing and necks bending beneath the swords; nor did the swords cease to play on men's necks nor the strife to rage more and more, till the most part of the night was past and the two hosts were weary of battle. So they called a truce and each army returned to its tents, whilst all the infidels repaired to King Afridoun and kissed the earth before him, and the priests and monks wished him joy of his victory over Sherkan. Then he went up into Constantinople and sat down upon his throne; and King Hendoub came to him and said, "May the Messiah strengthen thine arm and cease never to be thy helper and hearken to the prayers of my pious mother on thy behalf! Know that the Muslims can make no stand, now they have lost Sherkan." "To-morrow," replied Afridoun, "shall end the war, for I will seek out Zoumnek and slay him, and their army shall turn tail and take to flight." Meanwhile, Zoumnek returned to his tent thinking of nothing but his brother, and going in to the latter's pavilion, found him in evil plight; whereas he was sore troubled and sent for the Vizier Dandan and the Amirs Behram and Rustem, that he might take counsel with them. When they entered, they were all of accord to summon the physicians to treat Sherkan, and they wept and said, "The age will not lightly aford his like!" They watched by him all that night, and towards morning there came to them the pretended recluso, weeping. When Zoumnek saw her, he rose to receive her; and she stroked Sherkan's wound with her hand, chanting somewhat of the Koran and repeating some of the signs of the Compassionate One. Then she kept watch over him till the day, when he came to himself and opening his eyes, moved his tongue in his month and spoke. At this Zoumnek rejoiced, saying, "Verily the blessing of the holy man hath taken effect on him!" And Sherkan said, "Praised be God for recovery! indeed, I am well now. Yonder accursed one played me false, and but that I swerved aside quicklier than lightning, the javelin had pierced me through and through. So praised be God for my safety! How is it with the Muslims?" "They weep for thee," answered Zoumnek. Quoth Sherkan, "I am well and in good case; but where is the holy man?" Now she was sitting by him and said, "At thy head." So he turned to her
and kissed her hand; and she said, "O my son, it behoves thee to arm thyself with patience, and God shall make great thy reward; for the guerdon is measured by that which has been endured." Quoth Sherkan, "Pray for me," and she did so. As soon as it was morning and the day arose and shone, the Muslims sallied out into the field, and the Christians made ready to cut and thrust. Then the host of the Muslims advanced and offered battle; and Zoulmekan and Africoum made ready to tilt at one another. But when Zoulmekan sallied out into the field, there came with him Dengdan and Behram and the Chamberlain, saying, "We will be thy sacrifice." "By the Holy House and the Well Zemzem and the Steed of Abraham," I exclaimed he, "I will not be hindered from going forth against these barbarians." So he rode out into the field and played with sword and spear, till both armies wondered; then he rushed upon the right wing of the Greek army and slew two knights and in like manner dealt he with the left wing. Then he stayed his steed in the midst of the field and cried out, "Where is Africoum, that I may make him drink the cup of humiliation?" But King Herdoub con- jured Africoum not to budge from the field, saying, "O King, it was thy turn yesterday: to-day it is mine. I reckon not of my prowess." So he pricked out towards Zoulmekan, with a sabre in his hand and under him a jet black horse, swift as he were Alber, he that was Anir's horse, even as says the poet:

He viz with the glance of the eye on a swift-footed steed, That fares as it had a mind to escape Fate.
The hue of his bile is the blackest of all things black, Like night, when the shadows shroud it, in shade shrouded.
The sound of his neighing troubles the hearts of men, As it were thunder that echoes in heaven's gate.
If he run a race with the wind, he leads the way. Nor can the lightning outstrip him, early or late.

1 A chapel so called in the Temple at Mecca.

Then each rushed upon the other, girdling himself from his blows and showing the rare qualities that were in him and the wonders of his prowess; and they fell to advancing and retreating and ceased not to flee and return to the attack and wheel hither and thither, till the breasts of the bystanders were strained (for anxiety) and they were weary of waiting for the event. At last, Zoulmekan cried out and rushing upon Herdoub, King of Cæsarea, dealt him such a blow that he broke his head from his body and made an end of him. When the infidels saw this, they all ran at Zoulmekan, who met them in mid-field, and they fell to cutting and thrusting, till the blood ran in streams. Then the Muslims cried out, "God is most great!" and "There is no god but God!" and invoked blessings on the Giver of Good Tidings, the Admonisher of Mankind, and there befell a great battle. But God sent help to the faithful and confusion to the infidels. The Vizier Dengdan shouted, "Avenge King Omar ben Emaam and his son Sherkan!" and baring his head, cried out to the Turks. Now there were beside him more than twenty thousand horse, who all charged with him as one man, and the unbelievers found nothing for it but flight. So they turned their backs to flee, whilst the keen sabres wrought havoc amongst them and the Muslims slew of them that day more than fifty thousand cavaliers and took more than that: and much people also were slain at the going in of the gates, by reason of the greatness of the crowd, whilst the Christians mounted the walls, fearing an assault. Then the Muslims returned to their tents, fortified and victorious, and King Zoulmekan went in to his brother, whom he found in the most joyous case. So he returned thanks to the Bountiful, the Exalted One and gave Sherkan joy of his deliverance. "Verily," answered he, "we are all Night under the benediction of this holy and God-fearing man, ru.
nor would you have been victorious, but for his effectual prayers; for all day he hath never ceased to invoke victory on the Muslims. I found strength return to me, when I heard you cry, 'God is most great!' for then I knew you had gotten the better of your enemies. But now tell me, O my brother, what befoil thee." So he told him all that had passed, how he had slain the accursed Haroud and he had gone to the malediction of God; and Sherkan praised his prowess. When Dhat ad Dewahl heard tell of her son's death, the blood fled from her face and her eyes ran over with streaming tears; however, she kept her counsel and feigned to the Muslims that she was glad and wept for excess of joy: but she said in herself, "By the virtue of the Messiah, thine remains no profit of my life, if I make not his heart bleed for his brother Sherkan, even as he has made mine bleed for King Herdoub, the mainstay of the Christian faith and the hosts of the Cross!"

The Vizier Dand and Zoulmekan and the Chamberlain abode with Sherkan, till they had dressed his wound and anointed it; after which they gave him medicines and he began to recover his strength: whereat they were exceeding glad and told the troops, who rejoiced greatly, saying, "To-morrow he will ride with us and take part in the siege." Then said Sherkan to them, "You have fought all day and are weary, and it behoves that you return to your tents and sleep and not watch." So they went away all to their tents and there remained none with Sherkan but Dhat ad Dewahl and a few servants. He talked with her awhile, then lay down to rest, he and his servants, and soon sleep overcame them all and they were as dead men. But the old woman abode awake and looking at Sherkan, saw that he was drowned in sleep. So she sprang to her feet, as she were a bold she-bear or a speckled snake, and drew from her girdle a poisoned knife, that would have melted a rock, if laid thereon; then going up to Sherkan, she drew the knife across his throat and cut off his head. After this, she went up to the sleeping servants and cut off their heads also, lest they should awake. Then she left the tent and made for the Sultan's pavilion, but finding the guards awake, turned to that of the Vizier. He was reading the Koran and seeing her, said, "Welcome, O holy man!" When she heard this, her heart trembled and she said, "The reason of my coming hither at this time is that I heard the voice of a friend of God and am going to him." Then she went away, but the Vizier said to himself, "By Allah, I will follow the holy man to-night!" So he rose and went after her: but the accursed old woman heard his footsteps and knew that he was following her; wherefore she feared discovery and said in herself, "Except I put him off with some trick, he will discover me." So she turned and said to him from afar, "Harkye, Vizier, I am going after this saint, that I may know who he is; and after I will ask his leave for thee to join him. Then I will come back and tell thee; for I fear to let thee accompany me, without his leave, lest he take umbrage at seeing thee with me." When the Vizier heard this, he was abashed and knew not what to answer; so he left her and returning to his tent, would have slept; but sleep was not favourable to him and the world was straitened upon him. So he rose and went out, saying in himself, "I will go talk with Sherkan till the morning." But when he came to Sherkan's tent, he found the blood running like a rivulet and saw the servants lying dead. At this he gave a cry that aroused all who were asleep, and they hastened to him and seeing the blood streaming, set up a clamour of weeping and lamentation. The noise awoke the Sultan, who enquired what was the matter, and they said to him, "Sherkan and his servants are murdered." So he rose in haste and entering the tent, saw his brother's headless trunk and the Vizier by it shrinking aloud. At this sight, he swooned away and all
the troops stood round him, weeping and crying aloud, till
he came to himself; when he looked at Sherkan and wept
sore, whilst all who were present did the like. Then said
Zoulmakan, "Know ye who did this, and how is it I see
not the reclus, him who hath put away the things of the
world?" Quoth the Vizier, "And who should have been
the cause of this our affliction, save that devoutee of Satan?
By Allah, my heart shrunk from him from the first, because
I know that all who profess to be absorbed in the things
of the faith are corrupt and treacherous!" And he told
the King how he would have followed the devotee, but he
forbade him; whereupon the folk broke out into weeping
and lamentation and besought Him who is ever near at
hand, Him who answers prayer, to cause the false re-
cus, who denied His evidences, to fall into their hands.
Then they laid Sherkan out and buried him in the moun-
tain aforesaid, mourning over his renowned virtues, after
which they looked for the opening of the city-gate; but it
opened not and none appeared to them on the walls; whereat they wondered exceedingly, and King Zoulmakan
said, "By Allah, I will not turn back from them, though
I tarry here years and years, till I take my weal of my
brother Sherkan and lay Constantinople in ruins and slay
the King of the Nazarines, even if death overtake me and
I be at rest from this sorry world!" Then he brought out
the treasure he had taken from the hermitage of Metron-
omena and mustering the troops, divided it amongst them,
nor was there one of them but he gave him what contented
him. Moreover, he called together three hundred horse of
every division and said to them, "Do ye send succours to
your families, for I am resolved to camp here, till I have
taken my revenge for my brother Sherkan, even if I die in
this place." Then he summoned couriers and gave them
letters and charged them to do the soldiers' errands to
their families and let them know that they were safe and
in good heart, but that they were encamped before Con-
stantinople, resolved either to destroy it or perish, and
that, though they should abide these months and years,
they would not depart thence till they had taken the city.
Moreover, he bade Danar write to his sister Nuzhat ez
Zaman, acquainting her with what had befallen them and
with their situation and commending his child to her care,
since that, when he went out to war, his wife was near her
delivery and must needs by that time have been brought
to bed; and if she had given birth to a son, he charged
the messengers to hasten their return and bring him the
news. Then he gave them money and they set out at
once, and all the people came out to take leave of them
and entrust them with the money and the messages they
wished to send to their families. After they had departed,
Zoulmakan turned to the Vizier and commanded him to
push forward with the army against the city walls. So the
troops advanced, but found none on the walls, whereas
they marvelled and Zoulmakan was troubled.

To return to Dhat ez Dewahi. As soon as she had slain
Sherkan, she hastened to the walls of Constantinople and
called out in the Greek tongue to the guards, to throw her
down a rope. Quoth they, "Who art thou?" and she said,
"I am the princess Dhat ez Dewahi." They knew her and
throw her down a rope, to which she tied herself, and they
drew her up into the city. Then she went in to King
Afridoun and said to him, "What is this I hear from the
Muslims? They say that my son King Herdoub is slain." He
answered, "It is true!" and when she heard this, she
shrieked out and wept so grievously that she made Afridoun
and all who were present weep also. Then she told the
King how she had slain Sherkan and thirty of his servants,
whereat he rejoiced and thanked her and kissed her hands
and exhorted her to resignation for the loss of her son.
"By the Messiah," said she, "I will not rest content with
serve me but I must kill Zoulmekan and all the princes of Islam.

Meanwhile, the Muslims passed three days in concern and anxiety, and on the fourth day, they saw a knight on the wall, holding a bow and about to shoot an arrow to which was fastened a letter. So they waited till he had shot, and the King bade the Vizier Dendan take the letter and read it. He did so, and when Zoulmekan heard its purport, his eyes filled with tears and he shrieked for anguish at the old woman’s peril, and Dendan said, “By Allah, my heart shrank from her!” “How could this traitress impose upon us twice?” exclaimed Zoulmekan. “By Allah, I will not depart hence till I fill her kase with molten lead and set her in a cage, as men do birds, then bind her with her hair and crucify her at the gate of Constantinople.” Then he addressed himself again to the leaguer of the city, promising his men that, if it should be taken, he would divide its treasures equally among them. After this, he bethought him of his brother and wept sore; and his tears ceased not to flow, till his body was wasted with grief, as it were a book. But the Vizier Dendan came in to him and said, “Take comfort and be consoled; thy brother died but because his hour was come, and there is no profit in this mourning.”

How well says the poet:

That which is not to be shall by no means be brought To pass, and that which is to be shall come, unawared,
Even at the time ordained: but he that knoweth not The truth is still deceived and finds his hopes grown naught.

Wherefore do thou leave this weeping and lamentation and strengthen thy heart to bear arms.” “O Vizier,” replied Zoulmekan, “my heart is heavy for the death of my brother and father and our absence from our native land, and my mind is concerned for my subjects.” Thereupon the Vizier and the bystanders wept; but they ceased not
from the legions of Constantinople, till, after awhile, news arrived from Baghdad, by one of the Amir's, that the Sultan's wife had given birth to a son and that the princess Nesheh ez Zaman had named him Kamzakan. Moreover, his sister wrote to him that the boy bid fair to be a prodigy and that she had commanded the priests and preachers to pray for them from the pulpits; also, that they were all well and had been blessed with abundant rains and that his comrade the stoker was in the enjoyment of all prosperity, with slaves and servants to attend upon him; but that he was still ignorant of what had befallen him. Zoumekejan rejoiced greatly at this news and said to the Vizier Dendan, "Now is my hope fulfilled and my back strengthened, in that I have been vouchsafed a son. Wherefore am I minded to leave mourning and let others make recitations of the Koran over my brother's tomb and do amends for his account." Quoth the Vizier, "It is well." Then he caused tents to be pitched over his brother's tomb and they gathered together such of the troops as could repeat the Koran. Some fell to reciting the Koran, whilst others chanted the litanies of the praise of God, and thus they did till the morning, when Zoumekejan went up to the tomb of his brother Sherkan and shedding copious tears, repeated the following verses:

They bore him forth, whilst all who went behind him wept and cried
Such cries as Moses gave, when God brake down the mountain side,
Till to a tomb they came, whose grave seemed dug in all men's hearts
By whose the utility of God is held and glorified.
I had not thought, or ever thought, that they should bear thee forth upon the hither. To see my joy upon the hands of men uplifted ride
Nor, till they laid thee in the grave, could I have ever dreamed that since could leave their place in heaven and in the dark earth hide.
Is the indweller of the tomb the hostage of a pit, in which, for that his face is there, splendid and light abides
So, pain has taken up itself to bring him back to life! Now that his body's hid, his fame's shown forth and magnified.

When he had made an end of reciting these verses, he wept and all the troops wept with him; then he threw himself on the tomb, wild with grief, and the Vizier repeated the words of the poet:

That which fleets past thou hast left and won what endureth for aye,
And even as thou art the stake, that were and have passed away
And yet it was not of thy will that thou quittedst this house of the world;
For here hast thou joy and delight of all that befell in thy day.
How oft hast thou been thyself a succour and shield from the foe,
When the arrows and javelins of war flew thick in the midst of the fray!
I see that this world's but a cheat and a vanity after all. And yet to seek out Truth all creatures desire and essay!
The Lord of the Epigean vouchsafeth thee in heaven to dwell! And the Guide assign thee therein a goodly sojourn, I pray!
I bid thee sit down with a sigh and I see, for the loss of thee, The East and the West enshrouded with mourning and dismay.

When the Vizier had finished, he wept sore, and the tears fell from his eyes, like a network of pearls. Then came forward one of Sherkan's boon-companions, weeping till his eyes resembled rivers, and recalled the dead man's noble qualities, reciting the following cinquains:

Where be thy giving, alas? and the hand of thy bounty shed? They lie in the earth, and my body is wasted for dreariness.
O guide of the camel-litters, (may God still guide thee to keep) My tears on my cheeks have written, in characters of red.
That which would both rejoice thee and fill thee with palms and drest!
By Allah! let me and my heart, not a word of thee is said. Nor doth the thought of thy grace and thy glory pass through my hand,
But that mine eyes are wounded by dint of the tears I shed! Yea, if to rest on another my glance be ever lost.
May my life be drawn in slander: by looking for the dead!

Then Zoumekejan and Dendan wept sore and the whole army lamented aloud; after which they all withdrew to

1 i.e. protector of the women that ride therein.
their tents; and Zoumnekan turned to Dendan and took counsel with him concerning the conduct of the war. On this wise they passed days and nights, whilst Zoumnekan was weighed down with grief and concern, till at last he said to the Vizier, “I have a mind to hear stories of adventures and chronicles of kings and tales of folk oppressed of love, so hapy God may make this to solace the heavy anxiety that is on my heart and do away from me weeping and lamentation.” “O King,” replied Dendan, “it nought but hearing pleasant tales of bygone kings and peoples and stories of folk oppressed of love, and so forth can dispel thy trouble, the thing is easy, for I had no other business, in the lifetime of thy late father, than to tell him stories and repeat verses to him; so, this very night, I will tell thee a story of a lover and his beloved, which shall lighten thy heart.” When Zoumnekan heard this, his heart yearned after that which the Vizier promised him and he did nothing but watch for the coming of the night, that he might hear what he had to tell. So, no sooner had the night closed in, than he bade light the lamps and the candles and bring all that was needful of meat and drink and perfumes and what not and sending for Dendan, Restem, Behnam, Terkash and the Grand Chamberlain, turned to the Vizier and said, “O Vizier, behold, the night is come and hast let down its veils over us, and we desire that thou tell us that which thou didst promise us.” “With all my heart,” replied the Vizier. “Know, O august King, that I have heard tell a story of a lover and a loved one and of the discourse between them and of the rare and pleasant things that befell them, a story such as does away care from the heart and dispels sorrow like unto that of the patriarch Jacob: and it is as follows:

STORY OF TAJ EL MULOUK AND THE PRINCESS DUNYA.

There stood once, behind the mountains of Isphahan, a town called the Green City, in which dwelt a king named Sulaiman Shah, a man of virtue and beneficence, just, generous and loyal, to whom travellers resorting from all parts, for his renown was noise abroad in all cities and countries; and he reigned over the country for many years, in all honour and prosperity, save that he had neither wife nor child. Now he had a vizier who was akin to him in goodness and generosity, and one day, he sent for him and said to him, ‘O my Vizier, my heart is heavy and my patience at end and my strength falls me, for that I have neither wife nor child. This is not of the fashion of kings that rule over all, princes and beggars; for they rejoice in leaving behind them children, who shall succeed them and by whom both their number and strength are multiplied.

Quoth the Prophet (whom God bless and preserve), ‘Marry and engender and multiply, that I may boast myself of you over the peoples on the Day of Resurrection.’” So what is thy counsel, O Vizier? Advise me what is fitting to be done.” When the Vizier heard this, the tears streamed from his eyes and he replied, “God forbid, O king of the age, that I should speak on that which is of the pertinence of the Compassionate One! Wilt thou have me cast into the fire by the wrath of the All-powerful King? Buy a concubine.” “Know, O Vizier,” rejoined the King, “that when a prince buys a female slave, he knows neither her condition nor her lineage and thus cannot tell if she be of mean extraction, that she may abstain from her, or of gentle blood, that he may be intimate with her. So, if he have commerce with her, bolikhe she will conceive by him and her son be a hypocrite, a tyrant and a shedder of
blood. Indeed such a woman may be likened to a salt
soil, which, if one till it, yields only worthless crops;
for it may be the son in question will be obnoxious to
the wrath of his Lord, doing not that which He com-
mandeth him; neither abstaining from that which He for-
biddeth him. Wherefore I will never risk being the cause
of this, through the purchase of a concubine; and it is my
will, therefore, that thou demand for me in marriage the
daughter of some one of the kings, whose lineage is known
and whose beauty is renowned. If thou canst direct me
to some king's daughter of the Muslims, who is a woman
of good birth and piety, I will seek her hand and marry
her before witnesses, that the favour of the Lord of all
creatures may accrue to me thereby. O King,' said the
Vizier, 'God hath fulfilled thy need and hath brought thee
to thy desire: for it hath come to my knowledge that King
Zehr Shah, Lord of the White Country, hath a daughter
of surpassing beauty, whom no poet fails to describe: she
hath not her equal in this age, being perfect in beauty
and symmetry, with melting black eyes and long hair,
slender-waisted and heavy-lipped. When she draws nigh,
she seduces, and when she turns her back, she slays,
raffishing heart and sight, even as says of her the poet:
A peculiar one! her shape confounds the branch of the cassia tree; Not
sun nor moon can with her face brightness equal be.
Mesmerised, the water of her mouth is honey bland with wine; Ay, and
her teeth are finer pearls than any in the sea.
The smallest and deepest black meet in her glittering glance And
shapelier than the black-eyed maid of Paradise is she.
How may a man her eyes have seen, who perished in Persia? The
love of her's a way wherein are fear and woe.
If I would live, behold, she's death! I may not think of her, lest I
should die; for, lacking her, life's nothing worth to me.
So it is my counsel, O King, that thou despatch to her
father a sagacious and experienced ambassador, versed
in the conduct of affairs, who shall with courteous and
persuasive speech demand her in marriage for thee: for
she hath not her equal in the world, far or near. So shalt
thou enjoy her beauty in the way of right and the Lord
of Glory be content with thee; for it is reported of the
Prophet (whom God bless and preserve) that he said,
"There is no monkeyry in Islam." At this the King was
transported to the perfection of delight; his heart was
lightened and his breast dilated and care and anxiety
ceased from him: and he said to the Vizier, 'None shall
be about this business but thou, by reason of thy con-
summate wit and good breeding; wherefore do thou make
ready by the morrow and depart and demand me this girl
in marriage, with whom thou hast made my heart to be
grossed; nor do thou return to me but with her.' 'I hear and obey,' replied the Vizier, and withdrawing to his
own house, made ready a present such as beds, kings, of
ejewels and other precious things, light of carriage but
heavy of worth, besides Arabian horses and costly mail,
finely wrought as those which David made, and chests of
treasure, such as speech fails to describe. These all he
loaded upon camels and mules and set out, with flags and
banners flying before him and attended by a hundred
white slaves and the like number of black and a hundred
slave-girls. The King charged him to return to him
speedily; so he set out, leaving Sulaiman Shah on coasts
of fire, engrossed night and day with desire for the prin-
cessa, and faced on, without ceasing, night and day, across
plains and deserts, till there remained but a day's journey
between him and the city to which he was bound. Here

1 The Mohammedans have a legend that God gave David ex-
traordinary skill in working iron and making chain mail, that he might
earn his living without drawing upon the public treasury. "And we
gave David a grace from us and bestowed on him iron (saying), 'Make
these coats of mail and adjust the rings duly and deal rightly, for I
look upon what ye do.'"—Koran, xxxiv. 10.
he halted on the banks of a river, and calling one of his
chief officers, bade him hasten forward to King Zehr Shah
and announce his approach. Accordingly, the messenger
rode on in haste to the city and was about to enter it,
when the King, who chanced to be seated in one of his
pleasances before the gate, espied him and knowing
him for a stranger, bade bring him before him. So when
the messenger came into his presence, he informed him
of the approach of the Vizier of the mighty King Suleiman
Shah, Lord of the Green Country and of the mountains of
Isphahan; whereat King Zehr Shah rejoiced and bade him
welcome. Then he carried him to his palace and said to
him, 'Where dost thou leave the Vizier?' 'I left him,'
replied the messenger, 'at the first of the day, on the
banks of such a river, and he will be with thee to-morrow,
may God continue His favours to thee and have mercy
upon thy parents!' Whereupon the King commanded one
of his Viziers to take the better part of his nobles and
chamberlains and officers and grandees and go out to
meet the ambassador, in honour of King Suleiman Shah,
for that his dominion extended over the country.

Meanwhile, King Suleiman's Vizier abode in his stead,
till the night was half spent, when he set out for the city;
but hardly had the day appeared and the sun risen upon
the hills and plains, when he saw King Zehr Shah's Vizier
approaching with his retinue and the two parties joined
company at some parasangs' distance from the city. At
this the Vizier made sure of the success of his errand and
saluted the new-comers, who escorted him to the King's
palace and forewent him to the seventh vestibule, where
none might enter on horseback; for it was near the
presence-chamber of the King. So the Vizier alighted
and walked on till he came to a lofty hall, at the upper
end whereof stood a couch of alabaster, set with pearls
and jewels and having four elephants' tusks for feet. It

was covered with a mattress of green satin, embroidered
with red gold, and surmounted by a canopy adorned with
pearls and jewels, and on it sat King Zehr Shah, whilst
his officers of state stood in attendance on him. When
the Vizier stood before him, he composed himself and
loosing his tongue, displayed such skill of speech as befits
viziers and saluted the King in eloquent and complimentary
language, reciting the following verses in his honour:

He counsels, bending gracefully in his robes and shedding dew Of
bounty over the thinking land and the folk to him that see.
Indeed, he charmeth; nor analect nor spells nor magic may avail to
ward off the faithful glance of these his eyes from you.
Say to the consorts, 'Blame me not; whilst life abides in me, I'll never
swear from the love of him nor turn to love none.'
Laid, stouter surely is tired of me and fallen in love with him, And
even my heart hath played me false and but to him is true!
O heart, thou art not the only one that loves and tenders him; So get
thee gone and hide with him and leave me here to rise!
Except the praise of the King Zehr Shah it be that folk acclaim,
There's nothing rejoices mine ears, in speech, to hearken thereunto.
A King, the sight of whose glorious face would well thy pains repay,
Though thou shouldst lavish thy heart's best blood, so great a
grace to woe.

If thou be minded to offer up a pious prayer for him, Then it find but
true believers and shatter the whole world through.
O folk of his realm, if any forebear his governance And look for
another, I hold him mean of the faithful few!

When the Vizier had made an end of his speech, the
King bade him draw near and showed him the utmost
honour; then seating him by his own side, he smiled in
his face and made him a gracious reply. They conversed
till the time of the morning-meal, when the attendants
brought in the tables of food and they all ate till they were
satisfied, after which the tables were removed and all who
were present withdrew, with the exception of the chief
officers; which when the Vizier saw, he rose to his feet,
and after complimenting the King a second time and
kissing the earth before him, spoke as follows: 'O mighty king and august prince, I have travelled hither and am come to thee upon an errand, wherein is profit and good and prosperity for thee; and it is that I come as ambassador to thee, seeking the hand of thy noble and illustrious daughter, from the most just, loyal and excellent King Suleiman Shah, Lord of the Green Country and of the mountains of Ispahan, who sends thee many and rare presents and gifts of price, ardently desiring thine alliance. Art thou, then, minded to him as he to thee?' And he was silent, awaiting a reply. When the King heard his words, he sprang to his feet and kissed the earth respectfully before the Visier, to the amazement of the bystanders, whose minds were confounded at his condescension to the ambassador. Then he praised him who is the Lord of glory and honour and replied, still standing, 'O mighty Visier and illustrious lord, hear what I say. Verily we are Suleiman Shah and are ennobled of the subjects of King Suleiman Shah and are emollied by his alliance and aspire ardently thereto. My daughter is one of his handmaids, and it is my dearest wish that he may become my son and my support in time of need.'

Then he summoned the Cadis and the witnesses, who took act that King Suleiman had deputed his Visier his proxy to conclude the marriage, and King Zehr Shah joyfully consented on behalf of his daughter. So the Cadis drew up the marriage contract and offered up prayers for the happiness and prosperity of the contracting parties; after which the Visier arose and fetching the gifts and rambles and precious things that he had brought with him, laid them all before the King, who betook himself to the equipment of his daughter, honourably escorting the Visier and feasting great and small, and they held high festival for two months, costing much that could gladden heart and eye. When all was ready that was needful for the bride, the King caused the tents to be pitched without the city and they packed the bride's clothes and jewels in chests and loaded them on mules and camels. Now he had provided his daughter with Greek handmaids and Turkish slave-girls and great store of jewels and precious things, and had let make for her a litter of red gold inlaid with pearls and jewels, which within was as one of the chambers of a palace and without as one of the pavilions of Paradise, whilst its mistress seemed as though she were of the lovely hours. Moreover, he furnished her also with twenty mules for the journey and brought her three parasangs forward on her road, after which he bade her and the Visier farewell and returned to his own city in peace and gladness. Meanwhile, the Visier and his company faced on by night and forced marches, traversing plains and deserts and staying not day or night, till they came within three days' journey of King Suleiman's capital, when the Visier despatched a messenger to acquaint the King with their arrival. The messenger hastened forward till he reached the King's presence and announced to him the coming of the bride, whereat he rejoiced and bestowed on him a dress of honour. Then he bade his troops don their richest apparel and sadly forth in grand procession, with banners flying, to meet the princess and her company and do them honour, and let cry throughout the city that neither cloistered damsel nor honoured lady nor poor old woman should fail to go forth to meet the bride. So they all went out to meet her and the chiefest of them voted in doing her service, meaning to bring her to the King's palace by night. Moreover, the grandees agreed to decorate the road and stand on either side, whilst the bride should pass by, clad in the robes her father had given her and preceded by her eminents and serving-women. So at the appointed time, she made her appearance, surrounded by the troops, these on her right hand and those on her left, and the litter ceased not going with her, till they drew near the palace;
nor was there any one but came forth to gaze upon the show. The drums beat and the lances were brandished, the trumpets blared and the banners fluttered and the horses pranced, whilst fragrant odours breathed around. Till they reached the gate of the palace and the pages entered with the litter through the private gate. The place shone with its splendours and the walls glittered for the lustre of its ornaments. When the night came, the eunuchs threw open the doors of the bride-chamber and stood on each either hand; whereupon the bride entered, among her damsels, like the moon among stars or a pearl of matchless beauty in a string of lesser pearls, and seated herself upon a couch of alabaster inlaid with pearls and jewels, that had been set for her there. Then came the King in to her and God filled his heart with love of her; so he did away her maidenhead, and his trouble and disquiet ceased from him. She conceived by him the first night, and he abode with her well-nigh a month, at the end of which time he went forth and sitting himself on his throne of state, dispensed justice to his subjects, till the months of her pregnancy were accomplished. Towards daybreak on the last night of the ninth month, the queen was seized with the pangs of labour; so she sat down on the stool of delivery and God made the travail easy to her, so that she gave birth to a male child, on whom appeared the signs of happy fortune. When the King heard of this, he rejoiced with an exceeding joy and rewarded the bearer of the good tidings with much treasure. Then, of his gladness, he went in to the child and kissed him between the eyes, wondering at his brilliant beauty; for in him was the saying of the poet made truth:

God hath a Son given in him unto the house of Jesse And in the heaven of high estate hath set another star.
Lo, at his birth, the spears shake all and all the wild deer start. And all the chief lords of the folk and all the men of war!

So mount him not upon the beast, for he shall surely deem That horses' backs for such as he the sober sitting are: And wear ye him soon sucking milk, for he toth shall find The blood of foemen in the field the sweeter drink by far.

The midwives took the new-born child and cut the cord of his navel, after which they anointed his eyes with kohl and named him Taj al Muluk Khan. He was suckled at the breast of delight and reared in the lap of favouring fortune, and the days ran on and the years passed by, till he reached the age of seven. Then the King his father summoned the doctors and learned men and bade them teach his son writing and science and polite letters. This they did for some years, till he had learnt all that was needful, when the King took him out of the professors' hands and committed him to a master, who taught him horsemanship and the use of arms, till the boy attained the age of fourteen and became proficient in martial exercises. Moreover, he outshone all the people of his time for the excess of his beauty; so that, whenever he went abroad on any occasion, all who saw him were ravished with him and made verses in his honour, and even the virtuous were seduced by his brilliant loveliness. Quoth the poet of him:

A tender branch, that from the bough hath taken its nourishment! I clipped him and straightway became drunk with his sweetest scent.

Not drunken with the drunkenness of one who drinks wine, but with the honey of his mouth filled full of languishment.

All loveliness compels him within his perfect form, so that over all the hearts of men he reigns triumphant.

By God, forgetfulness of him shall never cross my mind. What while I wear the chains of life, nor even when they're cast:

Lo, if I live, in love of him I'll live; and, if I die of love longing for him, I'll say, "O marvel! O excellent!"

When he reached his eighteenth year, the tender down began to invade the table of his rosy cheeks, which were
adorned by a black mole like a grain of ambergris, and he captivated the minds and eyes of all who looked on him, even as says of him the poet in the following verses:

He is the Khalif of beauty in Joseph’s place: The hearts of all lovers dread him, whereas they see his grace.
Pause thou with me and fasten thy gaze on him; thou’lt see The sign of the Khalifir set in saith on his face.

And as says another:
These eyes have never looked upon a fairer sight, Of all the things that are to see beneath the sky.
Than yonder mole of brown, that nestles on his face, Midmost the rosy cheek, beneath the coal-black eye.

And a third:
I marvel at yon mole that serves the fire eternally Upon his cheek, yet is not burned, all Kafir though it be;
And eke I marvel that he’s sent of God, with every glance To work true miracles; and yet a sorcerer is he!
The many gall-bladders that burst for him it is that make The shining fringes of his cheek so black and bright to see.

And yet a fourth:
I wonder to hear the folk ask of the water of life And question in which of the lands its magical fountain flows;
Whenas I see it well from the damask lips of a fawn, Under his tender mustache and his cheek’s perennial rose.
And ehe’th a wonder of wonders that Moses, finding it there Flowing, yet took no patience nor laid him down to repose.

When he came to man’s estate, his beauty increased and he had many comrades and friends; and every one who drew near him hoped that he would become Sultan

1 This appears to be an allusion to the colours of the house of Abbas, which were black.
2 Kafir means ‘black’ as well as ‘infidel.’
3 One of the Mohammedan legends represents Moses as seeking the water of life.

after his father’s death and that he himself might be one of his officers. He had a passion for hunting and would hardly leave the chase a single hour. His father would have restrained him, fearing for him the perils of the desert and the wild beasts; but he paid no heed to him.
One day, he bade his attendants take ten days’ provender and setting out for the chase, rode on into the desert four days long, at the end of which time he came to a verdant champaign, full of wild beasts pasturing and trees laden with ripe fruit and springs welling forth. Then he said to his followers, ‘Set up the nets in a wide circle and let our general rendezvous be at the mouth of the ring, in such a spot.’ So they staked out a wide circle with the nets; and there gathered together a multitude of all kinds of wild beasts and gazelles, which cried out for fear of them and threw themselves in terror right in the face of the horses. Then they loosed the dogs and sakers and hunting hyenas on them and snatched them with arrows in the vitals; so, by the time they came to the closed end of the ring of nets, they took a great number of the wild beasts, and the rest fled. Then the prince sat down by the water-side and letting spread the game before himself, apportioned it among his men, after he had set apart the choicest thereof for his father King Sulaiman and despatched it to him; and other part he divided among the officers of his court.
He passed the night in that place, and when it was morning, there came up a caravan of merchants, with their slaves and servants, and halted by the water and the verdure. When Taj ol Malouk saw this, he said to one of his companions, ‘Go, bring me news of yonder folk and ask them why they have halted here.’ So the man went up to them and said, ‘Tell me who ye are, and answer quickly.’ ‘We are merchants,’ replied they, ‘and have halted here to rest, for that the next station is distant and we have confidence in King Sulaiman Shah and his
son Taj el Mulouk, knowing that all who alight in their dominions are in peace and safety; and we have with us precious stuffs, that we have brought for the prince." The messenger returned with this news to the prince, who said, 'I will not depart hence till I see what they have brought for me.' Then he mounted and rode to the caravan, followed by his servants. The merchants rose to receive him and invoked on him the aid and favour of God, with continuance of glory and virtues; after which they pitched him a pavilion of red satin, emblazoned with pearls and jewels, in which they spread him a royal divan, upon a silver carpet embroidered at the upper end with emeralds. The prince seated himself on the divan, whilst his servants stood in attendance upon him, and bade the merchants bring out all that they had with them. Accordingly, they produced all their merchandise, and he viewed it and took of it what pleased him, paying them the price. Then he re-mounted and was about to ride onward, when his eyes fell on a handsome young man, well dressed and elegantly made, with flower-white forehead and face brilliant as the moon, save that his beauty was wasted and that pallor had invaded his cheeks by reason of separation from those he loved: sighing and lamentation were grievous upon him and the tears streamed from his eyelids, as he repeated the following verses:

Absence is long and care and fear are heavy on my soul. Whilst from mine eyes the tears, O my friend, without cessation roll. Ails, I left my heart behind upon the parting day, And now sans heart, sans hope, abide all lonely in my deeps. Pause with me, O my friend, whilst I take my leave of one By whose sweet speech diseases all and sorrows are made whole.

Having said this, he wept awhile and fell down in a swoon, whilst Taj el Mulouk looked at him wonderingly; then coming to himself, he stared fixedly before him, with a distracted air, and repeated these other verses:

I rode then beware of her glassy, for, lo! 'tis a wizard, I ween! None becometh an eye so bright and so fixed as hers, that has gazed on their beam. For, trust me, black eyes, that are armed with the grace of a languid look. Are swifter and sharper to wound than scimitars, tempered and keen. And let not thy mind be beguiled by the soft and the sweet of her words; For the fever that springs from her speech o'ermasters the senses' demon. Soft-sweet, were it not to press on her skin, it would cause it to bleed. So delicate as she is and so young, as smooth as the last seen. Right charitable is the charm's 'twixt her neck and her ankles that lie, And what is the sweetness of sense to the fragrance that breathes from my queen? Then he gave a sob and swooned away a second time. When Taj el Mulouk saw him thus, he was perplexed about his case and went up to him. So when he came to himself and saw the prince standing by him, he sprang to his feet and kissed the earth before him; and Taj el Mulouk said to him, 'Why didst thou not show us thy merchandise?' 'O my lord,' answered the young merchant, 'there is nought among my stock worthy of thine august highness.' 'It matters not,' said the prince, 'thou must show me what thou hast and acquaint me with thy case; for I see thee weeping-eyed and mournful-hearted. If thou hast been wronged, we will do away thine oppression, and if thou be in debt, we will discharge thy debt; for my heart aches for thee, since I first set eyes on thee.' Then he called for seats and they set him a chair of ebony and ivory, netted with gold and silk, and spread him a silver carpet. So he sat down on the chair and bidding the young merchant seat himself on the carpet, again commanded him to show him his merchandise. 'O my lord,' said he, 'do not nance this to me, for I have bought worthy of thee.' 'I will have it so,' rejoined Taj el Mulouk and bade some of the attendants fetch the goods. So they brought them in spite of the merchant; and when he
saw this, the tears streamed from his eyes and he wept and sighed and lamented; sobs rose from his bosom and he repeated the following verses:

By the witching amorous sweetness and the blackness of thine eyes, By the tender restlesness in thy slender waist that lies, By the grace and the beauty of thy body and thy shape, By the sounds of wine and honey from thy oral lips that rise, O my hope, to see thine image in my dreams were sweeter far Than were safety to the fearful, languishing in woeful wise!

Then he opened his bales and displayed their contents to Taj el Muluk; piece by piece, till he came to a mantle of satin brocaded with gold, worth two thousand dinars, from which, when he opened it, there fell a piece of linen. As soon as he saw this, he caught up the piece of linen in haste and hid it under his thigh; and indeed he seemed as though he had lost his reason, and he repeated the following verses:

When shall my sad tormented heart be healed, alas, of thee? The pleases were nearer for thee is thy grace to me. Distance, estrangement, longing pain and fire of love laid waste, Pre-cerivation and delay, in these my life doth flee. For no attainments bids me live nor exile slays me quite; Travel no nigher docs me bring, nor wilt thou nearer be. There is no justice to be hid of thee nor any ruth in thee; no woe to thy grace and yet no breaking free. Alack, for love of thee, the ways are straitened all on me; So that I know not where to go nor any ease see!

The prince wondered greatly at his behaviour, and said to him, 'What is that piece of linen?' 'O my lord,' replied the merchant, 'I who hast no concern with it.' 'Show it me,' said the prince; and the merchant answered, 'O my lord, it was on account of this piece of linen that I

Night refused to show thee my goods; for I cannot let thee look on it.' But Taj el Muluk rejoined, 'I must and will see it;' and insisted and became angry. So he

drew it out from under his thigh, weeping and lamenting and redoubling his sighs and groans, and repeated the following verses:

Blame ye the lover not, for blame but blesse him to hear; Indeed, I spoke him truth, but he to me would lend no ear. God have her in His care, my moon that riseth far away, Down in the valley, midst the camp, from out the collier's sphere! I left her; would to God my love had left me peace of life! So had I never parted from her that held me dear. O how she pleaded for my sake upon our parting day, What while she knew her checks and mine tears followed spent tears! May God blesse me now! The woe of my excuse from me Was all in rent for loss of her; but I will mend my cheer. No bed is easy to a sly, nor is her resting-place A more reposeful unto her, now I'm no longer near. For Face with an illoorning hand hath wrought upon our loves And hindered me from my delight and her from hers, yere. Indeed, what time it filled the cup, whereas she drank what I E'en made her drink, it pented us grief, all unwood and cheer.

Quoth Taj el Muluk, 'Thy conduct perplexes me; tell me why thou weepest at the sight of this piece of linen.' When the young merchant heard speak of the piece of linen, he sighed and answered, 'O my lord, my story is a strange and evenful one, with regard to this piece of linen and her from whom I had it and her who wrought the figures and emblems that be thereon.' So saying, he unfolded the piece of linen, and behold, thereon were the figures of two gazelles, facing one another, one wrought in silk and gold and the other in silver with a ring of red gold and three bills of chrysolite about its neck. When Taj el Muluk saw the figures and the beauty of their fashion, he exclaimed, 'Glory be to God who teacheth man that which he knoweth not!' And his heart was filled with longing to hear the merchant's story; so he

1 The allusion here is to the face of a beloved one, which is likened to a moon rising out of her dress.
said to him, 'Tell me thy story with her who gave thee these gazelles.' 'Know, O my lord,' replied the young man, 'that

STORY OF AZIZ AND AZIZEH.

My father was one of the chief merchants of my native town, and God had vouchsafed him no other child than myself; but I had a cousin, the daughter of my father's brother, who was brought up with me in our house; for her father was dead and before his death, he had agreed with my father that I should marry her. So when I reached man's estate and she became a woman, they did not separate us, and we ceased not to sleep on the same couch, knowing no evil, albeit she was more thoughtful, more intelligent and quicker-witted than I, till at last, my father spoke to my mother and said, 'This very year we will draw up the contract of marriage between Aziz and Azizeh.' So they agreed upon this, and he betook himself to preparing vultur for the marriage festivities. When he had made an end of his preparations and there remained nought but to draw up the contract and consummate the marriage, he appointed the wedding for a certain Friday, after the congregational prayers, and going round to his friends among the merchants and others, acquainted them with this, whilst my mother invited her female friends and kindred. When the day came, they cleaned the guest-chamber and washed the marble floor, then spread carpets about the house and set out thence what was needful, after they had hung the walls with cloth of gold. Now the folk had agreed to come to our house after the Friday-prayers; so my father went and let make cakes and dishes of sweetmeats, and there remained nothing to do but to draw up the contract. Then my mother sent me to the bath and sent after me a suit of new clothes of the richest kind, which I put on, when I came out. The clothes were perfumed, and as I went along, there exalted from them a delicious fragrance, that scented the way. I was about to repair to the mosque, when I betook myself to one of my friends and was minded to go in quest of him, that he might be present at the drawing up of the contract, saying in myself, 'This will occupy me till near the time of prayer.' So I turned back and came to a by-street, that I had never before entered. Now I was in a profound perspiration, from the effects of the bath and the new clothes on my body, and the sweat streamed from me, whilst the perfume of my clothes was wafted abroad; so I sat down to rest on a stone bench at the upper end of the street, spreading under me an embroidered handkerchief I had with me. The heat redoubled on me, so that my forehead sweated and the drops ran down on my cheeks; but I could not wipe my face with my handkerchief, because I lay upon it. So I was about to take the skirt of my gartering and wipe my cheeks with it, when suddenly there fell on me from above a white handkerchief, softer to the feel than the zephyr and plainer to the sight than recovery to the sick. I seized on it and looking up to see whence it came, my eyes met those of the lady who gave me these gazelles. She was looking out of a window in a lattice of brass and never saw my eyes a fairer than she; my tongue fails to picture her beauty. When she saw me looking at her, she put her forefinger to her mouth, then joined her middle and index fingers and laid them on her bosom, between her breasts; after which she drew in her head and shut the wicket. With this, fire broke out and raged in my heart; the glance I had of her cost me a thousand sighs and I abode perplexed, having heard no word from her and understanding not the meaning of her signs. I looked again at the window, but found it shut and waited till sundown, but heard no sound and saw no one. When
I desired of seeing her again, I rose and taking up the handkerchief, opened it, whereupon there exhaled from it a scent of musk, which caused me such ease and mesmesed me in paradise. Then I spread it out before me and there dropped from it a little scroll of paper. I opened the scroll, which was scented with a delicious perfume, and found written therein the following verses:

I sent my love a scroll, complaining of desire. Writ in a fine, small hand; for writing very still.

"Why is thy writing that," my lover said to me, "Altarate and small, neat, to read and ill?"

Then, casting my eyes on the beauty of the handkerchief, I saw embroidered on one of its borders the following verses:

The down of his whiskers writes (good luck to it for a scribe!) Two lines, in the half a hand, on the table of his face.

O the wildness of the moose at him, when he appears! And O
the shame of the beak at sight of his fragile grace!

And on the opposite border were the following verses:

The whiskers write upon his cheeks, with ambigies on pearl, Two lines, as were wise as upon an apple, line for line.

Death lurks in his longed eyes and stays with every glance; And in his cheeks is drumminess, and not in any wine.

When I read what was written on the handkerchief, the flames of love raged in my heart, and longing and trouble redoubled on me. So I took the handkerchief and the scroll and went home, knowing no means to compass my desire, for that I was inexperienced in love affairs and unskilled in the interpretation of the language of signs used therein. The night was far spent before I reached my house, and when I entered, I found my cousin sitting weeping. As soon as she saw me, she wiped away her tears and coming up to me, took off my outer clothes and asked me the reason of my absence, saying, "All the folk, amirs and notables and merchants and others, assembled here, and the Cadi and the witnesses came also at the appointed time. They ate and sat awhile, awaiting thy coming for the drawing-up of the contract, till they despaired of thee, when they dispersed and went their ways. And indeed," added she, "thy father was exceeding wroth, by reason of this, and swore that he would not celebrate our marriage till next year, for that he hath spent much money on this occasion. What hath befallen thee to make thee tarry till now?" "O my cousin," replied I, "do not ask me what hath befallen me." Then I told her all that had passed and showed her the handkerchief and the scroll. She took them and read what was written therein; whereupon the tears ran down her cheeks and she repeated the following verses:

Who says to thee, the first of love is free, 'Tell him, not so; but, on the contrary,
"Tis all constrain, wherein no blame can be. History indeed attests this verity;
It does not style the good coin falsified.
Say, if thou wilt, the taste of pain is sweet, Or to be spared by
Fortune's flying feet;
Of need or vengeance, fortune or defeat, With joy or dole it makes the heart to beat:
Twist phrases and counterfeit I'm stupified.
But as for him whose happy days are lights, Fair maidens, whose lips with smiles are ever bright,
I'm not with him a crown heart may hide.

Then she asked me what she said and what signs she made to me. "She spoke not," answered I; "but put her index finger to her mouth, then joining it to her middle finger, laid them both on her bosom and pointed to the
ground, after which she drew in her head and shut the wicket and I saw her no more. She took my heart with her and I sat till sundown, expecting her to appear again at the window; but she came not; so, when I despaired of her, I rose and went home. This is my story, and I beg thee to help me in this my affliction." With this, she raised her face to me and said, "O my cousin, if thou seesthe one eye, I would tear it from its socket for thee, and I cannot choose but help thee to thy desire and her also to hers; for she is passionately enamoured of thee, even as thou of her." "And what is the meaning of her signs?" asked I. "As for the putting her finger to her mouth," replied Azizeh, "it meant that thou art to her as her soul to her body and that she would bite upon union with thee with her wisdom-teeth. The handkerchief is the token of greeting from lover to beloved and the scroll is a sign that her heart is bound up in thee. As for the laying her two fingers between her breasts, it is as if she said to thee, 'Return hither after two days, that the sight of thy countenance may dispel my anguish.' For know, O my cousin, that she loves thee and trusts in thee. This is my writing of her signs, and could I come and go at will, I would quickly bring you and her together and cover you both with my skirt." I thanked her and said to myself, "I will wait two days." So I abode two days in the house, without going out, and ate not nor drank, but lay with my head in my cousin's lap, whilst she comforted me.

Night and midday I wept and strove to persuade her to come. Then she rose and changed her clothes and perfumed me with incense. So I took heart and went out and walked till I came to the by-street, where I sat down on the bench. After a while, the wicket opened and I looked up and seeing the lady, fell down in a swoon. When I revived, I took courage to look again at her and again became insensible. Then I came to myself and looking at her, saw that she had a mirror and a red handkerchief in her hand. When she saw me, she bared her forearms and emoted her breast with her palm and five fingers; after which she raised her hands and holding the mirror forth of the wicket, took the red handkerchief and retired with it, but immediately returned and putting out her hand with the handkerchief, lowered it towards the ground and raised it again three several times. Then she wrung it out and folded it in her hands, bowing her head the while; after which she drew in her head and shutting the window, went away, without saying a word, leaving me confounded and knowing not what she meant. I sat there till the evening and did not return home till near midnight, when I found my cousin sitting, weeping bitterly and repeating the following verses:

Ah me, what ails the consumm, that he at thee should strive? How shall I be consoled for thee, and thou a sleeping shtay? O thou, the splendour of whose sight has taken my heart by storm, Whose apple bending grace compels to panther's utmost height, Thy eyes, with Turkish magnificence, your love to see the breast And love such wounds as your were made by fashion in the fight! Then lay on me a heavy load of passion and desire, On me that am too weak to bear a shift upon my sight. Ay, tears of blood I weep for, that my cousin say to me, "A sudden arrow, from out his lips thou listen, shall thee smite." Ah, would my heart were like this; even as by body is like to thy waist, all this and frail and surrendered for despairs! Thou, that my prince in beauty art, a steward's heart, whose rage gives me and a chamberlain that doth me feel unworthy. He lies who says, "All loveliness in Joseph was composed," How many Josephs are there not within thy beauty bright? I force myself to turn from thee, for fear of spying eyes. Though sore it fells me to forewear the shadows of thy sight.

1 Lit. "the love of the Beni Udheyn," an Arabian tribe, famous for the passion and devotion with which love was practiced among them.
2 Syn. eye (woman).
3 Syn. eyebrow (dust).
At this, trouble and grief redoubled on me and I fell down in a corner; whereupon she sprang up and coming to me, lifted me up and took off my outer clothes and wiped my face with her sleeve. Then she asked me how I had fared, and I told her all that had happened. "O my cousin," said she, "as for her sign to thee with her palm and five fingers, it meant, 'Return after five days!' and her gestures with the mirror and the putting forth of her head and the lowering and raising of the red handkerchief meant, 'Sit in the dyer's shop, till my messenger come to thee.'" When I heard this, fire flamed up in my heart and I exclaimed, "O my cousin, by Allah, thou sayest sooth in this thine interpretation; for I saw the shop of a Jewish dyer in the street." Then I wept, and she said, "O my cousin, summon up resolution and be steadfast of heart: others are occupied with love for years and are constant to endure the arduous of passion, whilst thou hast but a week! to wait; so why art thou thus impatient?" Then she went on to cheer me with comforting talk and brought me food; so I took a mouthful, but could not eat and abstained from meat and drink and knew not the salace of sleep, till my colours paled and I lost my good looks; for I had never before been in love nor tasted the abour of passion. So I fell sick and my cousin also sickened on my account; but every night she would divert me with stories of love and lovers, till I fell asleep; and whenever I awoke, I used to find her wakeful for my sake, with the tears running down her cheeks. Thus we did till the five days were past, when she rose and heating water, bathed me with it. Then she dressed me and said to me, "Go to her and may God fulfill your wish and bring thee to thy desire of thy beloved!" So I went out and walked on, till I came to the by-street. I found the dyer's shop shut, for it was Saturday, and sat before it, till I heard the
call to afternoon prayer. Then the sun turned pale, the Moezzines chanted the call to the prayer of sunset and the night came; but I saw no sign nor heard aught of her. With this, I feared for myself, sitting there alone; so I rose and went home, staggering like a drunken man. When I reached the house, I found my cousin A'zanah standing, with one hand grasping a peg driven into the wall and the other on her breast; and she was sighing heavily and repeating the following verses:

The longing of a Bedouin maid, whose folk are far away, Who years after the willow of the Hajjar and the bay, Whose tears, when she on travellers' lights, might for their water serve And eke her passion, with its heat, their breasts are purvey, Is not more fierce nor ardent than my longing for my love, Who seems that I commit a crime in loving him away.

When she had finished, she turned and seeing me, wiped away her tears and mine with her sleeve. Then she smiled in my face and said, "O my cousin, God grant thee joy of that which He hath given thee! Why didst thou not pass the night with thy beloved and why hast thou not fulfilled thy desire of her?" When I heard what she said, I gave her a kick in the breast and she fell over on to the edge of the estrade and struck her forehead against a peg there. Night had looked at her and saw that her forehead was cut open and the blood running; but she was silent and did not utter a syllable. She made some tinder of rags and staunching the wound with it, bound her forehead with a bandage; after which she wiped up the blood that had fallen on the carpet, and it was as if nothing had happened. Then she came up to me and smiling in my face, said, with gentle speech, "By Allah, O my cousin, I hid it not in my thought to mock thee or at her! I was troubled with a pain in my head and thought to be let blood, but now thou hast eased my head and brow; so tell me what has befallen

\[i.e.\text{ a graceful youth of the province in which Mecca is situate.}\]
thee to-day.’ So I told her what had passed and she wept and said, ‘O my cousin, rejoice in the near fulfillment of thy desire and the attainment of thy hopes. Verily, this is a sign of acceptance; she only stayed away, because she wished to try thee and know if thou wert patient and sincere in thy love for her or not. To-morrow, do thou go to her at the old place and note what signs she makes to thee; for indeed thy gladness is near and the end of thy grief is at hand.’ And she went on to comfort me; but my trouble and affliction ceased not to increase on me. Presently, she brought me food, but I kicked the dishes away, so that their contents were scattered in all directions, and said, ‘Every lover is a madman; he inclines not to food neither enjoys sleep.’ ‘By Allah, O my cousin,’ answered she, ‘these are indeed the signs of love!’ And the tears streamed down her cheeks, whilst she gathered the fragments of the dishes and wiped up the food; then she sat down by me and talked to me, whilst I prayed God to hasten the coming of the day. When, at last, the morning arose with its light and show, I went out and hastening to the by-street in question, sat down on the bench, when behold, the wicket opened and she put out her head, laughing. Then she went in and returned with a mirror, a bag, a pot of flowering plants and a lamp. First, she took the mirror and putting it into the bag, tied it up and threw it back into the room; after which she let down her hair over her face and set the lamp on instant on the pot of flowers; then took up all the things and shutting the window, went away, without saying a word. My heart was tortured by her obscure signs and mysterious gestures, and passion and distraction redoubled on me. So I retraced my steps, tearful-eyed and mournful-hearted, and returning home, found Azizah sitting, with her face to the wall; for her heart was on fire for grief and anxiety and jealousy; albeit the love she bore me forbade her to acquaint me with what she suffered, by reason of what she saw of the excess of my passion and distraction (for another). I looked at her and saw that she had two bandages on her head, one on account of the wound in her forehead, and the other over her eye, which pained her for excess of weeping; and she was in very sore plight, weeping and repeating the following verses:

I count the nights, night after night, the weary nights and slow; Yet would I, once upon a time, unreckoned let them go.
I have no knowledge, O my friend, of that which God ordains Of Lella or what He decrees to me, but this I know;
He to another he adjured and cursed me with her love: So hath He not afflicted me with other than her woe?

When she had finished, she looked round and seeing me through her tears, wiped them away and came up to me, but could not speak for excess of emotion. So she was silent awhile, then said to me, ‘O my cousin, tell me what befell thee with her this time.’ So I told her all that had passed, and she said, ‘Be patient, for the time of thy delight is come, and thou hast won to the attainment of thy hopes. As for her sign with the mirror and the bag, it was as if she said to thee, ‘When the sun is set,’ and the letting down of her hair over her face signified, ‘When the night is come and hath let fall the blackness of the dark and overmastered the daylight, come hither.’ As for her gesture with the flower-pot and the lamp, it meant, ‘When thou comest, enter the garden behind the street, and where as thou seest the lamp burning, go thither and seat thyself beneath it and wait for me; for the love of thee is killing me.’ When I heard this, I cried out for excess of passion and said, ‘How long wilt thou deceive me with promises and I go to her, but get not my will nor find any truth in thine interpreting?’ At this, she laughed and replied, ‘Thou needest but have patience for the rest of the day, till the light depart and the night come with the darkness.
and thou shalt enjoy fruition and accomplish thy hopes.
And indeed this is true without leasing." And she repeated the following verses:

Let the days pass, as they list, and fare, And enter thou not the house of despair.
Fall oft, when the guest of a thing is hard, The next hour brings us the end of our care.

Then she came to me and began to comfort me with soothing words, but dared not offer me food, fearing my wrath and seeking to make me incline to her: so she only took off my upper garment and said to me, "Sit, O my cousin, that I may entertain thee with talk, till the end of the day; and God willing, thou shalt be with thy beloved as soon as it is night." But I said no heed to her and gave my eye for looking for the coming of the night, saying, "O Lord, hasten the coming of the night!" till the hour of the evening prayer, when she went to give me a grain of pure meal, said to me, "O my cousin, put this in thy mouth, and when thou forsgatherest with thy beloved and hast taken thy will of her and she hath granted thee thy desire, repeat to her this verse:

Tell me, O lovers, for God's sake, I do entreat of you, When love is sore upon a maid, alack! what shall she do?

And she kissed me and made me swear not to repeat this to my mistress, till I should be about to leave her. Then I went out and walked on till I came to the garden. I found the door open: so I entered, and seeing a light in the distance, made towards it and came to a great pavilion, vaulted over with a dome of ivory and ebony, from the midst of which hung the lamp. The floor was spread with silken carpets, embroidered in gold and silver, and under the lamp stood a great candle, burning in a stand of gold. Midmost the pavilion was a fountain, adorned with all manner of figures; and by it stood a table of food, covered with a silken napkin, and a great porcelain vase full of wine, with a goblet of crystal, spayed with gold. Near these was a great covered dish of silver, which I uncovered and found therein fruits of all kinds, figs and pomegranates and grapes and oranges and citrons and shadlocks, together with all manner sweet-scented flowers, such as roses and jasmine and myrtle and eglinne and narcissus and all kinds of sweet-smelling herbs; but I saw there not a living soul, no, not even a slave, male or female, to guard these things. I was transported with delight at what I saw, and my grief and anxiety ceased from me. So I sat down to await the coming of Night the beloved of my heart: but the first hour of the night passed by, and the second and the third, and still she came not. Then I grew sore and hungry, for that it was long since I had tasted food by reason of the violence of my passion; but when I found the garden even as my cousin had told me and saw the truth of her interpretation of my mistress's signs, my mind was set at rest and I made sure of attaining my desire, so that nature resumed its sway and I felt the pangs of hunger. Moreover, the odour of the viands on the table excited me a longing to eat: so I went up to the table, and lifting the cover, found in the middle a porcelain dish, containing four fricassées fourviands, seasoned with spices, round which were four smaller dishes, one containing sweetmeats, another conserve of pomegranate-seeds, a third almond pastries and a fourth honey fritters, and the contents of these dishes were part sweet and part acid. So I ate of the fritters and a piece of meat, then went on to the almond pastries and ate what I would of them; after which I attacked the sweetmeats, of which I ate a spoonful or two or three or four, ending with part of a fowl and a mouthful of bread. With this my stomach became full and my limbs heavy and I grew drowsy; so I laid my head on a cushion, after having washed my hands, and sleep overcame me; and I knew
not what happened to me after this nor did I awake till
the sun's heat burnt me, for that I had not tasted sleep for
days. When I awoke, I found myself lying on the naked
marble, with a piece of salt and another of charcoal on my
stomach; so I stood up and shook my clothes and turned
right and left, but could see no one. At this I was per-
plexed and afflicted; the tears ran down my cheeks and
I mourned grievously for myself. Then I returned home,
and when I entered, I found my cousin beating her bosom
and weeping like the rain-clouds, as she repeated the
following verses:

From out my loved one's land a breeze blows cool and sweet; The
fragrance of its wafis sits up the ancient seat.

Elevy, empal of the East! Each lover hath his lot, His heaven-
appointed doom of fortune or Adana.
Lo, if we meet, we would embrace thee for desire, Even as a lever
climbs his mistress, when they meet.

When I saw her, I rose in haste and wiping away
her tears, accosted her with soft speech, saying, "O my
cousin, verily God hath been gracious to thee in thy love,
in that she whom thou lovest loves thee, whilst I pass my
time in weeping and lamenting my separation from thee
that blasphemous and chidest me; but may God not reproach
thee for my sake!" Then she smiled in my face, a sad
smile, and caressed me; then taking off my outer clothes,
she spread them out and said, "By Allah, this is not the
scent of one who hath enjoyed his mistress! Tell me what
has befallen thee, O my cousin." So I told her all that
had passed, and she smiled again, a sad smile, and said,
"Verily, my heart is full of pain; but may he not live who
would hurt thy heart! Indeed, this woman makes herself
extravagantly difficult to thee, and by Allah, I fear for thee

from her. Know that the meaning of the salt is that thou
wast drowned in sleep and she likens thee to insipid food,
at which the soul sickens; and it is as if she said to thee,
'Kto be waked most they be salted, lest nature reject thee.
Thou professest to be of the true lovers, but sleep is for-
bidden to a lover; therefore, thy love is false.' But it is
her love for thee that is false: for she saw thee asleep, yet
awoke thee not, and wore her love for thee sincere, she
had aroused thee. As for the charcoal, it means, 'God
blacken thy face, for that thou makest a lying pretence of
love, whereas thou art but a child and hast no concern but
to eat and drink and sleep.' This is the interpretation of
her signs, and may God the Most High deliver thee from
her!' When I heard my cousin's words, I beat my breast
with my hand and cried out, "By Allah, this is the truth,
for I slept and lovers sleep not! Indeed, I have signed
against myself, for mought could have done me more hurt
than eating and sleeping. What shall I do?" Then I
wept sore and said to her, "I have compassion on me and
tell me what to do, so may God have compassion on thee:
else I shall die." Now my cousin loved me very dearly,
so she replied, "On my head and eyes. But, O my cousin,
as I have told thee often, could I go in and out at will,
I would very soon bring you together and cover you both
with my skirt: nor would I do this but hoping to win thy
favour. God willing, I will do my utmost endeavour to
bring about your union; but hearken thou to me and do
as I bid thee. Go to the garden at nightfall and sit down
in the same place and look thou canst not, for eating induces
sleep; and beware of sleeping, for she will not come to
thee, till a fourth part of the night be passed. And may
God save thee from her mischief!" When I heard this,
I rejoiced and besought God to hasten the night. As soon
as it was dark, I rose to go, and my cousin said to me, "If
thou forswear with her, repeat to her the verse I taught,
then, at the time of leave-taking." "On my head and eyes," replied I, and going out, repaired to the garden, where I found all as on the previous night, with meat and drink spread ready, and dessert and flowers and so forth. I went up into the pavilion and smelt the odour of the violets and my soul hasted after them; but I forbore awhile, till at last I could no longer restrain my appetite. So I went up to the table, and raising the cover, found a dish of fowls, surrounded by four smaller dishes, containing various meats. I ate a mouthful of each dish and a piece of meat and as much as I would of the sweet meat: then I tasted a dish of rice dressed with honey and saffron and liking it, supped of it by the spoonful, till I was satisfied and my belly was full. With this, my eyelids became heavy; so I took a cushion and put it under my head, saying, "Surely I can recumb upon it without going to sleep." Then I closed my eyes and slept, nor did I wake till the sun had risen, when I found myself lying on the bare marble, with a die of bone, a play-stick, a green date-stone and a carob-bean on my stomach. There was no furniture norught else in the place, and it was as if there had been nothing there yesterday. So I rose and shaking all these things off me, went out in a rage, and going home, found my cousin sighing and repeating the following verses:

Wasted body and heart a-bleeding for despair And tears that down my cheeks stream on and on for ever, And a heart so heavy in disdain; Yet all a fair one does must needs be bright and fair. O cousin mine, thou'st filled my heart with longing pain And wounded me with words as sharp as the thorns that never spare.

I chid her and reviled her, at which she wept; then wiping away her tears, she came up to me and kissed me.

---

1 A small piece of wood used in a children's out-door game called tag.
2 The stone of the kish or "green" date, not allowed to ripen.

and pressed me to her bosom, whilst I held back from her and blamed myself. Then she said to me, "O my cousin, methinks thou didst sleep again last night?" "Yes," replied I; "and when I awoke, I found on my stomach a die of bone, a play-stick, a green date-stone and a carob-bean, and I know not why she did this." Then I wept and said to her, "Explain to me her meaning in this and tell me what I shall do and help me in this my strait." "On my head and eyes," answered she. "Know then that, by the figure of the die and the play-stick, she says to thee, 'Thy body is present, but thy heart absent. Love is not thus: do not reckon thyself among lovers.' As for the date-stone, it as if she said to thee, 'If thou wilt in love, thy heart would be on fire with passion and thou wouldst not taste the delight of sleep; for the sweet of love is like a green date and kindles a fire in the entrails.' As for the carob-bean, it signifies, 'The lover's heart is wearied; so be thou patient under our separation, even as Job was patient.'" When I heard this, fires raged in my entrails and grief recumbled upon my heart and I cried out, saying, "God ordained sleep to me, of my ill-fortune!" Then I said to her, "O my cousin, I conjure thee by my life, contrive me some device whereby I may win to her!" She wept and answered, "O Aziz, O my cousin, verify my heart is full of melancholy thought and I cannot speak; but go thou again to-night to the same place and look that thou sleep not, and thou shalt surely attain thy desire. This is my counsel and peace be on thee." "God willing," said I, "I will not sleep, but will do as thou biddest me." Then she rose and set food before me, saying, "Eat now what may suffice thee, that thy heart may be free." So I ate my fill, and when the night came, my cousin rose and bringing me a sumptuous suit of clothes, clad me therein. Then she made me promise to repeat the verse aforesaid to my mistress and bade me beware of sleeping. So I left
her and repairing to the garden, went up into the pavilion, where I occupied myself with gazing on the garden, holding my eyes open with my fingers and wagging my head.

Night from side to side, as the night darkened on me. Presently I grew hungry with watching, and the smell of the meats, being wafted towards me, increased my hunger: so I went up to the table and taking off the cover, ate a piece of meat and a mouthful of every dish; after which I turned to the vessel of wine, saying in myself, “I will drink one cup.” So I drank one cup and a second and a third, till I had drunk half a score, when the air smote me and I fell to the earth like a dead man. I lay thus till day, when I awoke and found myself without the garden, with a large sharp knife and an iron dish on my stomach. I rose trembling and taking the knife and the dish, went home, where I found my cousin saying, “Verily, I am in this house wretched and sorrowful, having no helper but weeping.” When I entered, I fell down at full length and fainting, throwing the knife and the dish from my hand. As soon as I came to myself, I told her what had passed and said, “Indeed, I shall never enjoy my desire.” The sight of my tears and my passion redoubled her distress on my account, and she said, “Verily, I can no more I warn thee against sleeping; but thou wilt not listen to my counsel, and my words profit thee nothing.” “By Allah,” cried I, “I conjure thee to explain to me the meaning of the knife and the dish.” “By the dishem,” replied she, “she alludes to her right eye, and it is as if she said to thee, ‘I swear, by the Lord of all creatures and by my right eye, that, if thou come here again and sleep, I will slay thee with this knife.’” And indeed, O my cousin, I fear for thee from her malice; my heart is full of anguish for thee and I cannot speak. Nevertheless, if thou canst be sure of thyself not to sleep, return to her and thou shalt

attain thy desire; but if thou sleep, according to thy wont, she will surely slay thee.” “O my cousin,” said I, “what shall I do? I conjure thee, by Allah, to help me in this my affliction!” “On my head and eyes,” replied she, “If thou wilt hearken to me and do as I say, thou shalt have thy will.” Quoth I, “I will indeed hearken to thee and do thy bidding.” And she said, “When it is time for thee to go, I will tell thee.” Then she pressed me to her bosom and laying me on the bed, rubbed my feet, till drowsiness overcame me and I was drowned in sleep; when she took a fan and seating herself at my head, ceased not to fan my face till the end of the day. Then she awoke me, and I found her sitting at my head weeping, with the fan in her hand and her clothes wet with tears. When she saw that I was awake, she wiped away her tears and fetching food, set it before me. I refused it, but she said to me, “Dost thou not promise to do my bidding? Eat.” So I ate and did not cross her, and she proceeded to put the food into my mouth and I to eat, till I was full. Then she made me drink a bowl of ume-fruits and sugar and washed my hands and dried them with a napkin; after which she sprinkled me with rose-water, and I sat with her awhile, restored to health and spirits. When the night had closed in, she dressed me and said to me, “O my cousin, watch all night and sleep not; for she will not come to thee this time till the last of the night, and God willing, thou shalt forget her with this night: but do not forget my charge.” Then she went, and my heart was sore for her, by reason of her much weeping, and I said to her, “What is the charge thou gavest me?” “When thou art about to take leave of her,” replied she, “repeat to her the verse I taught thee.” So I left her, full of gladness, and repairing to the garden, entered the pavilion, where I sat down, satiated with food, and watched till a fourth part of the night was past. The night was tedious to me, as it were.
a year: but I remained awake, till it was three quarters spent and the cocks cried out and I became sore an
hungred for long watching. So I went up to the table
and ate my fill, whereupon my head grew heavy and I was
on the point of falling asleep, when I espied a light making
towards me from afar. So I sprang up and washed my
hands and mouth and rounded myself; and before long, up
came the lady, accompanied by ten damsels, in whose
midst she shone, like the full moon among the stars. She
was clad in a dress of green satin, embroidered with red
gold, and she was as says the poet:

She lords it over her lovers in garnish'd all of green, With open vest and
collar and flowing hair beaute.

"What is thy name?" I asked her, and she replied, "I'm she Who
burns the hearts of lovers en coals of love and teen."
I made my mean unto her of passion and desire; "Upon a rock," she
answered, "thy plaints are wasted deep.

"Even if thy heart," I told her, "be rock in very deep, yet hath God
made fair water well from the rock, I ween."

When she saw me, she laughed and said, "How is it
that thou art awake and that sleep hath not overcome thee? Now that thou hast passed the night without
sleep, I know that thou art in love, for it is the mark of
a lover to watch the night for stress of longing." Then
she signed to her women and they went away, whereupon
came up to me and strained me to her bosom and
kissed me and sucked my upper lip, whilst I kissed her
and sucked her lower lip. I put my hand to her waist and
pressed it and we came to the ground at the same moment.
Then she undid her trousers and they fell down to her
ankles and we fell to clipping and toyin and clacking
and speaking softly and biting and intertwining of legs
and going round about the House and the corners thereof,

1 An audacious parody of the consecrated expressions used to describe
the ceremonies circumambulation of the Kaabeh at Mecca.
it, saw what was therein. When the time came for my
going to my mistress, she said to me, “Go and peace be
with thee; and when thou art about to leave her, repeat
to her the verse I taught thee and which thou forgottest.”
Quoth I, “Repeat it to me.” So she repeated it. Then
I went to the garden and entered the pavilion, where I
found the lady awaiting me. When she saw me, she rose
and kissed me and made me sit in her lap; and we ate
and drank and did our desire as on the previous night. In
the morning, I repeated to her my cousin’s verse:
Tell me, O lover, for God’s sake if I desist of you, When love is sure
upon a maid, shall I what shall she do?
When she heard this, her eyes filled with tears and she
answered with the following verse:
Against her passion she must strive and hide her case from view. And
humble and submissive be, whatever may ensue.
This I committed to memory and returned home, re-
jected at having done my cousin’s errand. When I entered
the house, I found Azizeh lying on the bed and my mother
at her head, weeping over her condition. When the latter
saw me, she said to me, “Out on thee for a cousin! How
couldst thou leave the daughter of thine uncle in ill case
and not ask what ailed her?” Azizeh, seeing me, raised
her head and sat up and said, “O Aziz, didst thou repeat
the verse to her?” “Yes,” replied I; “and she wept and
recited, in answer, another verse, which I remember.”
“Tell it me,” said Azizeh. I did so; and she wept and
repeated the following verses:
How shall she temper her desire? It doth her life undo. And still with
each recurring day her heart is steep in two.
Indeed, she strives for patience faint, but falsehood sought in her. Except a
heart too weak to bear the love that makes her me.
“Thou guest to thy mistress as of woe,” added she, “repeat to her these verses also.” “I hear and obey,”
answered I and betook myself, at the woe-timet, to the
garden, where there passed between my mistress and myself
what the tongue fails to describe. As I was about to leave
her, I repeated to her my cousin’s verses; whereupon the
tears streamed from her eyes and she replied:
If she her secret cannot hide and lack of patience deign, I see no help for
her but death, of all things old and new.

Then I returned home, where I found Azizeh fallen of
a swoon and my mother sitting at her head. When she
heard my voice, she opened her eyes and said, “O Aziz,
didst thou repeat the verses to her?” “Yes,” answered I;
and she recited with this verse.” And I repeated it;
whereupon my cousin swooned again, and when she came
to herself, she recited the following verses:
I headlong, I obey, I die; yeart bear to one, who shriv My hopes of union
and delight, my greeting and salutes.
Fair fall the happy of their joy, all hail! and fair beseal! The wretched
lover of the cup that’s set her lips unto!

When it was night, I repaired, as of woe, to the garden,
where I found my mistress awaiting me. We sat down
and ate and drank, after which we did our need and slept till
the morning; and as I was going away, I repeated to her
Azizeh’s verses. When she heard them, she gave a loud
cry and was greatly moved and exclaimed, “Alas! Alas!
She who said these words is dead!” Then she wept and
said to me, “Out on thee! What kin is she, who spoke thus,
to thee?” “She is the daughter of my father’s brother,”
replied I. “Thou Liath,” rejoined she. “By Allah, were
she thy cousin, thou wouldst have loved her even as she
loved thee! It is thou who hast killed her, and may God
in like manner kill thee! By Allah, hadst thou told me
thou hast a cousin, I would not have admitted thee to
my favour!” “Quoth I, “ Indeed, she is my cousin, and it
was she who interpreted to me thy signs and taught me
how to come at thee and how I should deal with thee;
and but for her, I had never won to thee.” “Did she then
know of us?" asked she. "Yes," answered I; and she exclaimed, "God give thee sorrow of thy youth, even as thou hast wasted her!" Then she said to me, "Go and see after her." So I went away, troubled at heart, and when I reached our street, I heard a sound of walling, and asking about it, was answered, "We found Azizah dead behind the door." I entered the house, and when my mother saw me, she said to me, "Her death lies at thy door, and may Night God not avenge thee of her blood! Out on thee for a cousin!" Then came my father, and we laid her out and did her the last offices and buried her. Moreover, we let make recitations of the Koran over her tomb and abode there three days, after which we returned home, grieving for her. When I entered the house, my mother came to me and said, "I would fain know what thou didst to her, to break her heart, for, O my son, I questioned her many times of the cause of her malady, but she would tell me nothing. So, God on thee, tell me what thou didst to her, that she died." Quoth I, "I did nothing." "May God avenge her on thee!" rejoined my mother. "She told me nothing, but kept her secret till she died, of her affection for thee. But when she died, I was with her, and she opened her eyes and said to me, 'O wife of my uncle, may God hold thy son guiltless of thy blood and punish him not for that he hath done with me!' And now he transporteth me from this transitory house of the world to the other and eternal dwelling-place." 'O my daughter,' said I, 'God preserve thee and preserve thy youth!' And I questioned her of the cause of her illness; but she made me no answer. Then she smiled and said, 'O wife of my uncle, when my cousin is about to repair to the place whither he goes every day, bid him repeat these two words at his going away: 'Faith is fair and perfidy foul.' For this is of my tenderness over him, that I am solicitous for him in my life-time and after my death.' Then she gave me somewhat for thee and made me swear that I would not give it to thee, till I should see thee weeping for her and lamenting her death. The thing is with me, and when I see thee as I have said, I will give it to thee." "Show it me," quoth I: but she would not. Then I gave myself up to my pleasures and thought no more of my cousin's death; for I was light-witted and would fain have been with my beloved day and night, So hardly had the night fallen, when I betook myself to the garden, where I found the lady sitting on coals of fire, for much wailing. As soon as she saw me, she ran to me and throwing her arms about my neck, exquised of my cousin. "She is dead," replied I; "and we have ceased lamentations and recitations of the Koran to be performed for her; and it is now four nights since she died." When she heard this, she shrieked aloud and wept, saying, "Did not thou tell thee that thou hast slain her? Hadst thou let me know of her before her death, I would have requited her the kindness she did me, in that she served me and brought thee to me; for but for her, we had never come together; and I fear lest some calamity befal thee by reason of thy sin against her." Quoth I, "She acquired me before she died." And I repeated to her what my mother had told me. "God on thee," rejoined she, "when thou returnedst to thy mother, learn what it is she hath for thee." Quoth I, "My mother also said to me, 'Before thy cousin died, she laid a charge upon me, saying, 'When thy son is about to go whither of woe, teach him these two words, 'Faith is fair and perfidy foul.'" When my mistress heard this, she exclaimed, "The mercy of God the Most High be upon her! Indeed, she hath delivered thee from me, for I had it in mind to do thee a mischief, but now I will not hurt thee nor trouble thee." I wondered at this and said to her, "What then didst thou purpose to do with me, and we loven?' Quoth she, 'Thou art infatuated with me; for thou art young and
witness; thy heart is free from guile and thou knowest not our perfidy and malice. Were she yet alive, she would protect thee, for she is the cause of thy preservation and hath delivered thee from destruction. And now I charge thee that thou speak not with neither accord any of our sex, young or old, for thou art young and simple and knowest not the ways of women and their malice, and she who explained the signs to thee is dead. And indeed I fear for

Nigh thee, lest thou fall into some calamity and find none to deliver thee from it, now that thy cousin is dead. Also, the pity of her! Would God I had known her before her death, that I might have visited her and required her the fair service she did me! The mercy of the Most High be upon her, for she kept her secret and revealed not what she suffered, and but for her, thou hadst never won to me! But there is one thing I desire of thee." "What is it?" said I. "It is," answered she, "that thou bring me to her grave, that I may visit her in the tomb wherein she is and write some verses thereon." "To-morrow," replied I, "if it be the will of God." Then I lay with her that night, and she ceased not, from time to time, to say, "Would thou hast told me of thy cousin, before her death!" And I said to her, "What is the meaning of the two words she taught me?" But she made me no answer. As soon as it was day, she rose and taking a purse of dinars, said to me, "Cone, show me her tomb, that I may visit it and grave some verses thereon and build a dome over it and commend her to the mercy of God and bestow these dinars in alms for her soul." "I hear and obey," replied I and went on before her, whilst she followed me, giving alms by the way and saying to all to whom she gave, "This is an alms for the soul of Azizah, who kept her counsel, till she drank the cup of death, and discovered not the secret of her passion." And she stilled not thus to give alms and say, "For Azizah's soul," till the purse was empty and we came to the burial-place. When she saw the tomb, she wept and threw herself upon it; then pulling out a graver of steel and a light mallet, she graved the following verses, in fine characters, upon the stone at the head of the tomb:

I passed by a raised tomb, in the midst of a garden-way, Upon whose letterless stone seven blood-red amanons lay.

Who sleeps in this unmarked grave? I said; and the earth, "Bend low; For a lover lies here and waits for the Resurrection Day."

"God help thee, O victim of love," I cried; "and bring thee to dwell In the heights of all the heavens of Paradise, I pray!"

How wretched are lovers all, even in the sepulchres. When their very graves are covered with ruin and decay!

Lo, if I might, I would plant thee a garden round about And with my streaming tears the thirst of its flowers quell!"

Then she returned to the garden, weeping, and I with her, and she said to me, "By Allah, thou shalt never leave me!"  "I hear and obey," answered I. Then I devoted myself wholly to her and paid her frequent visits, and she was good and generous to me. As often as I passed the night with her, she would make much of me and ask me of the two words my cousin told my mother; and I would repeat them to her.

I abode thus a whole year, till, what with eating and drinking and dalliance and wearing change of rich raiment, I waxed stout and fat, so that I lost all thought of sorrow and anxiety and forgot my cousin Azizah. At the end of this time, I went one day to the bath, where I refreshed myself and put on a rich suit of clothes, scented with various perfumes; then, coming out, I drank a cup of wine and smeared the fragrance of my new clothes, whereupon my breast dilated, for I knew not the perfidy of fortune nor the calamities of events. When the hour of evening prayer came, I thought to repair to my mistress; but being heated with wine, I knew not where I went, so
that, on the way, my drunkenness turned me into a by-
street called En Nekih, where, as I was going along, I
met an old woman with a lighted flambeau in one hand
Night
and a folded letter in the other; and she was weeping and
repeating the following verses:
O welcome, bearer of glad news, hence welcome to my sight! How
sweet and wondrous to me thy tidings of delight!
Thou that the lover's greetings brings into my languishing soul, God's
peace, while the seraph blows, dwell with thee day and night!

When she saw me, she said to me, "O my son, canst thou read?"
And I, of my officiousness, answered, "Yes,
O old aunt." "Then, take this letter," rejoined she, "and
read it to me." So I took the letter, and unfolding it, read
it to her. Now it contained the greetings of an absent
man to his friends; and when she heard its purport, she
rejoiced and was glad and called down blessings on me,
saying, "May God dispel thine anxiety, as thou hast dis-
pelled mine!" Then she took the letter and walked on.
Meanwhile, I was seized with a pressing need and squatted
don my heels to make water. When I had finished, I
stood up and cleansed myself with pebbles, then shaking
down my clothes, was about to go my way, when the old
woman came up to me again and bending down to kiss
my hand, said, "O my Lord, God give thee joy of thy
youth! I entreat thee to go with me to yonder door, for
I told them what thou readest to me of the letter, and they
believe me not: so come with me two steps and read them
the letter from behind the door and accept my devout
prayers." "What is the history of this letter?" asked I;
and she answered, "O my son, it is from my son, who hath
been absent from us these ten years. He set out with
merchandise and tarried long in foreign parts, till we lost
hope of him, supposing him to be dead. Now comes this
letter from him, and he has a sister, who weeps for him
day and night; so I said to her, 'He is in good health
and case.' But she will not believe me and says, 'Thou
must needs bring me one who will read the letter in my
presence, that my heart may be set at rest and my mind
eased.' Thou knowest, O my son, that those who love
are prone to imagine evil; so do me the favour to go with
me and read the letter, standing without the door, whilst
I call his sister to listen behind the curtain, so shalt thou
dispel our anxiety and fulfill our need. Quoth the Prophet
(whom God bless and preserve), 'He who eases an afflicted
one of one of the troubles of this world, God will ease him
of a hundred troubles,' and according to another tradition,
"Whoso relieves his brother of one of the troubles of this
world, God will relieve him of two-and-twenty troubles
of the Day of Resurrection." And I have betaken myself
to thee; so do not disappoint me." "I hear and obey,"
replied I. "Do thou go before me." So she went on and
I followed her a little way, till she came to the gate of a
large handsome house, whose door was plated with copper.
I stood without the door, whilst the old woman cried out
in Persian, and before I could think, a damsel ran up, with
a nimble and agile step. She had tucked up her trousers
to her knees, so that I saw a pair of legs that confounded
mind and eye, for they were like columns of alabaster,
adorned with anklets of gold, set with jewels. As says the
poet, describing her:
O thou who barest thy leg for lovers to look upon, That by the sight of
the leg the rest they may infer.
Who passest the cup around midst thy gallants, brisk and free, Naught
seduces the folk but the cup 1 and the cup-bearer. 2

She had seemingly been engaged in work of some kind,
for she had tucked the end of her shift within the ribbon

1 Saladin was mailebre.
2 The word sar (shar), when used in the oblique case, as it would
necessarily be here, makes salut, i.e. cup-bearer. A play upon the double
meaning is evidently intended.
of her trousers and thrown the skirt of her robe over her arm. Her sleeves were rolled up to the elbows, so that I could see her white wrists and forearms, on which were two pairs of bracelets, with chains of great pearls, and round her neck was a collar of precious stones. Her ears were adorned with pendants of pearls and on her head she wore a kerchief of brocade, embroidered with jewels of price. When I saw her, I was confounded at her beauty, for she was like the shining sun. Then she said, with clear and dulcet speech, never heard I sweeter, "O my mother, is this he who cometh to read the letter?"

"It is," replied the old woman; and she put out her hand to me with the letter. Now she was standing about half a rod within the door; so I stretched out my hand and put my head and shoulders within the door, thinking to draw near her and read the letter, when behold, before I knew what she would be at, the old woman thrust her head into my back and pushed me forward, with the letter in my hand, so that before I could think, I found myself in the vestibule. Then she entered, swifter than the lightning, and had but to shut the door. When the damsel saw me in the vestibule, she came up to me and straining me to her bosom, threw me to the floor, then knelt upon my breast and kneaded my belly with her hands, till I lost my senses. Then she took me by the hand and led me, unable to resist, for the violence of her pressure, through seven vestibules, whilst the old woman went before us with the lighted candle, till we came to a great saloon, with four daïses, in which a horseman might play at ball. Here she released me, saying, "Open thine eyes." So I opened them, still giddy for the excess of her pressing and pampering, and saw that the whole place was built of the finest alabaster and hung and carpeted with stuffs of silk and brocade, with cushions and divans of the same. Therein also were two benches of brass and a couch of red gold, set with pearls and jewels, befitting none save kings like unto thee. Then said she, "O Aziz, which wouldst thou rather, life or death?" "Life," answered I; and she said, "If life be lesser to thee, thou must marry me." Quoth I, "It were odious to me to marry the like of thee." "If thou marry me," rejoined she, "thou wilt at least be safe from the daughter of Delileh the crafty." "And who is she?" asked I. She laughed and replied, "How comes it that thou knowest her not, seeing that to-day thou hast companied with her a year and four months, may God the Most High destroy her and afflict her with one worse than herself! By Allah, there lives not a more perfidious than she! How many hath she not slain before thee and what deeds hath she not done! Nor can I understand how thou hast been so long in her company, yet hath she not killed thee nor done thee any hurt." When I heard this, I marvelled exceedingly and said, "Who made thee to know of her, O my lady?" "I know of her," said she, "as the age knows of its calamities: but now I would fain have thee tell me all that has passed between you, that I may know the cause of thy delivery from her." So I told her all that had happened, including the story of my cousin Aziz. When she heard of the latter's death, her eyes ran over with tears and she snote her hand upon hand and cried out, "God have mercy on her, for she lost her youth in His service, and may He replace her to thee! By Allah, O Aziz, it was she who was the cause of thy preservation from the daughter of Delileh and but for her, thou hadst been lost! Now she is dead and I fear for thee from the other's perfidy and mischief; but my heart is full and I cannot speak." "By Allah," quoth I, "all this happened, even as thou sayest!" And she shook her head and said, "There lives not this day the like of Aziz." "And when she was dying," continued I, "she bade me repeat to my mistress these two words, 'Faith is fair and
When she heard this, she exclaimed, "By Allah, O Aziz, it was this that saved thee from dying by her hand: and now my heart is at ease for thee from her, for she will never slay thee and thy cousin preserved thee, both in her lifetime and after her death. By Allah, I have desired thee this many a day, but could not get at thee till now and except by a trick, which succeeded with thee; for thou art inexperienced and knowest not the malice of women nor the viles of old women." "No, by Allah!" rejoined I. Then said she to me, "Be of good cheer and take comfort; the dead is in the mercy of God and the living shall be fairly entreated. Thou art a handsome youth, and I do not desire thee but according to the ordinance of God and of His prophet, on whom be peace and salvation! Whatever thou dost for money and stuff, thou shalt have without stint, and I will not impose any till on thee, for there is with me always bread baked and water in the pitcher. All I ask of thee is that thou do with me even as the cock does." "And what is it the cock does?" asked I. At this she laughed and clapped her hands and fell over on her back for excess of laughter; then she sat up and said, "O light of my eyes, dost thou not know what the cock’s business is?" "No, by Allah!" I replied; and she said, "The cock’s business is to eat and drink and tread." I was abashed at her words and said, "Is that the cock’s business?" "Yes," answered she; "and all I ask of thee now is to gird thy loins and strengthen thy resolution and strive thy best." Then she clapped her hands and cried out, saying, "O my mother, bring hither those who are with thee." Whereupon in came the old woman, carrying a veil of silk and accompanied by four lawful witnesses, who saluted me and sat down. Then she lighted four candles, whilst the young lady covered herself with the veil and deputed one of the witnesses to execute the contract on her behalf. So they drew up the marriage contract and she acknowledged to have received the whole of her dowry, both precedent and contingent, and to be indebted to me in the sum of ten thousand dinars. Then Night gave the witnesses their fee and they withdrew whence they came; whereupon she put off her clothes and abode in a shift of fine silk, laced with gold, after which she took me by the hand and carried me up to the couch, saying, "There is no blame in what is lawful." She lay down on her back and drawing me on to her breast, heaved a sigh and followed it up with an amorous gesture. Then she pulled up the shift above her breasts, and when I saw her thus, I could not choose but thrust into her, after I had sucked her lips, whilst she moaned and made a show of bashfulness and wept without tears. And indeed the case reminded me of the saying of the poet:

When I drew up her shift and discovered the terrace-roof of her bower, I found it as strait as my humour or else my worldly ways. So I gave it a suspension, halfway and she heaved a sigh. "What dost thou sigh?" quoth I. "For the rest of it, sure," she says.

Then she said, "O my beloved, to it and do thy best, for I am thine handmaid. My life on thee; give it me, all of it, that I may take it in my hand and thrust it into my entrails!" And she ceased not to excite me with sobs and sighs and amorous gestures, in the intervals of kissing and clinging, till we attained the supreme felicity and the term of our desires. We lay together till the morning, when I would have gone out; but she came up to me, laughing, and said, "Thinkest thou that going out of the bath is the same as going in?" Verily, I believe thou dostest me to be the like of the daughter of Delfeh. Beware of such a thought, for thou art my husband by contract and according to law. If thou be drunken, return to thy right mind and know that this house is opened but..."
one day in every year. Go down and look at the great door." So I went down and found the door locked and nailed up and returned and told her so. "Know, O Aziz," said she, "that we have in this house flour and ground and fruits and pomegranates and sugar and meat and sheep and fowls and so forth, enough to serve us for many years; and henceforth, the door will not be opened till after the lapse of a whole year, nor shall thou find thyself without till then." Qoth I, "There is no power and no virtue but in God!" "And what can this be?" rejoined she, "seeing thou knowest the cock's craft, of which I told thee?" Then she laughed and I laughed too, and I conformed to what she said and abode with her, plying the cock's craft, eating and drinking and clothing, twelve whole months, during which time she conceiv'd by me and brought me a son. At the end of the year, I heard the door opened and men came in with manchesters and flour and sugar. Thereupon, I would have gone out, but my wife said, "Wait till nightfall and go out as thou comest in." So I waited till the hour of evening prayer, and was about to go forth in fear and trembling, when she stopped me, saying, "By Allah, I will not let thee go, except thou swear to return this night before the closing of the door." I agreed to this, and she made me take a solemn oath by sword and Koran and the oath of divorce to boot that I would return to her. Then I left her and going straight to the garden, found the door open as usual; whereas I was angry and said to myself, "I have been absent a whole year and come here at unawares and find the place open as of wont! I wonder, is the damsel still in her old case? Alights I must enter and see, before I go to my mother, more by token.

Night that it is now nightfall." So I entered and making for the pavilion, found the daughter of Delilah sitting there with her head on her knee and her hand to her cheek. Her colour was changed and her eyes sunken; but when she saw me, she exclaimed, "Praised be God for thy safety!" and would have risen, but fell down for joy. I was aghast before her and hung my head; but presently went up to her, and kissing her, said, "How comest thou that I should come to thee to-night?" "I knew it not," replied she. "By Allah, this whole year past I have not tasted sleep, but have watched every night, expecting thee, from the day thou wastest out from me and I gave thee the new suit of clothes, and thou didst promise me to go to the bath and come back! So I abode awaiting thee that night and a second and a third; but thou comest not till now, and I ever expecting thy coming, for this is the way of lovers. And now I would have thee tell me what has been the cause of thine absence this year long." So I told her all that had happened; and when she knew that I was married, her colour paled. "I have come to thee to-night," added I; "but I must leave thee before day." Quoth she, "Dost it not suffice her to have tricked thee into marrying her and kept thee prisoner with her a whole year, but she must make thee take the oath of divorce to return to her before morning and not allow thee to divert thyself with thy mother or me nor suffer thee to pass one night with either of us, away from her? How, then, must it be with one from whom thou hast been absent a whole year, and I knew thee before she did?" But may God have compassion on thy cousin Aziz, for there befell her what never befell any and she endured what never any endured else and died, oppressed and rejected of thee; yet was it she protected thee against me. Indeed, I thought thee didst love me, so let thee take thine own way; else had I not let thee go safe and sound, when I had it in my power to hold thee in durance and destroy thee." Then she wept and waxed wrath and shuddered in my face and looked at me with angry eyes. When I saw this, I was terrified at her and trembled in every nerve, for she was like a dreadful
ghoul and I like a bean over the fire. Then said she,
"Thou art of no use to me, now thou art married and hast
a child, nor art thou any longer fit for my company. I care
only for bachelors and not for married men; for they profit
us nothing. Thou hast sold me for yonder stinking nose-
gay; but by Allah, I will make the baggage's heart ache
for thee, for thou shalt not live either for me or for her!"
Then she gave a loud cry, and ere I could think, up came
ten damsels and threw me on the ground; whereupon she
rose and taking a knife, said, "I will slay thee like a
he-goat; and that will be less than thy desert, for thy
behaviour to me and to thy cousin before me." When I
found myself at the mercy of her women, with my cheeks
stained with dust, and saw her sharpen the knife, I made
surer of death and cried out to her for mercy. But she only
redoubted in inhumanity and ordered the maids to bind
my hands behind me, and they did, and throwing me on
my back, sat down on my stomach and held my head.
Then two of them sat on my shins, whilst other two held
my hands, and she bade a third pair beat me. So they
beat me till I lost my senses and my voice failed. When
I revived, I said to myself, "It was easier and better for
me to have my throat cut than to be beaten thus!" And I
remembered how my cousin used to say to me, "God keep
thee from thy mischief!" and cried out and wept, till my
voice failed and I remained without breath or motion. Then
she sharpened the knife and said to the girls, "Uncover
the him." With this God inspired me to repeat to the him
my two words my cousin had bequeathed me, and I said, "O
my lady, dost thou not know that faith is fair and perfidy
is foul?" When she heard this, she cried out and said, "God
pity thee, Aziheh, and give thee Paradise in exchange for
thy wasted youth!" Yea, she served thee in her lifetime
and after her death, and now she has saved thee alive out
of my hands with these two words. Nevertheless, I cannot
leave thee thus, but I must o'en set my mark on thee, to spite
yonder shameless baggage, who has kept thee from me." Then
she called out to the damsels and bade them bind my
feet with cords and sit on me. They did her bidding, whilst
I lay insensible, and she fetched a pan of copper and setting
it on a brazier, poured into it oil of sesame, in which she
fried cheese. Then she came up to me and unfastening
my trousers, tied a cord round my cullions and giving it to
two of her women, bade them pull it at. They did so,
and I swooned away and was for excess of pain in a world
other than this. Then she came with a steel scalpel and
cut off my yard, so that I remained like a woman: after
which she scared the wound with the boiling oil and rubbed
it with a powder, and I the while unconscious. When I
came to myself, the blood had ceased to flow; so she bade
the damsels unbind me and gave me a cup of wine to
drink. Then said she to me, "Go now to her whom thou
hast married and who grudged me a single night, and the
mercy of God be on thy cousin Aziheh, who discovered
not her secret! Indeed she was the cause of thy pres-
servation, for hadst thou not repeated those words to me,
I had surely slain thee. Rise and go to whom thou wilt,
for thou hast done nothing of mine, save what I have cut
off, and now I have no part in thee, nor have I any further
care or occasion for thee: so be gone about thy business
and bless thy cousin's memory!" With that, she gave me
a push with her foot, and I rose, hardly able to walk, and
got little by little, till I came to the door of my wife's
house. I found it open, so I threw myself within it and
fell down in a swoon; whereupon my wife came out
and lifting me up, carried me into the salon and found that I
was like unto a woman. Then I fell into a deep sleep; but
when I awoke, I found myself thrown down at the gate of
cresset's garden. I rose, groaning for pain and misery, and

\* As a cresset.
made my way to my mother's house, where I found her weeping for me and saying, "O my son, would I knew where thou art!" So I drew near and threw myself upon her, and when she saw me, she knew that I was ill, for my face was at once pale and livid. Then I called to mind my cousin and all the kind offices she had been wont to do me and knew that she had indeed loved me; so I wept for her and my mother wept also. Presently, she said to me, "O my son, thy father is dead." At this my anguish redoubled, and I wept till I lost my senses. When I came to myself, I looked at the place where Asizeth had been used to sit and wept anew, till I all but fainted for excess of grief; and I ceased not to weep and lament thus till midnight, when my mother said to me, "Thy father has been dead these ten days." I shall never think of any one but my cousin Asizeth, answered I; "and indeed I deserve all that hath befallen me, in that I abandoned her who loved me so dear." "What hath befallen thee?" asked my mother. So I told her all that had happened, and she wept awhile, then rose and set meat and drink before me. I ate a little and drank, after which I repeated my story to her, and she exclaimed, "Praised be God that she did but this to thee, and forbore to stay thee!" Then she tended me and medicated me till I regained my health: and when my recovery was complete, she said to me, "O my son, I will now bring out to thee that which thy cousin commended to me in trust for thee; for it is thine. She made me swear not to give it thee, till I should see thee recalling her to mind and weeping over her and thine affections severed from other than her; and now I see thee in these conditions fulfilled in thee." So she arose and opening a chest, took out the piece of linen, with the figures of gazelles worked thereon, which I had given Asizeth; and I opened it and found written therein the following verses:

Who moved thee, fairest one, to use this refuge of bliss? And say, with stress of love, the words that sigh for these in vain?
If thou recall me not in mind beyond our parting-day, God knows the thought of thee with me for ever shall remain!
Thou art mine with these words, that yet are sweet to me: Wilt thou one day, though bat in dreams, to look upon me again?
I had not thought the ways of Love were languishment and woe And pains of soul and mind, alas! I to love thee I was fain.
I knew not weariness till I the captive of thine eyes became and all my soul was bound in passion's sad chain.
Even my foes have seen on me and play my distress: But think, O heart of steel, wilt ne'er have mercy on my pain.
By God, although I die, I'll never forget thee, O my hope, Nor comfort take, though life itself for love should waste and wane!

When I read these verses, I wept sore and buffeted my face; then I unfolded the scroll, and there fell from it another. I opened it and found these words written therein: "Know, O my cousin, that I accept thee of my blood and I beseech God to make accord between thee and her whom thou lov'st: but if it grieve thee or offend thee, thou shalt not return thou not to her neither resort to any other woman and bear thine affliction patiently, for were not the ordained term of thy life a long one, thou hadst perished long ago: but praise be God, who hath appointed my last day before thine! My peace be upon thee; preserve the cloth with the gazelles figured thereon and let it not leave thee, for it used to keep me company, whereas thou wast absent from me; but I conjure thee, by Allah, if thou chance to fall in with her who wrought these gazelles and it be in thy power to foregather with her, hold aloof from her and do not let her approach thee nor marry her; and if thou happen not on her and find no way to her, look thou company, not with any other of her sex. Know that she who wrought these gazelles is the daughter of the King of the Camper Islands and every year she works a like cloth and dispatches it to far countries, that her report and the beauty of her breadth,
which none in the world can match, may be bruited abroad.

As for thy beloved, the daughter of Deliich, this cloth came to her hand, and she used to ensnare folk with it, showing it to them and saying, 'I have a sister who wrought this.' But she lied in saying, may God bring her to shame! This, then, is my parting counsel to thee, and I have not charged thee thus, but because I know that, after my death, the world will be straitened on thee and bellicose, by reason of this, thou wilt leave thy native land and wander in foreign countries, and hearing of her who wrought these figures, be minded to forsake her with thee. Then wilt thou remember me and it shall not avail thee nor wilt thou know my value till after my death.'

When I had read the scroll and understood what was written therein, I fell again to weeping, and my mother wept because I did; and I ceased not to gaze upon it and weep till nightfall. I abode thus a whole year, at the end of which time the merchants, with whom I am in this caravan, prepared to set out from my native town, and my mother counselled me to equip myself and journey with them, so haply I might find forgetfulness and my sorrow cease from me, saying, 'Take comfort and put away from thee this mourning and travel for a year or two or three, till the caravan returns, when peradventure thy breast may be dilated and thy heart lightened.' She ceased not to persuade me thus, till I provided myself with merchandise and set out with the caravan. But all the time of my journey, my tears have never ceased flowing; and at every station where we halt, I open this piece of linen and look on these gazelles and call to mind my cousin Arzash and weep for her as thou hast seen, for indeed she loved me very dearly and died, oppressed and rejected of me; I did her nought but ill and she did me nought but good. When these merchants return from their journey, I shall return with them, by which time I shall have been a whole year absent; yet is my sorrow greater than ever and my grief and affliction were but increased by my visit to the Islands of Camphor and the Castle of Crystal. The islands in question are seven in number and are ruled by a king, Shehrim by name, who hath a daughter called Dinya; and I was told that it was she who wrought these gazelles and that this thou seest was of her broderie. When I knew this, yearning redoubled on me and I became a prey to consuming languor and drowned in the sea of melancholy thought; and I wept over myself, for that I was become even a woman, without manly gear like other men, and that there was no recourse for me. From the day of my departure from the Camphor Islands, I have been tearful-eyed and sorrowful-hearted, and I know not whether it will be given me to return to my native land and die by my mother or not, for I am weary of the world.'

When the young merchant had made an end of telling his story, he wept and groaned and complained and gazed upon the figures wrought on the piece of linen, whilst the tears streamed down his cheeks and he repeated the following verses:

* Needst thou sorrow have an end, quest thou mercy in me, and cease. * Needst thou mourning and sorrow and pain, let us be at peace. *

* After a while, say they; and I, 'Who will ensure me life, O foe, until the hands of grief their grip of me release? * Needst thou life to save from thy woe, let us be at peace. *

God knows that, since my separation from thee, full sore I've wept. So now that needs be I must run for very tears in debt! * Have patience, o quest thy enemies, and thou shalt win them yet. * And I, 'O thou that bannest me, whence should I patience get? * Needst thou life to save from thy woe, let us be at peace. *

Then said he, 'This, O prince, is my story; hast thou ever heard a stranger one?' Tai el Mulouk marvelled Night greatly at the young merchant's tale and said to him, 'By Allah, thou hast suffered that which never befell any but...
thyself, but thou hast a life-appointed to thee, which thou must needs fulfill; and now I would fain have thee tell me how thou sawest the lady who wrought these gazelles."

"O my lord," answered Aziz, "I got me access to her by a straggle, and it was this. When I entered her city with the caravan, I went forth and wandered about the gardens [till I came to one walled in and] abounding in trees, whose keeper was a venerable old man of advanced age. I asked him to whom the garden belonged, and he replied, "To the Lady Dunya, the king's daughter. We are now beneath her palaces," added he; "and when she is minded to divert herself, she opens the private door and walks in the garden and breathes the fragrance of the flowers." So I said to him, "Favour me by allowing me to sit in the garden till she comes; haply I may be fortunate enough to catch a sight of her as she passes." "There can be no harm in that," answered he. So I gave him money and said to him, "Buy us something to eat." He took the money joyfully and opening the door, admitted me into the garden and carried me to a pleasant spot, where he bade me sit down and await his return. Then he brought me fruit and leaving me, returned after a while with a roasted lamb, of which we ate till we had enough, my heart yearning the while for a sight of the princess. Presently, as we sat, the postern opened and the keeper said to me, "Rise and hide thyself." I did so; and beholding a black eunuch put out his head through the wicket and said, "O elder, is there any one with thee?" "No," answered he; and the eunuch said, "Shut the garden gate." So the keeper shut the gate, and the Lady Dunya came in by the private door. When I saw her, methought the moon had risen above the horizon and was shining; so I looked at her a long while and longed for her, as a man athirst longs for water. After a time she withdrew and shut the door; whereupon I left the garden and sought my lodging.

knowing that I could not win to her and that I was no mate for her, more by token that I was become like unto a woman, having no manly grace, and she was a king's daughter and I but a merchant; so how could I have access to the like of her or to any other woman? Accordingly, when my companions made ready for departure, I too made ready and set out with them, and we journeyed till we arrived at this place, where we met with thee. This then is my story, and peace be on thee!"

When Taj el Mulouk heard the young merchant's account of the Princess Dunya and her beauty, fires raged in his bosom and his heart and thought were occupied with love for her. passion and longing were sore upon him and he knew not what to do. Then he mounted his horse and taking Aziz with him, returned to his father's capital, where he assigned the merchant a house and supplied him with all that he needed in the way of meat and drink and clothing. Then he left him and returned to his palace, with the tears running down his cheeks, for report [whispered] stands in stead of sight and very knowledge. He abode thus till his father came in to him and finding him pale-faced, lean of body and tearful-eyed, knew that some chagrin had betided him and said to him, "O my son, acquaint me with thy case and tell me what hath befallen thee, that thy colour is changed and thy body wasted." So he told him all that had passed and how he had heard from Aziz of the princess Dunya and had fallen in love with her on hearsay, without having set eyes on her. "O my son," said the King, "she is the daughter of a king, whose country is far distant from ours: so put away this thought from thee and go in to thy mother's palace. There are five hundred damsels like means, and whosoever of them pleaseth thee, take her; or else we will seek thee in marriage some one of the kings' daughters, fairer than the Lady Dunya." "O my father," answered Taj el Mulouk,
I desire none other, for she it is who wrought the gazelles that I saw, and I must have her; else I will flee into the deserts and waste places and say myself for her sake." Then said his father, 'O my son, have patience with me, till I send to her father and demand her hand in marriage, as I did with thy mother. It may be that God will bring thee to thy desire; and if her father will not consent, I will shake his kingdom under him with an army, whose van shall be upon him, whilst the rear is yet with me.' Then he sent for Aziz and said to him, 'O my son, dost thou know the way to the Camphor Islands?' 'Yes,' answered he; and the King said, 'It is my wish that thou accompany my Vizier thither.' 'I hear and obey, O King of the age,' replied Aziz; whereupon the King summoned his Vizier and said to him, 'Devisef a plan, whereby my son's affair may be rightly managed, and go to the King of the Camphor Islands and demand his daughter in marriage for Taj el Misiouk.' 'I hear and obey,' answered the Vizier. Then Taj el Misiouk returned to his dwelling-place, and his longing redoubled and impatience and unease were sore upon him; and when the night darkened upon him, he wept and sighed and complained and repeated the following verses:

The shadows darken and my tears flow like rain, While in my heart the fires of love rage on and never die. Question the nights of me, and they will tell thee That I in all their endless hours do watch and weep and wait. Weepful for love-longing and grief, I lie and watch the stars All night long, and fear the tears will fall like hail. Lowly and helpless I abide, for such as loves be hate, as it were, nor with nor on to help them in their tale.

Then he swooned away and did not recover his senses till the morning, when there came to him one of his father's servants and standing at his head, summoned him to the King's presence. So he went with him, and his father seeing that his pallor had increased, exhorted him to patience and promised him union with her he loved. Then he equipped Aziz and the Vizier for the journey and gave them presents for the princess's father; and they set out and fared on night and day, till they drew near the Camphor Islands, when the Vizier called a halt on the banks of a stream and despatched a messenger to acquaint the King of his arrival. The messenger had not long been gone, when they saw, advancing towards them, the King's chamberlains and amirs, who met them at a parasang's distance from the city and escorted them to the royal presence. They laid before the King the gifts with which they were charged and enjoyed his hospitality three days. On the fourth day the Vizier rose and going in to the King, stood before him and acquainted him with the object of his visit; whereupon he was perplexed and knew not what answer to make him, for that his daughter was averse from men and did not desire to marry. So he bowed his head awhile, then raised it and calling one of his chamberlains, said to him, 'Go to thy mistress, the princess Dunya, and repeat to her what thou hast heard and tell her this Vizier's errand.' So the maiden went out and returning after a while, said to the King, 'O King of the age, when I went to the Lady Dunya and told her what I had heard, she was exceeding wroth and made me at a staff, meaning to break my head; whereupon I fled from her, and she said to me, 'If my father force me to marry, him whom I wed I will kill.' Then said the King to the Vizier and Aziz, 'Salute the King your master and tell him what ye have heard and that my daughter is averse from men and hath no mind to marry.' So they returned, without having Night accomplished the object of their journey, and fared on till morning, when they rejoined the King and told him what they had passed: whereupon he commanded the chiefs to summon the troops for war. But the Vizier said to him, 'O King, do not this,
for the King is not at fault, seeing that, when his daughter learnt our business, she sent to say that, if her father forced her to marry, she would kill her husband and herself after him: so the refusal comes from her.' When the King heard this, he feared for Taj el Mulouk and said, 'If I make war on the King of the Camphor Islands and carry off his daughter, she will kill herself and it will profit me nothing.' So he told his son how the case stood, and he said, 'O my father, I cannot live without her; so I will go to her and cast about to get me access to her, though I die in the attempt.' 'How wilt thou go to her?' asked his father; and he answered, 'In the disguise of a merchant.' Then said the King, 'If then must go and there is no help for it, take with thee Aziz and the Vizier.' He agreed to this, and the King took money from his treasures and made ready for him merchandise, to the value of a hundred thousand dinars; and when the night came Taj el Mulouk went to Aziz's lodging and passed the night there, heart-smitten and taking no delight in food nor sleep; for melancholy was heavy upon him and he was agitated with longing for his beloved. So he besought the Creator to unite him with her and wept and groaned and complained, repeating the following verses:

Shall wine after estrangeness becast on pleasure, some day? Shall I ever make most of my passion to thee, I wonder, and say, 'How oft have I called thee to mind, whilst the night in its trances slept? Thus hast made me waken, whilst all but I am oblivion lay.'

Then he wept sore and Aziz wept with him, for that he remembered his cousin; and they both ceased not to do thus till the morning, when Taj el Mulouk rose and went in to his mother, in his travelling dress. She asked him of his case, and he told her what was to do; so she gave him fifty thousand dinars and bade him farewell, offering up prayers for his safety and for his union with his beloved. Then he left her and betaking himself to his father, asked his leave to depart. The King granted him leave and presenting him with other fifty thousand dinars, let pitch a tent for him without the city, in which they abode two days, then set out on their journey. And Taj el Mulouk delighted in Aziz's company and said to him, 'O my brother, I can never bear to be parted from thee.' 'Nor I from thee,' replied Aziz; 'and fain would I die at thy feet: but, O my brother, my heart is concerned for my mother.' 'When we have attained our wish,' said the prince, 'all will be well.' As for the Vizier, he exhorted Taj el Mulouk to patience, whilst Aziz entertained him with talk and recited verses to him and diverted him with stories and anecdotes; and so they fared on day and night for two whole months, till the way became tedious to the prince and the fires of passion redoubled on him. So he repeated the following verses:

Long is the road and thankless and grief redoubled eyes, Whilst in my breast the fires of love rage ever night and day.

O thou, the goal of all my hopes, sole object of my wish, I swear by Him, the Most High God, who enabled man from clay,

For love of thee I bear a load of longing and desire. Such is the mountain of Zaisan which ne'er wraith away!

Indeed, O lady of my soul! love slumber are outset. No breath of life in me is left, my fading spirit to stop,

But for the hope of union with thee, that lives on, My weary body had no strength to faints forth the way.

When he had finished, he wept and Aziz wept with him, from a lacerated heart, till the Vizier was moved to pity by their weeping and said to the prince, 'O my lord, take courage and be of good cheer! all will yet be well.' 'O Vizier,' said Taj el Mulouk, 'indeed I am weary of the length of the way. Tell me how far we are distant yet from the city.' 'But a little way,' replied Aziz. Then they continued their journey, traversing valleys and plains and hills and stony wastes, till one night, as Taj el Mulouk

1 Dangun.
was asleep, he dreamt that his beloved was with him and that he embraced her and pressed her to his bosom; and he awoke, trembling and delirious with emotion, and repeated the following verses:

My heart is maddened for love and my tears for ever flow, And longing is ever upon me and yearning woe.

My plaint is, for tears, as the morning of women bereft of young. And I weep, when the darkness gathereth, as the turtledove and low.

Veil, if the breeze be hither from the land where thou dost dwell. Their wives on earth, unseen, enwrapped, a grateful cockles throw.

Peace be on thee, my beloved, as long as the cockatoo flies. As long as the turtle wanders, as long as the sepalphs blow!

When he had finished, the Vizier came to him and said, 'Rejoice; this is a good sign: so comfort thyself and be of good cheer, for thou shalt surely compass thy desire.' And Aziz also came to him and exhorted him to patience and applied himself to divert him, talking with him and telling him stories. So they pressed on, night and day, other two months, till, one day, at sunset, there appeared to them some white thing in the distance and Taj el Moulouk said to Aziz, 'What is yonder whiteness?' 'O my lord,' answered he, 'that is the Fortess of Crystal and the city that thou seest.' At this the prince rejoiced, and they fared forward till they drew near the city, to the exceeding joy of Taj el Moulouk, whose grief and anxiety ceased from him. They entered, in the guise of merchants, the King's son being hasted as a merchant of importance, and repaired to a great khan, known as the Merchants' Lodging. Quoth Taj el Moulouk to Aziz, 'Is this the resort of the merchants?' 'Yes,' replied he; 'it is the khan in which I lodged, when I was here before.' So they alighted there and making their beasts kneel down, unloaded them and laid up their goods in the warehouses. They abode four days, resting; at the end of which time, the Vizier proposed that they should hire a large house. To this they assented and hired a spacious house, fitted up for festivities, where they took up their abode, and the Vizier and Aziz studied to devise some plan of conduct for Taj el Moulouk, whilst the latter remained in a state of perplexity, knowing not what to do. The Vizier could think of nothing but that he should set up as a merchant in the bazar-market; so he turned to the prince and Aziz and said to them, 'If we tarry thus, we shall not compass our desire nor attain our aim; but I have bethought me of somewhat, in which, if it please God, we shall find our advantage.' 'Do what seemeth good to thee,' replied Taj el Moulouk; 'indeed there is a blessing on the aged, more by token that thou art versed in the conduct of affairs: so tell me what is in thy mind.' 'It is my counsel,' rejoined the Vizier, 'that we hire thee a shop in the bazar-market, where thou mayest sit to sell and buy. Every one great and small, hath need of silk and other stuffs; so if thou be patient and abide in thy shop, thine affairs will prosper, if it please God, especially as thou art comely of aspect.' Moreover, I would have thee make Aziz thy factor and set him within the shop, to hand thee the pieces of stuffs and silks. When Taj el Moulouk heard this, he said, 'This is a good counsel!' So he took out a handsome suit of merchant's clothes, and putting it on, set out for the bazar, followed by his servants, to one of whom he had given a thousand dinars, wherewith to fit up the shop. When they came to the bazar-market and the merchants saw Taj el Moulouk's beauty and grace, they were confounded and some said, 'Sire Rezwan hath opened the gates of Paradise and left them unguarded, so that this passing lovely youth hath come out.' And others, 'Believe this is one of the angels!' They asked for the shop of the overseer of the market, and the merchant directed them to it. So they repaired thither and saluted him, and he and those who were with him rose to them and seated them and made much of
them, because of the Vizier, whom they saw to be a man of age and reverend aspect; and seeing Ansir and Taj el Mulouk in his company, they said to one another, ' Doubtless this old man is the father of these two youths.' Then said the Vizier, 'Which of you is the overseer of the market?' ‘This is he,’ answered they; whereupon he came forward and the Vizier, observing him, saw him to be an old man of grave and dignified carriage, with slaves and servants, white and black. He greeted them in the friendliest manner and was lavish in his attentions to them; then he made them sit by his side and said to them, 'Have you any business which we may have the pleasure of transacting?' ‘Yes,’ answered the Vizier. ‘I am an old man, stricken in years, and have with me these two youths, with whom I have travelled through many towns and countries, tarrying a whole year in every city of importance on our way, that they might take their pleasure in viewing it and come to know its people. Now I have chosen to make a stay in this your town; so I would fain have thee allot me a handsome shop in the best situation, wherein I may establish them, that they may traffic and learn to buy and sell and give and take, whilst they divert themselves with the sight of the place and acquire the use of its people.’ ‘Good,’ said the overseer, and looking at the two youths, rejoiced in them and conceived a great affection for them. Now he was a great lover of bewitching glances, preferring the commerce of boys to that of girls and inclining to their love. So he said in himself, ‘These be fine purchase; glory to Him who created and fashioned them out of vile water!’ and rising, stood before them like a servant, to do them honour. Then he went out and made ready for them a shop in the midst of the market, from which there was no larger nor better in the bazaar, for it was spacious and handsomely decorated and fitted with shelves of ebony and ivory: after which he delivered the keys to the Vizier, who was dressed as an old merchant, saying, 'Take them, O my lord, and may God make it a blessed abiding-place to thy senses!' The Vizier took the keys, and they returned to the Khan and caused their servants to transport to the shop all their goods and stuffs and valuables, of which they had great plenty, worth treasures of money. Next morning, the Vizier carried the two young men to the bath, where they washed and put on rich clothes and perfumed themselves to the utmost therein. Now each of them was passing fair to look upon, and the bath enhanced their charms to the utmost, even as says the poet:

Good look to him who in the bath doth serve him as his squire, Handling a body gotten sure twist water and the fire
With skillful hands he showerth forth the muskels of his body, In that he slaughter very much from what is like carphim.

When the overseer heard that they had gone to the bath, he sat down to await them, and presently they came up to him, like two gazelles, with red cheeks and black eyes and shining faces, as they were two lustre moons or two fruit-laden saplings. When he saw them, he rose and said to them, 'May your bath profit you ever!' Whereupon Taj el Mulouk replied, with the sweetness of speech, 'May God be bountiful to thee, O my father! Why didst thou not come with us and bathe in our company?' Then they both bent over his hands and kissing them, walked before him to the shop, to do him honour and show their respect for him, for that he was chief of the merchants and the market, as well as their sense of his kindness in giving them the shop. When he saw their hips quivering, emotion and longing redoubled on him, and he could not contain himself, but puffed and moaned and devoured them with his eyes, repeating the following verses:

1 Senex honestus.
The heart in them studieth the chapter of worship unshaken and sheer; No proofs of more gods to worship than one if it beuth here.

No wonder it is they tremble by reason of their weight; How much is there set of motion in that revolving sphere.

And also these:

Two fair ones walking on the earth mine eyes did late espy; Two that I needs must love although they walked upon mine eye.

When they heard this, they begged him to enter the bath with them a second time. He could hardly believe his ears and hastening thither, went in with them. The Vizier had not yet left the bath; so when he heard of the overseer’s coming, he came out and meeting him in the outer room of the bath, invited him to enter. He refused, but Taj el Moulouk took him by one hand and Azaiz by the other and carried him into a cabinet, the impure old man submitting to them, whilst his emotion increased on him. Then Taj el Moulouk swore that none but he should wash him and Azaiz that none but he should pour water on him. He would have refused, albeit this was what he desired; but the Vizier said to him, ‘They are thy sons; let them wash thee and bathe thee.’ God preserve them to thee!” exclaimed the overseer. ‘By Allah, thy coming and their bath brought blessing and fortune upon our city!’ and he repeated the following verses:

Thou art, and the mountains about us grow green And glittered, with flowers for the bracelets of Venus;
While, earth and her creatures cried, ‘Welcome to thee, Thrice welcome, that comest in glory and sheen!’

They thanked him for this, and Taj el Moulouk proceeded to wash him, whilst Azaiz poured water over him and he thought himself in Paradise. When they had made an end of his service, he called down blessings on them and sat talking with the Vizier, gazing the while on the youths. Presently, the servants brought them towels, and they dried themselves and donned their clothes. Then they went out, and the Vizier said to the overseer, ‘O my lord, verily the bath is the Paradise of this world.’ ‘May God vouchsafe it to thee!’ replied the overseer, ‘and health to thy sons and guard them from the evil eye! Do you remember that the poets have said in praise of the bath?’ ‘Yes,’ said Taj el Moulouk and repeated the following verses:

The life of the bath is the pleasantest part of life, Except that the time of our sojourn there is slight.

A heaven, wherein ‘tis6 known to us to abide; A hell, into which we enter with delight.

And I also,’ said Azaiz, ‘remember some verses in praise of the bath.’ Quoth the overseer, ‘Let us hear them.’ So he repeated the following:

I saw in a house, whereon flowers from the sheer stone blew; Most goodly, when the flames about it rage and glow.
Then deemed it hell, and yet, in truth, tis Paradise And most that be therein are sins and deceits, I know.

His verses pleased the overseer and he wondered at their grace and eloquence and said, ‘By Allah, ye possess both beauty and eloquence! Bat now listen to me.’ And he chanted the following verses:

O pleasure of hell-fire and paradise of pain! Bodies and souls therein indeed are born again,
I marvel at a house whose pleasantness for aye Doth flourish, though the flames beneath it rage again.
A sojourn of delight to those who wait it: it is; the pools on them their tears in torrents rain.

Then he fed his eyes on the gardens of their beauty and repeated the following verses:

I went to the bath-keeper’s house and entered his dwelling-place And found no door-keeper there but met me with smiling face.
I rejoiced awhile in his heaven 4 and visited eke his hell 5 And thanked both Malik 6 and Sitawan 7 for solace and kindly grace.

1 i.e. Paradise. 6 The cold room of the bath. 7 The hot room.

The door-keeper of hell. 8 The door-keeper of Paradise.

VOL. II. 18
They were charmed with these verses, and the overseer invited them to his house; but they declined and returned to their own lodging, to rest from the great heat of the bath. They took their ease there and ate and drank and passed the night in the greatest comfort and delight, till morning, when they arose from sleep and making their ablutions, prayed the morning-prayer and drank the morning-draught. As soon as the sun had risen and the markets and shops were open, they went out to the bazaar and opened their shop, which their servants had already furnished, after the handsomest fashion, with prayer-rugs and silken carpets and a pair of divans, each worth a hundred dinars. On each divan they had spread a rug, guarded with gold and fit for a king, and in the midst of the shop stood a third seat of still greater elegance, even as the case required. Taj el Mulouk sat down on one couch and Aziz on another, whilst the Vizier seated himself on that in the centre, and the servants stood before them. The people of the city heard of them and crowded to them, so that they sold some of their goods and the report of Taj el Mulouk’s beauty and grace spread throughout the place. Some days passed thus, and every day the people flocked to them more and more, till the Vizier, after exhorting the prince to keep his secret, commended him to Aziz’s care and went home, that he might be alone and cast about for some device that might profit them.

Meanwhile, the two young men sat talking and the prince said to Aziz, ‘It may be some one will come from the Princess Dunya.’ So he abode in expectation of this days and nights, whilst his heart was troubled and he knew neither sleep nor rest; for desire had gotten the mastery of him and passion and longing were sore upon him, so that he forewent the solace of sleep and abstained from meat and drink; yet ceased he not to be like the full moon. One day, as he sat in the shop, there came up an old woman, followed by two slave-girls. She Night stopped before Taj el Mulouk and observing his grace and elegance and symmetry, marvelled at his beauty and sweated in her clothes, exclaiming, ‘Glory to Him who created thee out of vile water and made thee a ravishment to all who look upon thee!’ And she fixed her eyes on him and said, ‘This is sure no mortal, but a noble angel.’ Then she drew near and saluted him, whereupon he returned her salute and (being prompted thereto by Aziz) rose to his feet to receive her and smiled in her face; after which he made her sit down by his side and fanned her, till she was rested and refreshed, when she turned to him and said, ‘O my son, O thou that art perfect in graces and charms, art thou of this country?’ ‘By Allah, O my lady,’ answered he in the sweetest and most pleasant of voices, ‘I was never in this country in my life till now, nor do I sojourn here save for my diversion.’ ‘May all honour and prosperity attend thee!’ rejoined she. ‘What stuff hast thou brought with thee? Show me something handsome; for the fair should bring nothing but what is fair.’ When he heard her words, his heart fluttered and he knew not what he meant; but Aziz made a sign to him, and he replied, ‘I have everything thou canst desire, and amongst the rest goods that beat none but kings and kings’ daughters; so tell me for whom thou seestest the stuff, that I may show thee what will befit her.’ This he said, that he might learn the meaning of her words; and she rejoined, ‘I want a stuff fit for the Princess Dunya, daughter of King Sher Khan.’ When the prince heard the name of his beloved, he rejoiced greatly and said to Aziz, ‘Give me such a bale.’ So Aziz brought it and opened it before Taj el Mulouk, who said to the old woman, ‘Choose what will suit her; for these are goods only to be found with me.’ So she chose
goods' worth a thousand dinars and said, 'How much is this?' And ceased not while to talk with him and rub the inside of her thighs with the palm of her hand. 'Shall I bargain with the like of thee about this paltry price?' answered he. 'Farewell be God who hath brought me acquainted with thee!' 'The name of God be upon thee!' exclaimed she. 'I commended thy fair face to the protection of the Lord of the Daybreak! Fair face and pleasant speech!' Happy the woman who lies in thy bosom and clasps thy waist in her arms and enjoys thy youth, especially if she be fair and graceful like unto thee!' At this, Taj el Mubarak laughed till he fell backward and said (in jest), 'O Thou who fulfillst desire by means of dissolute old women! They are indeed the accomplishers of desires!' Then said she, 'O my son, what is thy name?' And he answered, 'My name is Taj el Mubarak.' 'This is a name of kings and kings' sons,' rejoined she; 'and thou art clad in a merchant's habit.' 'Quoth Aziz, 'For the love of his parents and family bore him and the value they set on him, they named him thus.' Thou sayst sooth,' replied the old woman. 'May God guard you both from the evil eye and the malice of the enemy and the envious, though hearts be broken by your charms!' Then she took the stuff and went away, amazed at the prince's beauty and grace and symmetry, and going in to the Princess Dyana, said to her, 'O my lady, I have brought thee some handsome stuff.' 'Show it me,' said the princess. 'Here it is,' answered the old woman; 'turn it over, O my treasure, and examine it.' So the princess looked at the stuff and was amazed at its beauty and said, 'O my nurse, this is indeed handsome stuff! I have never seen its like in our city.' 'O my lady,' replied the nurse, 'he who sold it me is handsomer still. It would seem as if Rizwan had left the gates of Paradise open and this youth had

1 i.e. Cumes of Kings.
I send thee, O my hope, a letter, to complain Of all my soul endures for parting and its pain.

Sir, I ask thee, 'A fire is in my heart!' The next line scorcheth my passion all in vain;

The third, 'My patience fails and she my life doth waste;' The fourth, 'All love with me for ever shall remain.'

The fifth, 'When shall mine eyes behold thee?' And the sixth, 'When shall the day betide of meeting for us twain?'

And by way of subscription he wrote these words, 'This letter is from the captive of desire, prisoned in the hold of longing, from which there is no deliverance but in union and intercourse with her whom I love, after absence and separation: for he suffereth grievous torment by reason of his severance from his beloved.' Then his tears rushed out and he wrote the following verses:

I write to thee, my love, and the tears run down as I write; For the tears of my eyes, shall I cease never day or night?

Yet do I not despair, my love, of God His grace, The day shall dawn for us of ease and delight.

Then he folded the letter and sealed it and gave it to the old woman, saying, 'Carry it to the Lady Dunya.' 'I hear and obey,' answered she; whereupon he gave her a thousand dinars and said to her, 'O my mother, accept this, as a token of my affection.' She took the letter and the money, calling down blessings on him, and returned to the princess. When the latter saw her, she said to her, 'O my maids, what is it he asks, that we may fulfill his wish to him?' 'O my lady,' replied the old woman, 'he sends thee this letter by me, and I know not what is in it.' The princess took the letter and reading it, exclaimed, 'Who and what is this merchant that he should dare to write to me thus?' And she buffeted her face, saying, 'What have we done that we should come in converse with shopkeepers? Alas! Alas! By Allah, but that I fear God the Most High, I would put him to death and crucify him before his shop!' 'What is in the letter,' asked the old woman, 'to trouble thy heart and move thine anger thus?' Doth it contain a complaint of oppression or demand for the price of the stuff?' 'Out on thee!' answered the princess. 'There is none of this in it, not but words of love and gallantry. This is all through thee: else how should this devil know me?' 'O my lady,' rejoined the old woman, 'thou sittest in thy high palace and none may win to thee, no, not even the birds of the air. God keep thee and keep thy youth from blame and reproach! Thou art a princess, the daughter of a king, and needest not reck of the barking of dogs. Blame not me that I brought thee this letter, knowing not what was in it; but it is my counsel that thou send him an answer, threatening him with death and forbidding him from this idle talk: surely he will abstain and return not to the like of this.' 'I fear,' said the princess, 'that, if I write to him, he will conceive hopes of me.' Quoth the old woman, 'When he reads thy threats and menace of punishment, he will desist.' So the princess called for inkhorn and paper and pen of brass and wrote the following verses:

O thou who feignest thee the prey of love and wakelassen And plaint of that thou dost endure for passion and distress,

Thinkst thou debased ones, to win thy wishes of the moon? Did ever any of a moon get union and rest?

I rode thee get away the thought of this thou seekest from thee; For that which is not true is for thee and weariness.

If thou to this thy speech return, a grievous punishment! Shall surely fall on thee from me and me past remorse.

By Him, the Almighty God, I swear, who moulded man from clay. Him who gave fire unto the sun and lit the moon no less,

If thou offend me now, for sure, upon a cross of tree I'll have thee crucified,

for all thy wealth and goodliness!

Then she folded the letter and giving it to the old woman, said, 'Carry this to him and bid him desist from this talk.' 'I hear and obey,' replied she, and taking the letter, returned, rejoicing, to her own house, where she
passed the night and in the morning betook herself to the shop of Taj el Mulfuk, whom she found expecting her. At sight of her, he fell sighing over his reason for delight, and when she came up to him, he rose to his feet and seated her by his side. Then she brought out the letter and gave it to him, saying, ‘Read this. When the princess read thy letter, she was angry; but I consoled her and fetched with her till I made her laugh, and she had pity on thee and has returned thee an answer.’ He thanked her and hade Aziz give her a thousand dinars: then he read her letter and fELL to weeping sore, so that the old woman’s heart was moved to pity for him and his tears and complaints grieved her. So she said to him, ‘O my son, what is there in this scroll, that makes thee weep?’ ‘She threatens me with death and crucifixion,’ replied he, ‘and forbids me to write to her; but if I write not, my death will be worse than my life.’ So take thou my answer to her letter and let her do what she will.”

By the life of thy youth,” rejoined the old woman, “needs must I venture my life for thee; that I may bring thee to thy desire and help thee to win that thou hast at heart!’ And he said, ‘Whatsoever thou dost, I will requite thee therefor; and do thou determine of it; for thou art versed in affairs and skilled in all fashions of intrigue; difficult matters are easy to thee: and God can do all things.’ Then he took a scroll and wrote therein the following verses:

My love with slaughter threatens me, woe’s me for my distress! But death is forsooth; to me, indeed, ’tis happiness.
Better death and a lover’s woes than that a weary life He live, rejected and forlorn, forbidden from content:
Visit a lover, for God’s sake, whose every helper fails. And with thy sight thy captive slave beseeches beg to bless!
Have rath upon me, lady mine, for loving thee; for all, Who love the noble, stand excused for very passion’s access.

Then he sighed heavily and wept, till the old woman wept also and taking the letter, said to him, ‘Take heart and be of good cheer, for it shall go hard but I bring thee to thy desire.’ Then she rose and leaving him on coals of night and fire, returned to the princess, whom she found still pale and经营者, with rage at Taj el Mulfuk’s first letter. The nurse gave her his second letter, wherein she anger redoubled and said, ‘Did I not say he would conceive hopes of us?’ ‘What is this dog?’ replied the old woman, ‘that he should conceive hopes of thee?’ Quoth the princess, ‘Go back to him and tell him that, if he write to me again, I will have his head cut off.’ ‘Write this in a letter,’ answered the nurse, ‘and I will take it to him, that his fear may be the greater.’ So she took a scroll and wrote thereon the following verses:

Hasten, thou that listest the lessons of the past inheed, List to the best and yet hearest power to win thy goal on high.
Think out thou to reach Es Suha,1 O debaited one, although Even the moon’s too far to come at, shining in the middle sky.
How then dares thou hope my favours and aspire to twinned delight? And my spear-straight shapes and slender thighs are to grapple with.
Leave this purpose, lest mine anger fall on thee some day of wrath. Such as since the pair of places shall with white for terror dye.

Then she folded the letter and gave it to the old woman, who took it and returned to Taj el Mulfuk. When he saw her, he rose to his feet and exclaimed, ‘May God not bereave me of the blessing of thy coming!’ Quoth she, ‘Take the answer to thy letter.’ He took it and reading it, wept sore and said, ‘Would some one would slay me now, for indeed death were easier to me than this my state!’ Then he took pen and inkhorn and paper and wrote the following verses:

O my hope, have done with rigour; I by disdain and anger by; Visit one who, drowned in passion, both for love and longing sigh.
Think not, under these arrangements, that my life I will endure. Lo, my soul, for very separation from thy sight, is like to die.

1 An obscure star in the Great Bear.
Then he folded the letter and gave it to the old woman, saying, 'Grudge it not to me, though I have wearied thee to no purpose.' And he bade Azize give her other thousand dinars, saying, 'O my mother, needs must this letter result in perfect union or complete separation.' 'O my son,' replied she, 'by Allah, I desire nought but thy weal; and it is my wish that she be thine, for indeed thou art the resplendent moon and she the rising sun. If I do not bring you together, there is no profit in my life; these ninety years have I lived in the practice of wile and intrigue; so how should I fail to unite two lovers, though in defiance of law?' Then she took leave of him, after comforting his heart, and returned to the palace. Now she had hidden the letter in her hair: so she sat down by the princess and rubbing her head, said, 'O my lady, maybe thou wilt comb out my hair, for it is long since I went to the bath.' The princess bared her arms to the elbow and letting down the old woman's hair, began to comb it, when out dropped the letter and Danya seeing it, asked what it was. Quoth the nurse, 'This paper must have stuck to me, as I sat in the merchant's shop: give it me, that I may return it to him; belike it contains some reckoning of which he hath need.' But the princess opened it, and reading it, cried out, 'This is one of thy tricks, and hadst thou not harmed me, I would lay violent hands on thee for this.' Verily God hath afflicted me with this merchant; but all that hath befallen me with him is of thy contrivance. I know not whence this fellow can have come; none but he would venture to affront me thus, and I fear lest this my case get wind, the more that it concerns one who is neither of my rank nor of my peers.' 'None would dare speak of this,' rejoined the old woman, 'for fear of thine anger and aye of thy father; so there can be no harm in sending him an answer.' 'O my nurse,' said the princess, 'verily this fellow is a devil. How can he dare to use such language to me and not dread the Sultan's wrath? Indeed, I am perplexed about his case; if I order him to be put to death, it were unjust; and if I leave him, his presumption will increase.' 'Write him a letter,' rejoined the old woman; 'it may be he will desist.' So she called for pen and ink and paper and wrote the following verses:

Again and again I chide thee, yet folly ever again comes thee: how long, with my writing, in verse shall I bid thee refrain, whilst thou dost grovel in heathenism all forswearing? But I now gaze, save to keep thy secret, unto thy prayers may reach,

Conceal thy passion nor ever reveal it; for, as thou speakest, I will surely show thee no mercy nor yet my wrath contain.

If to thy foolish daring thou turnest thou now, for sure, The raven of evil omens shall craak for thee death and base;

And slaughter shall come upon thee ere long, and under the earth To seek for a place of abiding, God wot, then shalt be lain.

Thy people, O self-shamester, thou'lt leave in mourning for thee; Ay, all their lives they shall weep for thee, forsooth and slain.

Then she folded the letter and committed it to the old woman, who took it and returning to Tujul Mulun, gave it to him. When he read it, he knew that the princess was hard-hearted and that he should not win to her; so he complained to the Vizier and besought his advice. Quoth he, 'Nothing will profit thee save that thou write to her and inveile the wrath of God upon her.' And he said to Azize, 'O my brother, do thou write to her in my name, according to thy knowledge.' So Aziz took a scroll and wrote the following verses:

O Lord, by the Five Elders, deliver me, I pray Thee, and her, for whom I suffer, in the aifliction: lay

Then knowest thou that I weary in raging flames of love; Whiles she love is cruel and saith me ever nay.

How long shall I be tender to her, despite my pain? How long shall she ride roughshod over my weakness night and day?

In agues I wonder of never-ceasing death And find not friend nor helper, O Lord, to be my stay.
Full fill would I forget her; but how can I forget, When for desire my patience is wasted all away?

Then he folded the letter and gave it to Taj el Mulouk, who read the verses and was pleased with them. So he handed the letter to the old woman, who took it and carried it to the princess. When she read it, she was greatly enraged and said, 'All that has befallen me comes from this pernicious old woman!' Then she cried out to the damsels and eunuchs, saying, 'Seize this accursed old trickster and beat her with your slippers!' So they beat her till she swooned away; and when she revived, the princess said to her, 'By Allah, O wicked old woman, did I not fear God the Most High, I would kill thee!' Then she bade them beat her again, and they did so, till she fainted a second time, whereupon the princess ordered them to drag her forth and throw her without the palace. So they dragged her along on her face and threw her down before the gate. When she came to herself, she rose and made the best of her way home, walking and resting by turns. She passed the night in her own house and in the morning, she went to Taj el Mulouk and told him what had passed, at which he was distressed and said, 'O my mother, this that has befallen thee is grievous to us; but all things are according to fate and destiny.'

'Take comfort and be of good cheer,' replied she; 'for I will not give over striving, till I have brought thee and her together and made thee to enjoy the valises baggage who hath tortured me with beating.' Quoth the prince, 'Tell me the reason of her aversion to men.' 'It arose from what she saw in a dream,' answered the old woman. 'And what was this dream?' asked the prince. 'One night,' replied she, 'as she lay asleep, she saw a fowler spread his net upon the ground and scatter grain round it. Then he sat down hard, and all the birds in the neighbourhood flocked to the net. Amongst the rest she saw a pair of pigeons, male and female; and whilst she was watching the net, the male bird's foot caught in it and he began to struggle, whereupon all the other birds took fright and flew away. But presently his mate came back and hovered over him, then alighted on the net, unobserved by the fowler, and fell to picking and pulling at the mesh in which the male bird's foot was entangled, till she released him and they flew away together. Then the fowler came up and mended his net and seated himself afar off. After a while, the birds came back and the female pigeon was caught in the net, whereupon all the other birds took fright and flew away; and the male pigeon flew away with the rest and did not return to his mate. Then came the fowler and took the female pigeon and killed her. So the princess awoke, troubled by her dream, and said, 'All males are worthless, like this pigeon, and men in general are wanting in goodness to women.' When the old woman had made an end of her story, the prince said to her, 'O my mother, I desire to have one look at her, though it be my death; so do thou contrive me some means of seeing her.' 'Know then,' answered she, 'that she hath under her palace windows a pleasure-garden, to which she resorts once in every month by the private door. In ten days, the time of her thus going forth will arrive; so when she is about to visit the garden, I will come and tell thee, that thou mayst go thither and meet her. And look thou quit not the garden, for haply, if she sees thy beauty and grace, her heart will be taken with love of thee, and love is the most potent means of union.' 'I hear and obey,' replied Taj el Mulouk. Then he and Aziz left the shop, and taking the old woman with them, showed her where they lodged.
Then said the prince to Aziz, 'I have no further need of the shop, having fulfilled my purpose of it; so I give it to thee with all that is in it; for that thou hast come abroad with me and hast left thy country for my sake.' Aziz accepted his gift and they sat conversing awhile, the prince questioning the young merchant of the strange passages of his life and the latter acquainting him with the particulars thereof. Presently, they went to the Vizier and acquainting him with Taj el Malouk's purpose, asked him what they should do. 'Let us go to the garden,' answered he. So they donned their richest clothes and went forth, followed by three white slaves, to the garden, which they found thick with trees and abounding in rills. At the gate, they saw the keeper sitting; so they saluted him and he returned their salute. Then the Vizier gave him a hundred dinars, saying, 'Prithhee, take this spending-money and fetch us something to eat; for we are strangers and I have with me these two lads, whom I wish to divert.' The gardener took the money and said to them, 'Enter and take your pleasure in the garden, for it is all yours; and sit down till I bring you what you require.' So he went to the market, and the Vizier and his companions entered the garden. In a little while, the gardener returned with a roasted lamb and bread as white as cotton, which he placed before them, and they ate and drank; after which he set on sweetmeats, and they ate of them, then washed their hands and sat talking. Presently the Vizier said to the gardener, 'Tell me about this garden: is it thine or dost thou rent it?' 'It does not belong to me,' replied he, 'but to the Princess Danyza, the King's daughter.' 'What is thy wage?' asked the Vizier, and the gardener answered, 'One dinar every month and no more.' Then the Vizier looked round about the garden and seeing in its midst a pavilion, lofty but old and dilapidated, said to the keeper, 'O elder, I am minded to do here a good work, by which thou shalt remember me.' 'O my lord,' rejoined the other, 'what is that?' 'Take these three hundred dinars,' answered the Vizier. When the keeper heard speak of the dinars, he said, 'O my lord, do what thou wilt.' So the Vizier gave him the money, saying, 'God willing, we will work a good work in this place.' Then they left the garden and returned to their lodging, where they passed the night. Next day, the Vizier sent for a plasterer and a painter and a skilful goldsmith, and furnishing them with all the tools and materials that they required, carried them to the garden, where he bade them plaster the walls of the pavilion and decorate it with various kinds of paintings. Then he sent for gold and ultramarine and said to the painter, 'Paint me on the wall, at the upper end of the saloon, a fowler, with his nets spread and birds lighted round them and a female pigeon fallen into the net and entangled therein by the bill. Let this fill one compartment of the wall, and on the other paint the fowler seizing the pigeon and setting the knife to her throat, whilst the third compartment of the picture must show a great hawk seizing the male pigeon, her mate, and digging his talons into him.' The painter did as the Vizier bade him, and when he and the other workmen had finished, they took their hire and went away. Then the Vizier and his companions took leave of the gardener and returned to their lodging, where they sat down to converse. And Taj el Malouk said to Aziz, 'O my brother, recite me some verses: may it may dilute my breast and dispel my sad thoughts and assuage the fire of my heart.' So Aziz chanted the following verses:

All that they loathe loses feel of anguish and despair; In myself compose, and so my strength is crushed outright;
And if thou seest a watering-place, see, from my streaming eyes, Rivers of tears for those who this ran ever day and night.
Or, if thou fain wouldst look upon the rein pendant's hands Can wreak on lovers, let thy gaze upon my body light.
And his eyes ran over with tears and he repeated these verses also:

Who loves not the necks and the eyes of the fair and pretends, forsooth,
To know the delight of the world, God wot he speaks not the truth.
For in love is a secret meaning, that none may know, save he who has loved indeed and known its worth and ruth.
May God not lighten my heart of passion for her! I love Nor ease my eyelids, for love, of watchfulness in my youth!

Then he sang the following:

Avicenna, in his writings renowned, That the lover's best med'cine is song and sweet sound.
And dalliance with one of his sex like his love And drinking, with waters and fruits all around.
I took me another, to heal me for thee, And fate was propitious and grace did abound.

Yes, I know love a mortal disease, against which Avicenna his remedy idle I found.

Taj el Mulouk was pleased with his verses and wondered at his eloquence and the excellence of his recitation, saying, 'Indeed, thou hast done away from me somewhat of my concern.' Then said the Vizier, 'Of a truth, there occurred to those of times past what astonds those who hear it.' 'If thou canst recall any fine verse of this kind,' quoth the prince, 'I prithee let us hear it and keep the talk in vogue.' So the Vizier chanted the following verses:

Metbought thy favour might be bought and thou to give consent To union won by gifts of gold and grace and blandishment; And else, for ignorance, I deemed thy love an easy thing. Thy love in which the nubile souls for languor are forget.

Until I saw thee choose one out and gratify that one With sweet and subtle favour. Then, to me twas evident Thy graces never might be won by any artifice; so underneath my wing my head I hid incontinence.

And in the nest of passion made my heart's abiding-place, Wherein my morning and my night for evermore are past.

Meanwhile the old woman remained shut up in her house, till it befell that the princess was taken with a desire to divert herself in the garden. Now this she had been wont to do only in company with her nurse; so she sent for her and spoke her fair and made her peace with her, saying, 'I wish to go forth to the garden, that I may divert myself with the sight of its trees and fruits and gladden my heart with its flowers.' 'I hear and obey,' replied the old woman; 'but let me first go to my house and change my dress, and I will be with thee anon.' 'Go,' said the princess; 'but be not long absent from me.' So the old woman left her and repairing to Taj el Mulouk, said to him, 'Don thy richest clothes and go to the gardener and salute him and make shift to hide thyself in the garden.' 'I hear and obey,' answered he; and she agreed with him upon a signal to be made by her to him and returned to the princess. As soon as she was gone, the Vizier and Aziza rose and dressed Taj el Mulouk in a right costly suit of kings' raiment, worth five thousand dinars, and girt his middle with a girdle of gold set with jewels. Then he repaired to the garden and found the keeper seated at the gate. As soon as the latter saw him, he sprang to his feet and received him with all respect and consideration and opening the gate, said, 'Enter and take thy pleasure in the garden.' Now the gardener knew not that the princess was to visit the garden that day; but Taj el Mulouk had been there but a little while, when he heard a noise and ere he could think, out came the eunuchs and damozels by the private door. When the gardener saw this, he came up to the prince and said to him, 'O my lord, what is to be done? The Princess Domya, the King's daughter, is here.' 'Fear not,' replied the prince; 'no harm shall befall thee; for I will conceal myself somewhere about the garden.' So the gardener exhorted him to the utmost prudence and went away. Presently, the princess entered the garden, attended by her damsels and the old woman, who said to
herself, 'If these eunuchs abide with us, we shall not attain our object.' So she said to the princess, 'O my lady, I have somewhat to say to thee that will be for thy heart's ease.' 'Say on,' replied the princess. 'O my lady,' said the old woman, 'thou hast no present need of these eunuchs; send them away, for thou wilt not be able to divert thyself at thine ease, whilst they are with us.' 'Thou art right,' rejoined the princess. So she dismissed the eunuchs and began to walk about, whilst Taj el Mulouk fed his eyes on her beauty and grace, without her knowledge, and fainted every time he looked at her, by reason of her surpassing loveliness. The old woman held her in converse and drew her on till they reached the pavilion, which the vizier had caused to be decorated afresh, when the princess entered and looking round, perceived the picture of the fowler and the birds; whereupon she exclaimed, 'Glory be to God! This is the very presentment of what I saw in my dream.' She continued to gaze at the painting, full of admiration, and presently she said, 'O my nurse, I have been wont to blame and dislike men, by reason of my having seen in my dream the female pigeon abandoned by her mate; but now see how the male pigeon was minded to return and set her free; but the hawk met him and tore him in pieces.' The old woman, however, feigned ignorance and ceased not to hold her in converse, till they drew near the place where the prince lay hidden, whereupon she signed to him to come out and walk under the windows of the pavilion. He did so; and presently the princess, chanceing to look out, saw him and noting his beauty and symmetry, said to the old woman, 'O my nurse, whence comes yonder handsome youth?' 'I know nothing of him,' replied the old woman, 'except that I think he must be some great king's son, for he attains the utmost extremes of beauty and grace.' The princess fell passionately in love with him; the spells that bound her were dissolved and her reason was overcome by his beauty and elegance. So he said to the old woman, 'O my nurse, this is indeed a handsome youth.' 'Thou art in the right, O my lady!' replied the nurse and signed to Taj el Mulouk to go home. So he went away, not daring to cross her, though desire flamed in him and he was distraught for love and longing, and taking leave of the gardener, returned to his lodging, where he told the vizier and Aziz all that had passed. They exhorted him to patience, saying, 'Did not the old woman know that there was an object to be gained by thy departure, she had not signed to thee to return home.'

Meanwhile, desire and passion redoubled upon the princess, and she was overcome with love-longing and said to the old woman, 'I know not how I shall forego with this youth, but through thee.' 'God be my refuge from Satan the Accursed!' exclaimed the old woman. 'Thou that art averse from men! How comes it that thou art thus afflicted with love of this young man? Though, by Allah, none is worthy of thy youth but he!' 'O my nurse,' said the princess, 'help me to forego with him; and thou shalt have of me a thousand dinars and a dress worth as much more: but if thou aid me not to come at him, I shall assuredly die.' 'Go to thy palace,' replied the nurse, 'and leave me to devise means for bringing you together. I will risk my life to content you both.' So the princess returned to her palace, and the old woman betook herself to Taj el Mulouk, who rose to receive her and curtsied her with respect and honour, making her sit by his side. Then said she, 'The device hath succeeded,' and told him all that had passed between the princess and herself. 'When is our meeting to be?' asked he. 'To-morrow,' replied the old woman. So he gave her a thousand dinars and a dress of equal value, and she took them and returned to the princess, who said to her, as soon as she saw her, 'O
cried out to Taj el Mulouk, saying, ‘Pass on, O damsel!’ So he passed on into the vestibule, whilst the eunuch was silent and said nothing. Then the prince counted five doors and entered the sixth, where he found the Princess Dunya standing awaiting him. As soon as she saw him, she knew him and pressed him to her bosom, and he returned her embrace. Then the old woman came in to them, having made a pretext to dismiss the princess’s attendants for fear of discovery, and the princess said to her, ‘Do thou keep the door.’ So she and Taj el Mulouk abode alone together and passed the night in kissing and embracing and twining leg with leg. When the day drew near, she left him and shutting the door upon him, passed in to another apartment, where she sat down according to her wont, whilst her women came in to her, and she attended to their affairs and conversed with them awhile. Then she said to them, ‘Leave me now, for I wish to be alone.’ So they withdrew and she betook herself to Taj el Mulouk, and the old woman brought them food, of which they ate and after fell again to amorous dalliance, till the dawn. Then the princess left him, and locked the door as before; and they ceased not to do thus for a whole month.

Meanwhile, the Vizier and Aziz, when they found that the prince did not return from the princess’s palace all this while, gave him up for lost and Aziz said to the Vizier, ‘O my father, what shall we do?’ ‘O my son,’ answered he, ‘this is a difficult matter, and except we return to his father and tell him, he will blame us.’ So they made ready at once and setting out, journeyed night and day along the valleys, in the direction of the Green Country, till they reached King Sulaiman’s capital and presenting themselves before him, acquainted him with what had befallen his son and how they had heard no news of him, since he entered the princess’s palace. At this the King was greatly troubled and regret was sore upon him, and
he let call a holy war throughout his realm. Then he encamped without the town with his troops and took up his abode in his pavilion, whilst the levies came from all parts of the kingdom; for his subjects loved him by reason of his much justice and beneficence. As soon as his forces were assembled, he took horse, with an army covering the country as far as the eye could reach, and departed in quest of his son Taj el Muleek. Meanwhile, the latter sojourned with the princess half a year's time; whilst every day they redoubled in mutual affection and distraction and passion and love-longing and desire so pressed upon Taj el Muleek, that at last he opened his mind to the princess and said to her; 'Know, O beloved of my heart and entrails, that the longer I abide with thee, the more longing and passion and desire increase on me, for that I have not yet fulfilled the whole of my desire.' ‘What then wouldst thou have, O light of my eyes and fruit of my entrails?’ asked she. ‘If thou desire aught beside kissing and embracing and entwining of legs, do what pleases thee; for, by Allah, none hath any part in us.’ ‘It is not that I desire,’ rejoined he; ‘but I would fain acquaint thee with my true history. I am no merchant, but a King, the son of a King, and my father is the supreme King Suileiman Shah, who sent his Vaisir ambassador to thy father, to demand thy hand in marriage, but thou wouldst not consent.’ Then he told her his story from first to last, nor is there any profit in repeating it, and added, ‘And now I wish to return to thy father, that he may send an ambassador to thy father, to demand thy hand for me, so we may be at ease.’ When she heard this, she rejoiced greatly, because it fell in with her own wishes, and they passed the night on this understanding. But by the decree of Fate, it befell that sleep overcame them that night above all nights and they slept till the sun had risen. Now at this hour, King Shehrman was sitting on his chair of estate, with his amirs and grandees before him, when the chief of the goldsmiths presented himself before him carrying a large box, which he opened and brought out therefrom a small casket worth a hundred thousand dinars, for that which was therein of rubies and emeralds and other jewels, beyond the competence of any King. When the King saw this, he marvelled at its beauty and turning to the chief eunuch (him with whom the old woman had had to do, as before related), said to him, ‘O Kafour, take this casket to the Princess Darya.’ The eunuch took the casket and repairing to the princess's apartment, found the door shut and the old woman lying asleep on the threshold; whereupon said he, ‘Asleep at this hour?’ His voice awoke the old woman, who was terrified and said to him, ‘Wait till I fetch the key.’ Then she went out and fed for her life; but the eunuch, having his suspicions of her, lifted the door off its hinges and entering, found the princess and Taj el Muleek lying asleep in each other's arms. At this sight he was confounded and was about to return to the King, when the princess awoke, and seeing him, was terrified and changed colour and said to him, ‘O Kafour, verily thou saidst not true.’ But he replied, ‘I cannot conceal aught from the King;' and locking the door on them, returned to Shehrman, who said to him, ‘Hast thou given the casket to the princess?’ ‘Here is the casket,’ answered the eunuch. ‘Take it, for I cannot conceal aught from thee. Know that I found a handsome young man in the princess's arms, and they asleep in one bed.’ The King commanded them to be fetched and said to them, ‘What manner of thing is this! and being violently enraged, seized a dagger and was about to strike Taj el Muleek with it, when the princess threw herself upon him and said to her father, 'Slay me before him.' The King reviled her and commanded her to be taken back to her chamber; then he turned to Taj el
Mulouk and said to him, 'Woe to thee! Whence art thou? Who is thy father and what hast embozzled thee to debouch my daughter?' 'Know, O King,' replied the prince, 'that if thou put me to death, thou wilt repent it, for it will be thy ruin and that of all in thy dominions.' 'How so?' asked the King. 'Know,' answered Taj el Mulouk, 'that I am the son of King Suleiman Shah, and before thou knowest it, he will be upon thee with his horse and foal.' When King Shehriman heard this, he would have forborne to kill Taj el Mulouk and put him in prison, till he should know the truth of his words; but his Vizier said to him, 'O King of the age, it is my counsel that thou make haste to slay this gallows-bird, that dares debauch kings' daughters.' So the King said to the headman, 'Strike off his head; for he is a traitor.' Accordingly, the headman took him and binding him fast, raised his hand to the amirs, as if to consult them, a first and a second time, thinking to gain time; but the King said to him, 'How long wilt thou consult the amirs? If thou do so again, I will strike off thine own head.' So the headman raised his hand, till the hair of his armpit appeared, and was about to strike off Taj el Mulouk's head, when suddenly loud cries arose and the people closed their shops; and the Vizier, whereupon the King said to him, 'Wait awhile,' and dispatched one to learn the news. Presently, the messenger returned and said, 'I see an army like the stormy sea with its clashing billows; the earth trembles with the tramp of their horses, and I know not the reason of their coming.' When the King heard this, he was confounded and feared lest his realm should be torn from him; so he turned to his Vizier and said, 'Have not any of our troops gone forth to meet this army?' But before he had done speaking, his chamberlains entered with messengers from the approaching host, and amongst them the Vizier who had accompanied Taj el Mulouk. They saluted the King, who rose to receive them and bidding them draw near, enquired the reason of their coming; whereupon the Vizier came forward and said, 'Know that he who hath invaded thy realm is no king like unto the Kings and Sultans of time past.' 'Who is he?' asked Shehriman, and the Vizier replied, 'He is the lord of justice and loyalty; the report of whose magnanimity the caravans have praised abroad, the Sultan Suleiman Shah, Lord of the Green Country and the Two Columns and the mountains of Bashan, he who loves justice and equity and abhors iniquity and oppression. He saith to thee that his son, the darling of his heart and the fruit of his bosom, is with thee and in this thy city; and if he find him in safety, his aim is won and thou shalt have praise and thanks; but if he have disappeared from thy dominions or if might have befallen him, look thou for ruin and the laying waste of thy realm; for this thy city shall become a desert, upon which the raven shall creak. Thus have I done thy errand to thee and peace be on thee!' When King Shehriman heard these words, his heart was troubled and he feared for his kingdom: so he cried out for his grandees and viziers and chamberlains and officers; and when they appeared, he said to them, 'Out on you! Go down and search for the young man!' Now the prince was still under the headman's hands, but he was changed by the fright he had undergone. Presently, the Vizier, changing to look aside, saw the prince on the carpet of blood and knew him; so he threw himself upon him, as did the other eunuchs. Then they loosed his bonds and kissed his hands and feet, whereupon he opened his eyes and recognizing his father's Vizier and his friend Aziz, fell down in a swoon, for excess of delight in them. When King Shehriman saw that the coming of the army was indeed on this youth's account, he was confounded and feared greatly; so he went up to Taj el Mulouk and kissing his head, said to him, with streaming eyes, 'O my son, bear me not malice neither
blame the sinner for his evil-doing; but have compassion on my gray hairs and do not lay waste my kingdom.' But Taj el Mulk drew near unto him and kissing his hand, replied, 'Fear not; no harm shall come to thee, for indeed thou art to me as my father; but look that noth befall my beloved, the Lady Dunya.' 'O my lord,' replied the King, 'fear not for her; nought but joy shall betide her.' And he went on to excuse himself to him and made peace with King Sulaiman's Vizier, to whom he promised much money, if he would conceal from the King what he had seen. Then he bade his officers carry the prince to the bath and clothe him in one of the best of his own suits and bring him back speedily. So they carried him to the bath and brought him back to the presence-chamber, after having clad him in the suit that the King had set apart for him. When he enquired, the King rose to receive him and made all his grandees stand in attendance on him. Then he sat down to converse with Aziz and the Vizier and acquainted them with what had befallen him; after which they told him how they had returned to his father and given him to know of his son's perilous plight and added, 'And indeed our coming hath brought thee relief and us gladness.' Quoth he, 'Good fortune hath attended your every action, first and last.'

Meanwhile, King Shehriman went in to his daughter, the Princess Dunya, and found her weeping and lamenting for Taj el Mulk. Moreover, she had taken a sword and fixed the hilt in the earth, with the point to her heart between her breasts; and she bent over it, saying, 'Needs must I kill myself and not live after my beloved.' When her father entered and saw her in this case, he cried out, 'O princess of kings,' daughter, hold thy hand and have compassion on thy father and the people of thy realm! Then he came up to her and said, 'God forbid that an ill thing should befall thy father for thy sake!' And he told her that her lover was the son of King Sulaiman Shah and sought her to wife and that the marriage waited only for her consent; whereas she smiled and said, 'Did I not tell thee that he was a king's son? By Allah, I must let him crucify thee on a piece of wood worth two dirhems!' 'O my daughter,' answered the King, 'have mercy on me, so may God have mercy on thee!' 'Hark ye,' rejoined she, 'make haste and bring him to me without delay.' The King replied, 'On my head and eyes be it,' and returning in haste to Taj el Mulk, repeated her words in his ear. So he arose and accompanied the King to the princess, who caught hold of him and embraced him in her father's presence and kissed him, saying, 'Thou hast made me a weary woman!' Then she turned to her father and said to him, 'Sawst thou ever any do hurt to the like of this fair creature, more by token that he is a king, the son of a king, and of the free-born, guarded against abominations?' Therewith Shehriman went out and shutting the door on them with his own hand, returned to the Vizier and the other envoys and bade them report to their King that his son was in health and gladness and enjoying all delight of life with his beloved. So they returned to King Sulaiman and acquainted him with this, whereat he rejoiced and exclaimed, 'Praised be God who hath brought my son to his desires!' Meanwhile, King Shehriman despatched largesse of money and victual to King Sulaiman's troops, and choosing out a hundred couriers and a hundred dromedaries and a hundred white slaves and a hundred concubines and a hundred black slaves and a hundred female slaves, sent them all to the King as a present. Then he took horse, with his grandees and chief officers, and rode out of the city in the direction of King Sulaiman's camp. As soon as the latter knew of his approach, he rose and advancing some paces to meet him, took him in his arms and made
him sit down beside himself on the royal couch, where they conversed awhile frankly and cheerfully. Then food was set before them, followed by sweetmeats and fruits, and they ate till they were satisfied. Presently, they were joined by Taj el Mulouk, richly dressed and adorned, and when his father saw him, he rose and embraced him and kissed him. Then the two kings seated him between them, whilst all who were present rose to do him honour; and they sat conversing awhile, after which the king Suleiman to King Shehriman, “I wish to have the contract between my son and thy daughter drawn up in the presence of witnesses, that the marriage may be made public, as of wont.” “I hear and obey,” answered King Shehriman and summoned the Cadi and the witnesses, who came and drew up the marriage contract between the prince and princess. Then they gave largesse of money and sweetmeats and burnt perfumes and sprinkled essences. And indeed it was a day of joy and festivity, and the grandees and soldiers rejoiced therein. Then King Shehriman proceeded to equip his daughter; and Taj el Mulouk said to his father, “Of a truth, this young man Aziz is a man of great worth and generosity and hath done me right noble service, having warried for me and travelled with me till he brought me to my desire. Indeed, he ceased never to have patience with me and exhorted me to patience, till I accomplished my intent; and he has now companied with us two whole years, cut off from his native land. So now I purpose to equip him with merchandise, that he may depart with a light heart; for his country is near at hand.”

“It is well seen,” replied his father; so they made ready a hundred loads of the richest and most costly stuffs, which Taj el Mulouk presented to Aziz, saying: “O my brother and my true friend, take these loads and accept them from me, as a gift and token of affection, and go in peace to thine own country.” Aziz accepted the presents and kissed the earth before the prince and his father, bade them farewell. Moreover, Taj el Mulouk mounted and brought him three miles on his homeward way, after which Aziz conjured him to turn back, saying: “By Allah, O my lord, were it not for my mother, I would never part from thee! But leave me not without news of thee.” “So be it,” replied Taj el Mulouk. Then the prince returned to the city, and Aziz journeyed on, till he came to his native town and repairing to his mother’s house, found that she had built him a monument in the midst of the courtyard and used to visit it continually. When he entered, he found her, with her hair dishevelled and spread over the tomb, weeping and repeating the following verses:

Indeed, I'm very patient 'gainst all that can beseech; Yet do I lack of patience thine absence to abide.

Who is there can have patience after his friend and who bows not the head to parting, that comes with rapid strides?

Then sobs burst up out of her breast, and she repeated these verses also:

What ails me? I pass by the graveyard, saluting the tomb of my son,
And yet no greeting he gives me and answer comes there now.

“How shall I give thee an answer, who lie in the grip of the grave, The hostage of earth and corruption?” replies the beloved one.

“The dust hath eaten my heart and I have forgotten thee, Shut in from kindness and love and stars and moon and sun.”

Then Aziz came in to her, and when she saw him, she fell down in a swoon for joy. He sprinkled water on her, till she revived and rising, took him in her arms and strained him to her bosom, whilst he in like manner embraced her. Then they exchanged greetings, and she asked the reason of his long absence, whereupon he told her all that had befallen him from first to last and how Taj el Mulouk had given him a hundred loads of wealth and stuffs. At this she rejoiced, and Aziz abode with his mother in his native town, weeping for what had befallen
him with the daughter of Delileh the Crafty, even her who had gilded him.

Meanwhile, Taj el Mulouk went in to his beloved, the Princess Danyya, and did away her maidenhead. Then King Shehriman proceeded to equip his daughter for her journey with her husband and father-in-law and let bring them victual and gifts and rarities. So they loaded their busses and set forth, whilst Shehriman brought them three days' journey on their way, till King Suleiman beggad him to return. So he took leave of them and turned back, and Taj el Mulouk and his wife and father journeyed on, night and day, with their troops, till they drew near the capital of the Green Country. As soon as the news of their coming became known, the folk decorated the city; so they entered, and the King sitting down on his chair of estate, with his son by his side, gave alms and largesse and loced those who were in bonds. Then he held a second bridal for his son, and the sound of the singing-women and players upon instruments of music ceased not for a whole month, during which time the tire-women stinted not to adorn the bride and display her in various dresses; and she tired not of the unveiling nor did they weary of gazing on her. Then Taj el Mulouk, after having companied awhile with his father and mother, took up his sojourn with his wife, and they abode in all delight of life and fair fortune, till they came to them the Destroyer of Delights.

When the Vizier had made an end of the story of Taj el Mulouk and the Princess Danyya, Zoulmekan said to him, "Of a truth, it is the like of these who lighten the mourning heart and are worthy to be the companions of kings and to guide their policy in the right way."

Meanwhile, they ceased not from the leagues of Constantinople; and thence they lay four whole years, till they yearned after their native land and the troops murmured, being weary of siege and vigil and stress of war by night and by day. Then King Zoulmekan summoned Rustem and Behram and Terkash and bespake them thus, "Know that all these years we have lain here and have not come by our intent and have gotten us but increase of trouble and concern; for indeed we came, thinking to take our wreak for King Omar ben Emnarsun and behold, my brother Sherkan was slain; so is our sorrow grown two sorrows and our affliction two afflictions. All this came of the old woman Dhat ed Dewali, for it was she who slew the Sultan in his kingdom and carried off his wife, the Princess Sufiyeh; nor did this suffice her, but she must put another cheat on us and slay my brother Sherkan; and indeed I have bound myself and sworn by the most solemn oaths to avenge them of her. What say ye? Ponder my words and answer me." With this, they bowed their heads and answered, "It is for the Vizier Dendan to decide." So the Vizier came forward and said, "O King of the age, it avail us nothing to tarry here, and it is in my counsel that we strike camp and return to our own country, there to abide awhile and after return and fall upon the worshippers of idols." "This is a good counsel," replied the King; "for indeed the folk weary for a sight of their families, and I also am troubled with yearning after my son Kannaqan and my brother's daughter Kuzia Fedan, for she is in Danascus and I knew not how it is with her." So he bade the herald call the retreat after three days, whereupon the troops rejoiced and blessed the Vizier Dendan. Then they fell to preparing for the home-ward march and on the fourth day, they heat the drums and unfurled the banners and the army set forth, the Vizier in the van and the King riding in the mid-battle, with the Great Chamberlain by his side, and journeyed night and day, till they reached Baghdad. The folk rejoiced in their return, and care and hardship ceased.
from them, whilst those who had stayed at home came forth to meet those who had been so long absent and each amir betook him to his own house. As for Zoulmekan, he went up to the palace and went in to his son Kaumkan, who had now reached the age of seven and used to go down [into the tilting-ground] and ride. As soon as the King was rested of his journey, he entered the bath with his son, and returning, seated himself on his chair of state, whilst the Vizier Dandak took up his station before him and the amirs and grandees of the realm entered and stood in attendance upon him. Then he called for his comrade, the stoker, who had befriended him in his strangerhood; and when he came, the King rose to do him honour and made him sit by his own side. Now he had acquainted the Vizier with all the kindness and fair service that the stoker had done him; so the Vizier and all the amirs made much of him. The stoker had waxed fat and burly with rest and good living, so that his neck was like an elephant's neck and his face like a porpoise's belly. Moreover, he was grown dull of wit, for that he had never stirred from his place; so at the first he knew not the King by his aspect. But Zoulmekan came up to him smilingly and saluted him after the friendliest fashion, saying, "How hast thou made haste to forget me?" So the stoker roused himself and looking steadfastly on Zoulmekan, knew him; whereupon he sprung to his feet and exclaimed, "O my friend, who hath made thee Sultan?" Zoulmekan laughed at him and the Vizier, coming up to him, expounded the whole story to him and said, "He was thy brother and thy friend; and now he is King of the land and needs must thou get great good of him. So I counsel thee, if he say to thee, 'Ask a boon of me,' ask not but for some great thing; for thou art very dear to him." Quoth the stoker, "I fear lest, if I ask of him aught, he may not choose to grant it or may not be able thereto." "Have no care," answered the Vizier; "whatsoever thou askest, he will give thee." "By Allah," rejoined the stoker, "I must ask of him a thing that is in my thought! Every night I dream of it and implore God to vouchsafe it to me." "Take heart," said the Vizier. "By Allah, if thou askest of him the government of Damascus, in the room of his brother, he would surely give it thee." With this, the stoker rose to his feet and Zoulmekan signed to him to sit; but he refused, saying, "God forbid! The days are gone by of my sitting in thy presence." "Not so," answered the Sultan; "they endure even now. Thou wast the cause that I am now alive, and by Allah, what thing seest thou askest of me, I will give it to thee! But ask thou first of God, and then of me." "O my lord," said the stoker, "I fear ...." "Fear not," quoth the Sultan. "I fear," continued he, "to ask aught and that thou shouldst refuse it to me." At this the King laughed and replied, "If thou askest of me the half of my kingdom, I would give it with thee: so ask what thou wilt and leave talking." "I fear ...." repeated the stoker. "Do not fear," said the King. "I fear," went on the stoker, "lest I ask a thing and thou be not able thereto." With this the Sultan waxed wroth and said, "Ask what thou wilt." Then said the stoker, "I ask, first of God and then of thee, that thou write me a patent of mastership over all the stokers in Jerusalem." The Sultan and all who were present laughed and Zoulmekan said, "Ask somewhat other than this." "O my lord," replied the stoker, "said I not I feared thou wouldst not choose to grant me what I should ask or be not able thereto?" Therewith the Vizier nudged him once and twice and thrice, and every time he began, "I ask of thee ...." Quoth the Sultan, "Ask and be speedy." So he said, "I beseech thee to make me captain of the scavengers in Jerusalem or Damascus." Then all these
who were present laughed, till they fell backward, and the Vizier beat him. So he turned to the Vizier and said to him, "What art thou that thou shouldst beat me? It is no fault of mine: didst thou not bid me ask some considerable thing? Let me go to my own country." With this, the Sultan knew that he was jesting and took patience with him awhile; then turned to him and said, "O my brother, ask of me some considerable thing, befitting our dignity." So the stoker said, "O King of the age, I ask first of God and then of thee, that thou make me Viceroy of Damascus in the room of thy brother." "God grant thee this," answered the King. So the stoker kissed the ground before him, and he bade set him a chair in his rank and put on him a viceroy's habit. Then he wrote him a patent of investiture and sealing it with his own seal, said to the Vizier, "None shall go with him but thou; and when thou returnest, do thou bring with thee my brother's daughter, Kuzia Fekan." "I hear and obey," answered the Vizier and taking the stoker, went down with him and made ready for the journey. Then the King appointed the stoker servants and officers and gave him a new litter and princely equipage and said to the amirs, "Whoso loves me, let him honour this man and give him a handsome present." So they brought him every one his gift, according to his competence; and the King named him Zibican, and conferred on him the surname of honour of El Mujahid. As soon as the new Viceroy's grace was ready, he went up with the Vizier to the King, to take leave of him and ask his permission to depart. The King rose to him and embracing him, exhorted him to do justice among his subjects and deal fairly with them and bade him make ready for war against the infidels after two years. Then they took leave of each other and King Zibican,  summoned El Mujahid, set out on his journey, after the amirs had brought him slaves and servants, even to five thousand in number, who rode after him. The Grand Chamberlain also took horse, as did Behram, captain of the Maces, and Rustem, captain of the Persians, and Terkash, captain of the Arabs, and rode with him three days' journey, to do him honour and take their leaves of him. Then they returned to Baghdad and the Sultan Zibican and the Vizier Dandam fared on, with their company, till they drew near Damascus. Now news was come, upon the wings of birds, to the notables of Damascus that King Zosimekan had made Sultan over Damascus a Sultan called Zibican el Mujahid; so when he reached the city, he found it decorated in his honour, and all the folk came out to gaze on him. He entered Damascus in great state and went up to the citadel, where he sat down upon his chair of state, whilst the Vizier Dandam stood in attendance on him, to acquaint him with the ranks and stations of the amirs. Then the grandees came in to him and kissed hands and called down blessings on him. He received them graciously and bestowed on them gifts and presents of honour; after which he opened the treasuries and gave largesse to the troops, great and small. Then he governed and did justice and proceeded to equip the Lady Kuzia Fekan, daughter of King Sherkan, appointing her a litter of silken stuff. Moreover, he furnished the Vizier Dandam also for the return journey and would have made him a gift of money, but he refused, saying, "Thou art near the time of the tryst with the King, and happy thou wilt have need of money. or we may send to seek of thee funds for the Holy War or what not." When the Vizier was ready, the Viceroy brought Kuzia Fekan to him and made her mount the litter, giving her ten damsels to do her service. Moreover, he mounted, to bid the Vizier farewell, and they set forward, whilst Zibican returned to
Damascas and busied himself in ordering the affairs of his government and making ready his harness of war, against such time as King Zoulmekan should send to him therefor. Meanwhile the Vizier and his company fared forward, by easy stages, till they came, after a month's travel, to Rehbeh; and thence pushed on, till they drew near Baghdad. Then he despatched messengers, to inform King Zoulmekan of his arrival; and he, when he heard this, took horse and rode out to meet him. The Vizier would have dismounted to receive him, but the King constrained him not to do so and spurred his steed, till he came up to him. Then he questioned him of Ziblan, whereof the Vizier replied that he was well and that he had brought with him his brother's daughter, Kuzia Fekan. At this the King rejoiced and said to Dendan, "Go thou and rest thee of the fatigue of the journey, and after thee come to me again." "With all my heart," replied the Vizier and betook himself to his own house, whilst the King went up to his palace and went in to his brother's daughter, who was then a girl of eight years old. When he saw her, he rejoiced in her and sorrowed sore for her father. Then he let make for her clothes and gave her her splendid jewels and ornaments and bade lodge her with his son Kannakan in one place. So they both grew up, the brightest and bravest of the people of their time; but Kuzia Fekan grew up possessed of good sense and understanding and knowledge of the issues of events, whilst Kannakan grew up generous and freethoughted, taking no thought to the issues of nught. Now Kuzia Fekan used to ride a horseback and fare forth with her cousin into the open plain and range at large with him in the desert; and they both learnt to smile with swords and thrust with spears. So they grew up, till each of them attained the age of twelve, when King Zoulmekan, having completed his preparations and provisions

1 A town on the Euphrates, on the borders of Syria and Mesopotamia.

for the Holy War, summoned the Vizier Dendan and said to him, "Know that I am minded to do a thing, which I will discover to thee, and do thou with speed return me an answer thereon." "What is that, O King of the age?" asked the Vizier. "I am resolved," said the King, "to make my son Kannakan king and rejoice in him in my lifetime and do battle before him, till death overcome me. What deemest thou of this?" The Vizier kissed the earth before the King and replied, "O King and Sultan, lord of the age and the time, this is in thy mind is indeed good, save that it is now no time to carry it out, for two reasons: the first, that thy son Kannakan is yet of tender age; and the second, that it is of woe that he who makes his son king in his lifetime, lives but a little thereafter."

"Know, O Vizier," rejoined the King, "that we will make the Grand Chamberlain guardian over him, for he is art and part of us and he married my sister, so that he is to me as a brother." Quoth the Vizier, "Do what seemeth good to thee: we will obey thine orders." Then the King sent for the Grand Chamberlain and the grandees of the kingdom and said to them, "Ye know that this my son Kannakan is the first cavalier of the age and that he hath no peer in jousting and martial exercises; and now I appoint him to be Sultan over you in my stead and I make his uncle, the Grand Chamberlain, guardian over him." "O King of the age," replied the Chamberlain, "I am but an offshoot of thy bounty." And the King said, "O Chamberlain, verily this my son Kannakan and my niece Kuzia Fekan are brothers' children; so I marry them one to the other and I call those present to witness thereof." Then he made over to his son such treasures as beggar description and going in to his sister Nuzhet ez Zeman, told her what he had done, whereas she rejoiced greatly and said, "Verily, they are both my children. May God preserve thee to them many a year!" "O my sister,
replied he, "I have accomplished that which was in my heart of the world and I have no fear for my son: yet it were well that thou shouldst have a watchful eye to him and to his mother." And he went on to commend to the Chamberlain and Nurhet ez Zeman his son and niece and wife. Thus did he nights and days till he [fell sick] and deeming surely that he should drink the cup of death, took to his bed and abode thus a whole year, whilst the Chamberlain took upon himself the ordering of the people and the realm. At the end of this time, the King summoned his son Kannakan and the Vizier Dendan and said to the former, "O my son, this Vizier shall be thy father, when I am dead; for know that I am about to leave this transitory house of life for that which is eternal. And indeed I have fulfilled my last of this world; yet there remaineth in my heart one regret, which may God dispel at thy hands!" "What regret is that, O my father?" asked his son. "O my son," answered Zoulmeakan, "it is that I die without having avenged thy grandfather Omar ben Emmuran and thine uncle Sherkan on an old woman whom they call Dhat ed Dewahl; but, so God grant thee aid, do not thou fall to take thy recreant on her and to wipe out the disgrace we have suffered at the hands of the Infidels. Beware of the old woman's craft and do as the Vizier shall counsel thee; for that he from of old time hath been the pillar of our realm." And his son assented to what he said. Then the King's eyes ran over with tears and his sickness redoubled on him, nor did it leave to press sore upon him four whole years, during which time his brother-in-law the Chamberlain held sway over the country, judging and commanding and forbidding, to the contentment of the people and the nobles, and all the land prayed for him" what while Zoulmeakan was occupied with his malady. As for Kannakan, he had no thought but of riding and

**tilting with spears and shooting with arrows, and thus also did his cousin Kuzia Fekun; for they were wont to go forth at the first of the day and return at nightfall, when she would go in to her mother and he to his, to find her sitting weeping by his father's bed. Then he would tend his father till daybreak, when he would go forth again with his cousin, according to their wont. Now Zoulmeakan's sufferings were long upon him and he wept and recited these verses:

My strength is past away, my tale of days is told And I, alas! am left even as thou dost behold.

In honor's day, the first amongst my folk was I, And in the race for fame the foremost and most bold.

Woe that before my death I might but see my son The enemy in my stead over the people held.

And melancholy in his heart, his face was pale, To see a sword and pike, in fury uncontrolled.

Lay, I'm a man forsooth, in this world and the next, Except my spirit of God be soothed and consoled!

When he had made an end of repeating these verses, he laid his head on his pillow and his eyes closed and he slept. In his sleep he saw one who said to him, "Rejoice, for thy son shall fill the lands with justice and have the mastery over them and men shall obey him." Then he awoke gladened by this happy omen that he had seen, and after a few days, death smote him, whereat great grief fell on the people of Baghdad, and gentle and simple mourned for him. But time passed over him, as if he never had been, and Kannakan's estate was changed; for the people of Baghdad set him aside and put him and his family in a place apart. When his mother saw this, she fell into the sorriest of plights and said, "Needs must I go to the Grand Chamberlain, and I hope for the favour of the Sublime, the All-Wise One!" Then she betook herself to the house of the Chamberlain, who was now become Sultan, and found him sitting upon his couch. So she
went into his wife Nushet az Zeman and wept sore and said, "Verily, the dead have no friends. May God never bring you to need and may you cease not to rule justly over rich and poor many days and years! Think not that our sight has been shed and thine eyes have seen all that was ours aforetime of kingship and honour and dignity and wealth and goodness of life and condition; and now fortune hath turned upon us, and fate and the time have played us false and wrought hostility with us; wherefore I come to thee, craving thy bounties, I that have been used to confer favours; for when a man dies, women and girls are brought low after him." And she repeated the following verses:

"Let it suffice thee that Death is the worker of wonders and know that the lives which are gone from our sight will never return to us any more. The days of the life of mankind are nothing but journeys, I wot. Whose watering-places for eye are mixed with misfortune and woe. Yet nothing afflicts my heart like the loss of the good and the great. Whom the stresses of adverse events have compassed about and laid low.

When Nushet az Zeman heard this, she remembered her brother Zainabkhan and her son Kannakan and making her draw near to her, said to her, "By Allah, I am now rich and thou poor, and by Allah, we did not leave to seek thee out, but that we feared to wound thy heart, lest thou shouldst deem our gifts to thee an slight. Of a truth, all the good that we now enjoy is from thee and thy husband; so our house is thy house and our place thy place, and all that we have of wealth and goods is thine." Then she clad her richly and appointed her a lodging in the palace, adjoining her own; and she and her son abode therein in all delight of life. Him also did Nushet az Zeman clothe in kings' raiment and gave them handsmaids to do them service. After a little, she told her husband of her brother's widow, whereat his eyes filled with tears and he said, "Wouldst thou see the world after thee, look upon the world after another than thyself. Entertain her honourably and enrich her poverty."

Meanwhile, Kannakan and Kuzia Fekan grew up and flourished, like unto two fruit-laden saplings or two shining moons, till they reached the age of fifteen. As for the girl, she was indeed the fairest of the chelished maids, with lovely face and smooth cheeks, slender waist, heavy hips and arrowy shape, lips sweeter than old wine and spittle as it were the fountain Selselih of Paradise, even as saith the poet, describing her:

"From her mouth's honeyed dew, nascent, the first-pressed wine is drawn
And on her sweetest lips the grapes, from which life's birds are drawn.
And when she seeks to please, her voice is sweeter than honey.
Blessed be He who fashioned her and may not she be made known!"

For indeed God had united in her every attribute of beauty: her shape put to shame the willow-ward and the rose sought grace before her cheeks; the water of her mouth made mock of clear wine, and she gladdened heart and eyes, even as saith of her the poet:

"Goodly and glorious she is, and perfect in every charm. Her eyelashes put to shame kohl and the uses of kohl.
Even as a sweet in the hand of All, the Vicar of God, So is the glance of her eye to a lover's heart and soul.

As for Kannakan, he was no less accomplished in grace and Excelling in perfection; there was none could match with him in beauty and qualities, and valour shone from between his liquid black eyes, testifying for him and not against him. The hardest hearts inclined to him; and when the tender down of his lips and cheeks began to sprout, many were the poems made in his honour: as for example the noble:

"Unknown was my enmity, till on his cheek the hair grew and the darkness crept, bewildered, here and there.
A fire, when eyes of men are fixed upon him, unites, His glance straight on them a transfixion piercing fire."
And another:
His brows' shafts have wrought upon his cheek, I ween, A net the blood has painted with all its ruddy sheen.
Oh, how at them I marvel! They're myrrhys; yet they dwell In fire, and for their mimnest, they're clad in sereal green.1

It chanced, one festival day, that Kuzia Fekan went out, surrounded by her handmaids, to visit certain kindred of the court; and indeed beauty encompassed her; the rose of her cheek vied with the moon thereon, her teeth flashed from her smiling lips, like the petals of the camomile flower, and she was as the resplendent moon. Her cousin Kannakan began to turn about her and devour her with his eyes. Then he took courage and giving loose to his tongue, repeated the following verses:
When shall the morning heart be healed of anger and disdain? When, rigor coming, shall the lips of union smile again?
Would God I know if I shall lie, some night, within the arms Of a beloved, in whose heart is somewhat of my pain?

When she heard this, she was angry and putting on a haughty air, said to him, "Hast thou a mind to shame me among the folk, that thou speakest thus of me in thy verse? By Allah, except thou leave this talk, I will assuredly complain of thee to the Grand Chamberlain, Sultan of Baghdad and Khosraun and lord of justice and equity, whereby disgrace and punishment will fall on thee!" To this Kannakan made no reply, but returned to Baghdad; and Kuzia Fekan also returned home and complained of her cousin to her mother, who said to her, "O my daughter, belie he meant thee no ill, and is he not an orphan? Indeed, he said nought that implied reproach to thee; so look thou tell none of this, lest it come to the Sultan's ears and he cut short his life and blot out his name and make it even as yesterday, whose remembrance hath passed away." How-

1 i.e. the silky whiskers, which is common, in poetry, to call green, likening them to newly-sprouted heritage.

ever, Kannakan's case was not hidden from the people, and his love for Kuzia Fekan became known in Baghdad, so that the women talked of it. Moreover, his heart became contracted and his patience waxed and he knew not what to do. Then longed he to give vent to the anguish he endured, by reason of the pangs of separation; but he feared her anger and her reproofs: so he recited the following verses:

What though I be fearful, son, of her wrath, Whose honour serene is grown troubled and sour,
I bear it with patience, as he who is sick Endureth a cautery in hopes of a cure.

His verses came one day to the knowledge of King Susan (for so had they named the Grand Chamberlain, on his assumption of the Sultanate), as he sat on his throne, and he was told of the love the prince bore to Kuzia Fekan; whereat he was sore vexed, and going in to his wife Nushet ez Zaman, said to her, "Verily, to bring together fire and dry grass is of the greatest of risks; and men may not be trusted with women, so long as eyes cast forlorn glances and eyelids quiver. Now thy nephew Kanmalan is come to man's estate and it behoves us to forbid him access to the harem; nor is it less needful that thy daughter be kept from the company of men, for the like of her should be cloistered." "Thou sayest sooth, O wise King," answered she. Next day came Kanmalan, according to his wont, and going in to his aunt, saluted her. She returned his greeting and said to him, "O my son, I have somewhat to say to thee, that I would fain leave unsaid; yet must I tell it thee, in my own despite." "Speak," said he. "Know then," rejoined she, "that thine uncle the Chamberlain, the father of Kuzia Fekan, has heard of thy love for her and the verses thou madest of her and has ordered that she be kept from thee; wherefore, if thou have occasion for aught from us, I will send it to thee from behind the door, and thou shalt
not look upon Kuzia Pekan nor return hither from this
day forth." When he heard this, he withdrew, without
speaking a word, and betook himself to his mother, to
whom he related what his aunt had said to him. Quoth
she, "This all comes of thy much talk. Thou knowest
that the news of thy passion for Kuzia Pekan is noised
abroad everywhere and how thou eatest their victual and
maketh love to their daughter." "And who should have
her but I?" replied the prince. "She is the daughter
of my father's brother and I have the best of rights to her."
"These are idle words," rejoined his mother. "Be silent,
lest thy talk come to King Sanan's ears and it prove the
cause of thy losing her and of thy ruin and increase of
affliction. They have not sent us the evening meal to-night
and we shall die of want; and were we in any land other
than this, we were already dead of the pangs of hunger or
the humiliation of begging our bread." When Kannakan
heard his mother's words, his anguish redoubled; his eyes
ran over with tears and he sobbed and complained and
repeated the following verses:

Give o'er this unavailing blame, that never let me be! My heart loved
her to whom it's thral'd and may not struggle free.
Look not to me for any jot of patience, for I swear By God His house,
my patience all is clean divorced from me!
Smires to prudence me exhort; I heed them not, for I in my woe
am drenched in a store of love and constancy.
They bind me by very love from visiting my dear, Though, by the
Merciful, nor rogue am I nor disorderous!
Indeed, my bones, where'er they may be, they hear the mention of her name, Do quake
and tremble even as birds from sparrow-hawks that flieth.
O daughter of my uncle, may to him who chides at love, That I, by
Allah, am distraught with love-longing for thee.

And he said to his mother, "I can dwell no longer in
my aunt's house nor among these people, but will go forth
and abide in the corners of the city." So he and his
mother left the palace and took up their abode in one of
the quarters of the poorer sort: and she used to go from
time to time to King Sanan's palace and take thence food
for her own and her son's subsistence. One day, Kuzia
Pekan took her aside and said to her, "Aha, my aunt,
how is it with thy son?" "O my daughter," replied she,
"sooth to say, he is tearful-eyed and mournful-hearted,
being fallen into the snare of thy love." And she repeated
to her the verses he had made; whereupon Kuzia Pekan
wept and said, "By Allah, I rebuked not him for his words,
of ill-will or dislike to him, but because I feared the
malice of enemies for him. Indeed, my passion for him
is double that he feels for me; words fail to set out my
yearning for him; and were it not for the extravagances
of his tongue and the wanderings of his wit, my father had
not cut off his favours from him nor decreed unto him ex-
clusion and prohibition. However, man's fortune is fought
but change, and patience in every case is most becoming;
peradventure He who ordained our severance will vouch-
safe us reunion!" And she repeated the following:

O son of mine woe, the like of thine anguish I suffer, the like of thy
passion I feel;
Yet hide I from men what I suffer for longing. And should those not
also thy passion conceal?

When his mother heard this, she thanked her and
blessed her; then she left her and returning to her son,
told him what his mistress had said; whereupon his desire
for her increased. But he took heart, being eased of his
despair, and the turmoil of his spirits was quelled. And
he said, "By Allah, I desire none but her!" And he
repeated the following verses:

Give o'er thy chiding; I'll bear it no whit to the founts of my bosom;
Indeed I've discovered my secret that ought should have made me
disclose;
And she, whose enjoyment I hoped for, slack I is for distant from me;
Mine eyes watch the hours of the dark, whilst she passes the night in repose.
So the days and nights went by, whilst Kannakan lay tossing upon coals of fire, till he reached the age of seventeen: and indeed his beauty was now come to perfection and his wit had ripened. One night, as he lay awake, he commended with himself and said, “Why should I keep silence, till I consume away, and see not my love? My only fault is poverty: so, by Allah, I will go out from this land and wander afar in the plains and valleys; for in my condition in this city I am one of misery and have no friend nor lover in it to comfort me; wherefore I will distract myself by absence from my native land, till I die and am at peace from absence and tribulation.” And he repeated the following verses:

Though my soul weary for distress and flutter fast for woe, Yet of its nature was it never to trundle to a foe.

Excuse me; for indeed my heart is like a book, whereof The supercensor’s sought but tears, that eyes uncensoring flow.

Behold my countenance, how she seems a maid of Paradise, A heart come, by Riwan’s grace, to visit us below!

Who seeks the glance of her eyes and fears the searching stroke Of their bright spears, shall hardly escape their swift and deadly blow.

Lo, I will wander o’er the world, to free my heart from lale And compensation for its loss upon my soul bestowed!

Yes, I will range the fields of war and tilt against the brave And over the champions will I ride roughshod and lay them low.

Then will I come back, glad at heart and rich in goods and store, Driving the herds and flocks as spoil before me, as I go.

So he went out in the darkness of the night, barefoot, wearing a short-sleeved tunic and a skull cap of felt seven years old and carrying a cake of dry bread, three days stale, and betook himself to the gate El Arij of Baghdad.

Here he waited till the gate opened, when he was the first to go forth; and he went out at random and wandered in the deserts day and night. When the night came, his mother sought him, but found him not, whereupon the world, for all its wideness, was strained upon her and she took no delight in aught of its good. She looked for him a first day and a second and a third, till ten days were past, but no news of him reached her. Then her breast became contracted and she shrieked and lamented, saying, “O my son, O my delight, thou hast revived my sorrows! Did not what I endured suffice, but thou must depart from the place of my abiding? After then, I care not for food nor delight in sleep, and but tears and mourning are left me. O my son, from what land shall I call thee? What country hath given thee refuge?” And her sobs burst up, and she repeated the following verses:

We know that, since you went away, by grief and pain we’ve tried.

The hours of servitude on us fell, many a shaft have piled.

They girt their saddles on and at the appanage of death Left me to strive alone, whilst they cross the sand-wastes hid.

Deep is the darkness of the night a ring-dove called to me, Complaining of her case; but I, “Give o’er thy plaint,” replied.

For, by thy life, if her heart were full of dole, like mine, She had not put a cover on her yet her feet had dyed.

My cherished friend is gone and I for lack of him endure All manner sorrows which with me for ever will abide.

Then she abstained from food and drink and gave herself up to weeping and lamentation. Her grief became known and all the people of the town and country wept with her and said, “Where is thine eye, O Zainikahan?” And they bewailed the rigour of fate, saying: “What can have befallen him, that he left his native town and fled from the place where his father used to fill the hungry and do justice and mercy?” And his mother redoubled her tears and lamentations, till the news of Kannakan’s departure came to King Sasan through the chief amir Nigh who said to him, “Verily, he is the son of our late King and the grandson of King Omar ben Eddin, and we hear that he hath exiled himself from the country.” When King Sasan heard these words, he was wroth with them and ordered one of them to be hanged, whereas the fear
Then he wept, but presently wiped away his tears and ate of the fruits of the earth. Then he made his ablutions and prayed the ordained prayers that he had neglected this time; after which he sat in that place, resting, the whole day. When the night came, he lay down and slept till midnight, when he awoke and heard a man’s voice repeating the following verses:

Life unto me is worthless, except I see the shine Of the flashing teeth of my mistress and see her face divine.

The bishops in the convents pray for her day and night And in the mosques the imams fall prostrate before her shrine.

Death’s colder than the rigors of a beloved son Whose image never chases me, with whom I live and pine.

O joy of bene-companions, when they together be And lover and beloved in one embrace entwine.

Still more so in the season of Spring, with all its flowers, What time the world is fragrant with blossoms sweet and fine.

Up, drinker of the vine-juice, and forth, for sweet thou not Earth gift with blooms and waters all welling forth like wine?

When Kannakan heard this, it revived his sorrows; his tears ran down his cheeks like rivers and flames of fire raged in his heart. He rose to see who it was that spoke, but saw none, for the thickness of the dark; whereupon passion increased on him and he was alarmed and restlessness possessed him. So he descended to the bottom of the valley and followed the banks of the stream, till he heard one sighing heavily, and the same voice recited the following verses:

Though thou hast used to dissemble the love in thy heart for me, Give to the day of parting, free course to sob and moan.

I twined thee and my beloved were vows of love and loth; So cease I for her never to long and wish her near.

My heart is full of longing; the reply, when it blows, To many a thought of passion stirs up my heavy cheer.

Dost she o’ the adorers hold me in mind, whilst far away, Though between me and Sada were solemn vows and dear? Shall the nights e’er muzzle us, the nights of dear delight, And shall we tell our sad joys, each in the other’s ear?

VOL. II.

21
of him, for what he saw of his tender years and his condition, which was that of a poor man. So he said to him, "O youth, of what tribe art thou and to whom art thou kin among the Arabs? What is thy history and wherewithal goest thou by night, after the fashion of champions? Indeed, thou spakest to me in the night words such as are spoken of none but magnificent cavaliers and lion-hearted warriors; and now thy life is in my hand. But I have compassion on thee by reason of thy tender age; so I will make thee my companion, and thou shalt go with me, to do me service." When Kamalak heard him speak thus unseemly, after what he had shown him of skill in verses, he knew that he despised him and thought to presume with him; so he answered him with soft and dulcet speech, saying, "O chief of the Arabs, leave my tenderness of age and tell me thy story and why thou wanderest by night in the desert, reciting verses. Thou talkest of my serving thee; who then art thou and what movest thee to speak thus?" "Hark ye, boy!" answered the Bedouin, "I am SUBAH, son of RENMAH ben Hamman. My people are of the Arabs of Syria, and I have a cousin called Nefnach, who brings delight to all that look on her. My father died, and I was brought up in the house of my uncle, the father of Nefnach; but when I grew up and my cousin became a woman, they excluded her from me and me from her, seeing that I was poor and of little estate. However, the chiefs of the Arabs and the heads of the tribes went in to her father and rebuked him, and he was ashamed before them and condescended to give me his daughter, but upon condition that I should bring him as her dower fifty head of horses and fifty dromedaries and fifty camels laden with wheat and a like number laden with barley, together with ten male and ten female slaves. The dower he imposed upon me was beyond my competence; for he exacted more than the due marriage
portion. So now I am travelling from Syria to Iraq, having passed twenty days without seeing other than thyself, and I mean to go to Baghdad, that I may note what rich and considerable merchants start thence. Then I will go out in their track and seize their goods, for I will kill their men and drive off their camels with their loads. But what manner of man art thou?" "Thy case is like unto mine," replied Kannakan; "save that my complaint is more grievous than thine; for my cousin is a king's daughter, and the dowry of which thou hast spoken would not content her family, nor would they be satisfied with the like of that from me." "Surely," said Subbah, "thou art mad or light-headed for excess of passion! How can thy cousin be a king's daughter? Then hast no sign of prince or rank on thee, for thou art but a mendicant." "O chief of the Arabs," rejoined Kannakan, "marvel not at my case, for it is due to the shifts of fortune; and if thou desire proof of me, behold, I am Kannakan, son of King Zoulmekan, son of King Omar ben Emanan, lord of Baghdad and Khorassan, and fortune hath played the tyrant with me; for my father died and (my uncle) King Sasam took the Sultanate. So I fled forth from Baghdad, secretly, lest any should see me, and have wandered twenty days, without seeing any but thyself. So now I have discovered to thee my case, and my history is as thy history and my need as thy need." When Subbah heard this, he cried out and said, "O joy! I have attained my desire! I will have no booty this day but thyself; for, since thou art of the lineage of kings and hast come out in the habit of a beggar, it cannot be but thy people will seek thee, and if they find thee in any one's hand, they will ransom thee with much treasure. So put thy hands behind thee, O my lad, and walk before me." "So, O brother of the Arabs," answered Kannakan: "my people will not ransom me with silver nor with gold, no, not with a brass dirhem; and I am a poor man, having with me neither much nor little: so leave this behaviour with me and take me to comrade. Let us go forth of the lands of Iraq and wander over the world, so happily may we win dowry and marriage-portion and enjoy our cousins' embraces." When Subbah heard this, he was angry; his arrogance and heat redoubled and he said, "Oat on thee, O vilest of dogs! Dost thou bandy words with me? Turn thy back, or I will chastise thee." At this Kannakan smiled and answered, "Why should I turn my back for thee? Is there no equity in thee? Dost thou not fear to bring reproach upon the Arabs by driving a man like myself captive, in dishonour and humiliation, before thou hast proved him in the field, to know if he be a warrior or a coward?" The Bedouin laughed and replied, "By Allah, I wonder at thee! Thou art a boy in years, but old in talk. These words should come from none but a doughty champion: what wantest thou of equity?" "If thou wilt have me be thy captive, to serve thee," said Kannakan, "throw down thine arms and put off thine upper clothes and wrestle with me; and whichever of us throws the other shall have his will of him and make him his servant." The other laughed and said, "I think thy much talk denotes the nearness of thy death." Then he drew his sword and tucking up his skirt, drew near unto Kannakan, and they gripped each other. But the Bedouin found that Kannakan had the better of him and out-weighted him, as the quintal outweighs the dinar; and he looked at his legs and saw that they were as finely planned as two well-built minarets or two tent-poles driven into the ground or two immovable mountains. So he knew that he himself was not able to cope with him and repeated of having come to wrestle with him, saying in himself, "Would I had fallen on him with my weapons!" Then Kannakan took hold of him and master ing him,
shook him, till he thought his guts would burst in his belly and roared out, "Hold thy hand, O boy!" He heeded him not, but shook him again, and lifting him from the ground, made with him towards the stream, that he might throw him therein: whereupon the Bedouin cried out, saying, "O valiant man, what wilt thou do with me?" Quoth Kannakan, "I mean to throw thee into this stream; it will carry thee to the Tigris. The Tigris will bring thee to the river Isra and the Isra to the Euphrates, and the Euphrates will bear thee to thine own country; so thy people will see thee and know thy manhood and the sincerity of thy passion." When Subbah heard this, he cried out and said, "O champion of the desert, do not with me the deed of the wicked, but let me go, by the life of thy cousin, the jewel of the fair!" With this, Kannakan set him down; and when he found himself at liberty, he ran to his sword and buckler and taking them up, stood plotting in himself treachery and a sudden attack on Kannakan. The latter read his intent in his eye and said to him, "I know what is in thy mind, now thou hast hold of thy sword and buckler. Thou hast neither strength nor skill for wrestling, but thou thinkest that, wert thou on horseback and couldst wheel about and ply me with thy sword, I had been slain long ago. But I will give thee thy will, so there may be no dispute left in thy heart. Give me the buckler and fall on me with thy sword; either I shall kill thee or thou me." "Here it is," answered Subbah and throwing him the shield, drew his sword and rushed at him. Kannakan took the buckler in his right hand and began to fend himself with it, whilst Subbah struck at him with the sword, saying at each stroke, "This is the finishing one!" But Kannakan received all his blows on his buckler and they fell harmless, though he did not strike back again, having no weapon of offence; and Subbah ceased not to smite at him, till his arm was weary. When the prince saw this, he rushed at him and seizing him in his arms, shook him and threw him to the ground. Then he turned him over on his face and binding his arms behind him with the hangers of his sword, began to drag him by the feet towards the river; whereupon cried Subbah, "What wilt thou do with me, O youth and cavalier of the age and hero of the field?" "Did I not tell thee," answered Kannakan, "that it was my intent to send thee by the river to thy people and thy tribe, lest their hearts be troubled for thee and thou miss thy cousin's bride-feast?" At this, Subbah shrieked aloud and wept and said, "Do not thus, O champion of the time! Let me go and make me one of thy servants." And he wept and Wallace and recited the following verses:

An ostenfest from my folk (how long my exile lasts) am I. Would God I knew if I in this my strangerhood shall die!
I perish, and my folk know not the place where I am slain; I fall in exile, far away from her for whom I sigh.

Kannakan had compassion on him and said to him, "Make a covenant with me and swear to be a true comrade to me and to bear me company whithersoever I may go." "It is well," replied Subbah and took the required oath. So Kannakan loosed him, and he rose and would have kissed the prince's hand; but he forbade him. Then the Bedouin opened his wallet and taking out three barley-cakes, laid them before Kannakan, and they both sat down on the bank of the stream to eat. When they had done eating, they made the ablation and prayed, after which they sat talking of what had befallen each of them from his people and the shifts of fortune. Then said Kannakan, "Whither dost thou now intend? "I purpose," replied Subbah, "to repair to Bagdad, thy native town, and abide there, till God vouchsafe me the marriage-portion." "Up then," rejoined the other, "and to the road! I abide here." So the Bedouin took leave of him.
and set out for Baghdad, whilst Kannakan remained behind, saying to himself, "O my soul, how shall I return poor and needy? By Allah, I will not go back empty-handed, and if God please, I will assuredly work my deliverance!" Then he went to the stream and made his ablutions and prayed to his Lord, laying his brow in the dust and saying, "O my God, Thou that makest the dew to fall and feedest the worm in the rock, vouchsafe me, I beseech Thee, my livelihood, of Thy power and the graciousness of Thy compassion!" Then he pronounced the salutation that closes prayer and sat, turning right and left and knowing not which way to take. Presently, he saw, making towards him, a horseman whose back was bowed and who let the reins droop. He sat still and after a while the horseman came up to him, when beheld, he was at the last gasp and made sure of death, for he was grievously wounded. The tears streamed down his cheeks, like water from the mouths of skins, and he said to Kannakan, "O chief of the Arabs, take me to friend, whilst I live, for thou wilt not find my like, and give me a little water, harmful though the drinking of water be to a wounded man, especially whilst the blood is flowing and the life with it. If I live, I will give thee what shall heal thy distress and thy poverty: and if I die, mayst thou be blessed for thy good intent!" Now this horseman had under him a stallion of the most generous breed, with legs like shafts of marble, the tongue fails to describe it; and when Kannakan looked at it, he was seized with longing admiration and said in himself, "Verily, the like of this stallion is not to be found in our time." Then he helped the rider to alight and attended him friendly and gave him a little water to drink; after which he waited till he was rested and said to him, "Who has dealt thus with thee?" "I will tell thee the truth of the case," answered the wounded man. "I am a horse-thief and all my life I have occupied myself with stealing and snatching horses, night and day, and my name is Ghassan, surmamed the plague of all stables and horses. I heard tell of this stallion, that he was with King Afriloun in the land of the Greeks, where they had named him El Catoul and surmamed him El Mejzoun. So I journeyed to Constantinople on his account, and whilst I was watching my opportunity to get at him, there came out an old woman, much considered among the Greeks and whose word is law with them, a past mistress in all manner of trickery, by name Shewati Dhat ed Dewahi. She had with her this stallion and ten slaves, no more, to attend on her and it, and was bound for Baghdad, there to sue for peace and pardon from King Saan. So I went out in their track, thinking to get the horse, and ceased not to follow them, but was unable to get at the stallion, by reason of the strict guard kept by the slaves, till they reached this country and I feared lest they should enter the city of Baghdad. As I was casting about to steal the horse, behold, a great cloud of dust arose and covered the prospect. Presently it opened and disclosed fifty horsemen, banded together to waylay merchants and led by a captain by name Khuridash, like a raging lion, yea, in battle a lion that lays heroes flat even as a carpet. They bore down on the old woman and her company, shouting and surrounding them, nor was it long before they bound her and the ten slaves and made off with their captives and the horse, rejoicing. When I saw this, I said to myself, 'My toil is wasted and I have not attained my desire.' However, I waited to see how the affair would result, and when the old woman found herself a captive, she wept and said to Khuridash, 'O daugthy champion and invincible warrior, what wilt thou do with an old woman and slaves, now thou hast thy will of the horse? And she beguiled him with soft words and promises that she would send him horses and cattle, till
he released her and her slaves. Then he went his way, he and his comrades, and I followed him to this country, watching my opportunity; till at last I succeeded in scaling the horse, whereupon I mounted him and drawing a whip from my wallet, struck him with it. When the robbers heard this, they came out on me and surrounded me on all sides and shot arrows and cast spears at me, whilst I stuck fast on the horse's back and he defended me with his hoofs, till at last he shot out with me from amongst them, like an arrow from the bow or a shooting star, after I had gotten a grievous wound in the press of the battle. Since that time, I have passed three days in the saddle, without tasting food or sleep, so that my strength is wasted and the world is become as no account to me. But thou hast dealt kindly with me and hast had pity on me; and I see thee naked of body and sorrowful of aspect; yet are the marks of gentle breeding manifest on thee. So tell me, what and whence art thou and whither art thou bound?" "My name is Kannakan," answered the prince. "Son of King Zariukhan, son of King Omar ben Ebnisana. My father died, and a base man seized the throne after his death and became king over great and small." Then he told him all his story from first to last; and the thief said to him, (and indeed he had compassion on him). "By Allah, thou art a man of great account and exceeding nobility and thou shalt surely win to high estate and become the first cavalier of thy time! If thou canst lift me into the saddle and mount behind me and bring me to my country, thou shalt have honour in this world and a reward on the Day of calling of men one to another; for I have no strength left to hold myself in the saddle; and if I die by the way, the steed is thine; for thou art worthier of it than any other." "By Allah," said Kannakan, "if I could carry thee on my shoulders or bear my

\[ i.e. \text{the Day of Judgement.} \]

life with thee, I would do so, without the horse! For I am of those that love to do good and succour the afflicted. So make ready to set out and put thy trust in the Subtle, the All-Wise." And he would have lifted him on to the horse and set forward, trusting in God the Succourable. But the robber said, "Wait for me a little." Then he closed his eyes and opening his hands, said, "I testify that there is no god but God and that Muhammad is the Apostle of God! O Glorious One, pardon me my mortal sin, for none can pardon mortal sins save Thou!" And he made ready for death and recited the following verses:

I've ranged through all countries, oppressing mankind, And in drinking of wine I have wasted my days.
I've walked through torrents, the horses to steal And I've used with my guile the high places to raise.
My case is right grievous and great is my guilt. And Cato, alas! is the end of my ways.
I hope of this horse I should get my desire; But vain was my journey and vain my essay.
All my life I have stolen the steeds, and my death Was decreed of the Lord of all power and all praise.
So, in fine, for the good of the stranger, the poor, The orphans, I've waited in toils and afflictions.

When he had finished, he closed his eyes and opened his mouth; then giving one sob, he departed this life. Kannakan rose and dug a grave and laid him in the earth. Then he went up to the stallion and kissed it and wiped its face and rejoiced with an exceeding joy, saying, "None has the like of this horse, no, not even King Saam." So much for Kannakan.

Meanwhile, news came to King Saam that the Vizier Dandar and half the army had thrown off their allegiance to him and sworn that they would have no king but Kannakan and the Vizier had bound the troops by a solemn covenant and had gone with them to the islands of India and Ethiopia, where he had gathered together a host like
the swollen sea, none could tell its van from its rear. Moreover, he was resolved to make for Baghdad and possess himself of the kingdom and slay all who should let him, having sworn not to return the sword of war to its sheath, till he had set Kannakan on the throne. When this news came to Sasan, he was drowned in the sea of melancholy, knowing that the whole state had turned against him, great and small, and trouble and anxiety were sore on him. So he opened his treasures and distributed that which was therein among his officers and prayed for Kannakan's return, that he might draw his heart to him with fair usage and bounty and make him commander of those troops that remained faithful to him, hoping that to prop his [failing] power. The news of this reached Kannakan by the merchants; so he returned in haste to Baghdad, riding on the aforesaid stallion, and the news of his coming reached King Sasan, as he sat perplexed upon his throne; whereupon he despatched all the troops and head-men of Baghdad to meet him. So all who were in Baghdad went out to meet the Prince and escorted him to the palace and kissed the threshold, whilst the damsels and servants went in to his mother and gave her the good tidings of his return. She came to him and kissed him between the eyes, but he said to her, "O my mother, let me go to my uncle King Sasan, who hath overwhelmed us with favours and benefits." Then he repaired to the palace, whilst all the people marveled at the beauty of the stallion and said, "No king is like unto this man." So he went in to King Sasan, who rose to receive him; and Kannakan saluted him and kissing his hands, offered him the horse as a present. The King bade him welcome, saying, "Welcome and fair welcome to my son Kannakan! By Allah, the world hath been straitened on me by reason of thine absence, but praise be God for thy safety!" And Kannakan called down blessings on him. Then the King looked at the stallion and knowing it for the very horse, Catoil by name, that he had seen in such and such a year, whilst at the leaguer of Constantinople with King Zoumezan, said to Kannakan, "If thy father could have come by this horse, he would have bought him with a thousand chargers of price: but now let the honour return to thee who deservest it. We accept the steed and return it to thee as a gift, for thou hast more right to it than any man alive, being the prince of cavaliers." Then he bade bring forth for him dresses of honour and led horses and appointed him the chief lodging in the palace, giving him much money and showing him the utmost honour, for that he feared the issue of the Vizier Dandan's doings. At this Kannakan rejoiced and despondency and humiliation ceased from him. Then he went to his house and said to his mother, "O my mother, how is it with my cousin?" "By Allah, O my son," answered she, "my concern for thin absence hath distracted me from any other, even to thy beloved; especially as she was the cause of thine exile and separation from me." Then he complained to her of his sufferings, saying, "O my mother, go to her and speak with her; haply she will favour me with a sight of her and dispel my anguish." "O my son," replied his mother, "idle desires abase the necks of men; so put away from thee this thought that will but lead to vexation; for I will not go to her nor carry her such a message." Therupon he told her what he had heard from the horse-thief concerning Dhat ed Dewahi, how she was then in their land, on her way to Baghdad, and added, "It was she who slew my uncle and grandfather, and needs must I avenge them and wipe out our reproach." Then he left her and repaired to an old woman, by name Sandaneh, a cunning perfidious and pernicious beldam, past mistress in all kinds of trickery and deceit. To her he complained of what he suffered for love
of his cousin Kuzia Fekan and begged her to go to her
and implore her favour for him. "I hear and obey," answered
the old woman and betaking herself to Kuzia
Fekan's palace, interceded with her in his favour. Then
she returned to him and said, "Thy cousin salutes thee
and will visit thee this night at the middle hour." At this
Night he rejoiced and sat down to await the fulfillment of his
cousin's promise. At the appointed hour she came to him,
wrapped in a veil of black silk, and aroused him from sleep,
saying, "How canst thou pretend to love me, when thou art sleeping, heart-free, after the godliest fashion?"
So he awoke and said, "O desire of my heart, by Allah,
I slept not but with the hope that thine image might visit me in
dreams!" Then she chid him tenderly and repeated the
following verses:
West thou a lover true and fair
If thou hast not suffered slander
On thee creep.
O thou who forget'st to walk the ways of love,
The watch of passion
And desire to keep,
Son of my uncle, sure the eyes of those
Who've love-distracted know
Not the taste of sleep.
When he heard his cousin's words, he was appalled
before her and rose and excused himself. Then they
embraced and complained to each other of the anguish of
separation; and thus they did, till the dawn broke and
the day flowered forth over the lands; when she rose to
depart. At this, Kannakan wept and sighed and repeated the
following verses:
She came to me, after her pride had driven me to despair.
She in whose lips the teeth as the pedestal of her necklace were.
I kissed her a thousand times and clipped her nose in my arms. And lay
all night with my cheek pressed close to the cheek of the fair;
Till the day, that must sever our loves, as were the blade of a sword
That flashes forth of its sheath, gleamed out on us unaware.
Then she took leave of him and returned to her palace.

Now she let certain of her damsels into her secret, and
one of them told the King, who went in to Kuzia Fekan
and drawing his sabre upon her, would have slain her;
but her mother Nushet es Zeman entered and said to him,
"By Allah, do her no hurt, lest it be noised among the
folk and thou become a reproach among the kings of the
age! Then knowest that Kannakan is no base-born
wretch, but a man of honour and nobility, who would not
do aught that could shame him, and she was reared with
him. So take patience and be not hasty; for verily the
report is spread abroad, among the people of the palace
and all the folk of the city, how the Vizier Dandah hath
levied troops from all countries and is on his way hither
to make Kannakan king." "By Allah," said the King,
"needs must I cast him into a calamity, such that neither
earth shall bear him nor sky shadow him! I did but
speak him fair and entreat him with favour, because of my
subjects and officers, lest they should turn to him; but
thou shalt see what will betide." Then he left her and
went on to order the affairs of the kingdom.
Next day, Kannakan came in to his mother and said to
her, "O my mother, I am resolved to go forth a-raiding
in quest of booty. I will way-lay caravans and seize
horses and flocks and slaves black and white, and as soon
as my store is waxed great and my case is bettered, I will
demand my cousin Kuzia Fekan in marriage of my uncle."
"O my son," replied she, "of a truth the goods of men
are not as a waster camel, ready to thy hand; but between
thee and them are sword-strokes and lance-thrusts and
men that eat wild beasts and lay waste countries and snare
lions and trap lynxes." Quoth he, "God forbid that I
should turn from my purpose, till I have attained my
desire!" Then he despatched the old woman to Kuzia
Fekan, to tell her that he was about to set out in quest of
da dowry befitting her, saying, "Thou must without fail
bring me an answer from her.” “I hear and obey,” replied the old woman and going forth, presently returned with Kuria Pekan’s answer, which was that she would come to him at midnight. So he abode awake till one half of the night was past, when disquietude got hold on him, and before he was aware, she came in to him, saying, “My life be thy ransom from wakefulness!” And he sprang up to receive her, exclaiming, “O desire of my heart, my life be thy ransom from all things evil!” Then he acquainted her with his intent, and she wept; but he said, “Weep not, O my cousin: for I beseech Him who decreed our separation to vouchsafe us reunion and felicity.” Then Kannakan went in to his mother and took leave of her, after which he girt on his sword and donned turban and chia-band and mounting his horse Catou, rode through the streets of Baghdad, till he reached the gate of the city. Here he found his comrade Subbah ben Remnah going out, who, seeing him, ran to his stirrup and saluted him. He returned his greeting, and Subbah said to him, “O my brother, how camest thou by this steed and sword and clothes, whilst I up to now have gotten nothing but my sword and target?” Qaath Kamnakan, “The hunter returns not but with game after the measure of his intent. A little after thy departure, fortune came to me: so now wilt thou go with me and work thine intent in my company and journey with me in this desert?” “By the Lord of the Kaabeh,” replied Subbah, “from this time forth I will call thee nought but ‘My lord!’” Then he ran on before the horse with his sword hanging from his neck and his budget between his shoulder-blades, and they pushed on into the desert four days space, eating of the gazelles they caught and drinking of the water of the springs. On the fifth day, they came in sight of a high hill, at whose foot was a Spring encampment and a running stream. The knolls and hollows were filled with canoes and oxen and sheep and horses, and little children played about the cattle-folds. When Kannakan saw this, he was right glad and his breast was filled with joy; so he addressed himself to battle, that he might take the canoes and the cattle, and said to Subbah, “Come, let us fall upon this good, whose owners have left it unguarded, and do battle for it with near and far, so haply it may fall to our lot and we will share it between us.” “O my lord,” replied Subbah, “verily they to whom these herds belong are much people, and among them are doughty horsemen and footmen. If we cast ourselves into this great danger, neither of us will return to his people; but we shall both be cut off utterly and leave our cousins desolate.” When Kannakan heard this, he laughed and knew that he was a coward: so he left him and rode down the hill, intent on rapine, shouting and chanting aloud the following verse:

O the house of En Nunus in middle of night! We’re the champions with swords on the squattrees that unites!
When the fury of battle stirs high in our hearts, We’re eye to be found in the front of the fight.
The poor man amongst us may shudder secure Nor see the foot favour of want or unright.
I hope for the mocking of Him in whose hand Is the Kingdom, the Maker of body and spirit.

Then he rushed upon the cattle, like a camel in heat, and drove them all, oxen and sheep and horses and camels, before him. Therewith the slaves ran at him with their bright swords and their long lances; and at their head was a Turkish horseman, a stout champion, doughty in battle and onset and skilled to wield the twiny spear and the white sabre. He drove at Kannakan, saying, “Out on thee! Knowest thou to whom these cattle belong, thou hast not done this thing! Know that they are the good of the Greek band, the champions of the sea and the Circassian troop, and they are a hundred cavaliers, all

vol. ii. 22
stem warriors, who have forsworn the commandment of all kings. There has been stolen from them a steed of great price, and they have vowed not to return hence, but with it." When Kannakan heard these words, he cried out, saying, "O ye men, this is the steed itself, after which ye seek and for whose sake ye would do battle with me! So come out against me, all of you at once, and do your darest!" So saying, he cried out between Catoa's ears and ran at them, as he were a ghooul. Then Kannakan drove at the Turk and smote him and overthrew him and let out his life; after which he turned upon a second and a third and a fourth and bereft them also of life. When the slaves saw this, they were afraid of him, and he cried out and said to them, "Ho, sons of whores, drive out the cattle and the horses, or I will dye my spear in your blood!" So they untethered the cattle and began to drive them out, and Subbhs came down to Kannakan, crying out with a loud voice and rejoicing greatly; when, behold, there arose a cloud of dust and grew, till it covered the prospect, and there appeared under it a hundred cavaliers, like fierce lions. With this Subbhs flew up on to the hill, that he might gaze upon the fight in safety, saying, "I am an warrior but in sport and jest." Then the hundred cavaliers made towards Kannakan from all sides, and one of them accosted him, saying, "Whither goest thou with this good?" "I have made prize of them," replied he, "and am carrying them away; and I forbid you from them, for know that he who is before you is a terrible lion and an illustrious champion and a sword that cuts wherever it turns!" When the horseman heard this, he looked at Kannakan and saw that he was a cavalier as he were a strong lion, whilst his face was as the full moon rising in its fourteenth night, and all the sun shine from between his eyes. Now this horseman was the chief of the hundred horse, and his name was Khebrash; and what he saw in Kannakan of the perfection of martial grace, together with surpassing beauty and comeliness, reminded him of a mistress of his, by name Fatin. Now this Fatin was one of the fairest of women in face, for God had given her beauty and grace and charms and noble qualities of all kinds, such as the tongue fails to describe. Moreover, the cavaliers of the tribe feared her prowess and the champions of the land stood in awe of her, and she had sworn that she would not marry nor give any possession of her, except he should conquer her, saying to her father, "None shall approach me, except he master me in the field and the steed of war." Khebrash was one of her suitors, and when the news reached him of the vow she had taken, he thought seem to fight with a girl, fearing reproach; and one of his friends said to him, "Thou art accomplished in beauty and many qualities; so if thou contend with her, even though she be stronger than thou, thou must needs overcome her; for when she sees thy beauty and grace, she will be discomfited before thee, seeing that women by nature incline unto men, as is not unknown to thee." Nevertheless he refused and would not contend with her, albeit indeed she loved him, for what she had heard of his beauty and valour; and he ceased not to abstain from her thus, till he met with Kannakan, as hath been set down. Now he took the prince for his beloved Fatin and was afraid; so he went up to him and said, "Out on thee, O Fatin! Thou comest to show me thy prowess; but now alight from thy steed, that I may talk with thee, for I have driven off these cattle and waylaid horsemen and champions, all for the sake of thy beauty and grace, which are without peer. So now thou shalt marry me, that kings' daughters may wait on thee, and thou shalt become queen of these countries." When Kannakan heard this, the fires of wrath flamed up in him and he cried out, saying, "Out on thee, O dog of
the barbarians! Leave thy raving of Fatim and come to cutting and thrusting, for escoth thou shalt lie in the dust." So saying, he began to wheel about him and offer battle. Then Khurash observed him more closely and saw that he was indeed a doughty knight and a stiward champion; and the error of his thought was manifest to him, whereas he saw the tender dusk that adorned his cheeks, as it were myriles springing from the heart of a red rose. And he feared his onslaught and said to those that were with him, "Out on you! Let one of you attack him and show him the keen sword and the quivering spear; for know that for a company to do battle with one man is foul shame, even though he be a doughty man of war and an invincible champion." With this, there ran at Kannakan a lion-like horsemanship, mounted on a black horse with white feet and a star on his forehead, the bigness of a dithem, astounding sight and wit, as he were Abjen, that was Antar's steed: even as saith of him the poet:

See, where the stallion yonder comes, that with a fierce delight Drives to the battle, mingling earth with heaven in his might.
Menemen, the morning smote his bow and to avenge himself Therewith he plunges straight and deep into his heart of light.

He rushed upon Kannakan, who met him in midcareer, and they wheeled about awhile in the din of battle, exchanging blows as confound the wit and din the night, till Kannakan took the other at vantage and smote him a swashing blow, that shook through turban and iron skull-cap and reached his head, and he fell from his saddle, as a camel falls, when he rolls over. Then a second came out to him and a third and a fourth and a fifth, and he died with them all as he had done with the first. Thenceupon the rest rushed upon him, all at once, for indeed they were wild with rage and concern; but it was not long before he had transfused them all with the point of his lance. When

Kehrash saw his feats of arms, he knew that he was stout of heart and concluded that he was the phoix of the champions and heroes of the age; so he feared death and said to Kannakan, "I give thee thy life and pardon thee the blood of my comrades, for I have compassion on thee by reason of thy fair youth. So take what thou wilt of the cattle and go thy ways, for life is better for thee [than death]." "Thou lackest not of the generosity of the noble," replied Kannakan; "but leave this talk and face for thy life and reck not of blame nor think to get back the booty; but take the straight path for thine own safety." When Kehrash heard this, he waxed exceeding wroth and his anger moved him to that which was the cause of his death; so he said to Kannakan, "Out on thee! Knowest thou who I am, thou wouldst not talk thus in the open field. I am the doughty lion known as Kehrash, he who despiseth great kings and waylays all the travellers and seizes the merchants' goods. Yonder steed under thee is what I am seeking and I call upon thee to tell me how thou canst by it." "Know," replied Kannakan, "that this steed was being carried to my uncle King Susun in the company of a certain old woman, attended by ten slaves, when thou fatest upon her and tookst the horse from her; and I have a debt of blood against this old woman for the sake of my grandfather King Omar ben Ennunan and my uncle King Sherkan." "Out on thee!" said Kehrash. "Who is thy father, O thou that hast no (known) mother?" "Know," answered the prince, "that I am Kannakan, son of Zouman, son of Omar ben Ennunan." Quoth Kehrash, "Thy perfection cannot be denied, nor yet the union in thee of martial virtue and comeliness: but go in peace, for thy father showed us favour and bounty." "By Allah, O vile wretch," rejoined Kannakan, "I will not so far honour thee as to overcome thee so small a wight as I am."
thee in the open field!

At this the Bedouin was wroth and they drove at one another, shouting aloud, whilst their horses pricked up their ears and raised their tails. They clashed together with such a dint, that it seemed to each as if the heavens were split in sunder, and strive like two butting rams, snarting another with thick-coming spear-strokes. Presently, Kehrdash aimed a blow at Kannakan; but he evaded it and turning upon the brigand, smote him in the breast, that the head of the spear issued from his back. Then he collected the horses and cattle and cried out to the slaves, saying, “Up and drive them off briskly!” With this came Subbah and accosting Kannakan, said to him, “Thou hast fulfilled thee right well, O hero of the age! I prayed God for thee and He heard my prayer.” Then he cut off Kehrdash’s head and Kannakan laughed and said, “Out on thee, Subbah! I thought thee a man of valour.” Quoth the Bedouin, “Forget not thy slave in the division of the spoils, so haply I may win therewith to marry my cousin Nejmeh.” “Thou shalt surely have a share in it,” answered Kannakan; “but now keep watch over the booty and the slaves.” Then they set out and journeyed night and day till they drew near Baghdad, and all the troops heard of Kannakan and saw the booty and the brigand’s head on the point of Subbah’s spear. Moreover, the merchants knew Kehrdash’s head and rejoiced, for he was a noted highwayman, saying, “Allah hath rid mankind of him!” And they marvelled at his death and called down blessings on his slayer. Then all the people of Baghdad came to Kannakan, seeking to know what had befallen him, and he told them what had passed, whereupon they were taken with awe of him and all the champions and men of war feared him. After this, he drove his spoil to the palace and plantig the spear, on which was Kehrdash’s head, before the gate, gave largesse to the people of canals and horses, so that they loved him and all hearts inclined to him. Then he took Subbah and lodged him in a spacious dwelling, giving him part of the booty; after which he went in to his mother and told her all that had befallen him. Meanwhile the news of him reached the King, who rose and shuttling himself up with his chief officers, said to them, “I wish to reveal to you my secret and acquaint you with the truth of my case. Know that Kannakan will be the cause of our expulsion from the kingdom; for he has slain Kehrdash, albeit he had with him the tribes of the Turks and the Kurds, and our affair with him will assuredly result in our destruction, seeing that the most part of our troops are his kinmen and ye know what the Vizier Dendan hath done; how he refuses to recognize me, after all the favours I have done him, and is become a traitor to his faith. Indeed, it has come to my knowledge that he hath levied an army in the provinces and goeth about to make Kannakan king, for that the kingdom was his father’s and his grandfather’s before him, and he will surely slay me without mercy.” When they heard this, they replied, “O King, verily he is unequal to this, and did we not know him to have been reared by thee, not one of us would take thought to him. We are at thy commandment; if thou wilt have us slay him, we will do so, and if thou wilt have him kept at a distance, we will chase him away.” When King Saman heard this, he said, “Verily, it were wise to slay him; but needs must ye take an oath of it.” So they all pledged themselves to kill him, to the intent that, when the Vizier Dendan came and heard of his death, his might should be weakened and fail of that which he designed to do. When they had made this compact with him, the King bestowed great gifts upon them and dismissing them, retired to his own apartments. Now the troops refused their service, awaiting what should

1 i.e. Kannakan.
beful for they saw that the most part of the army was with the Vizier Dandian. Presently, the news of these things came to Kuzia Fekan and caused her much concern; so that she sent for the old woman, who was wont to carry messages between her and her cousin, and bade her go to him and warn him of the plot against his life. Accordingly, she repaired to Kannakan and gave him the princess's message, to which he replied, "Bear my cousin my salutation and say to her, 'The earth is God's (to whom belong might and majesty), and He maketh whom He willeth of His servants to inherit it. How excellent is the saying of the poet:

> The kingship is God's alone, and him who would fulfill His wishes He driveth away and maketh him rue for his ill.

Had I or another than I a hand beneath of earth to my own, The Godship were sundered in twain and two were the Tower and the Will."

The old woman returned to Kuzia Fekan with Kannakan's reply and told her that he abode in the city. Meanwhile, King Susan awaited his going forth from Baghdad, that he might send after him and kill him; till, one day, it befell that Kannakan went out to hunt, accompanied by Subbah, who would not leave him day or night. He caught ten gazelles and among them one that had soft black eyes and turned right and left; so he let her go, and Subbah said to him, "Why didst thou let her go?" Kannakan laughed and set the others free also, saying, "It behoves us, of humanity, to release gazelles that have young, and this one only turned from side to side, to look for her young ones; so I let her go and released the others in her honour." Quoth Subbah, "Do thou release me, that I may go to my people." At this Kannakan laughed and smote him on the breast with the butt of his spear, and he fell to the ground, writhing like a serpent. Whilst they were thus occupied, they saw a cloud of dust and heard the tramp of horse; and presently there appeared a troop of armed cavaliers. Now King Susan had heard of Kannakan's going out and sending for an Amir of the Medes, called Jami, and twenty men, had given them money and bidden them slay Kannakan. So, when they drew near the prince, they rushed at him and he met them in mid-career and killed them all, to the last man. Meanwhile the King took horse and riding out to meet his men, found them all slain, whereat he wondered and turned back; but the people of the city laid hands on him and bound him straitly. As for Kannakan, he left that place behind him and rode onward with Subbah. As he went, he saw a youth sitting at the door of a house in his road and saluted him. The youth returned his greeting and going into the house, brought out two platters, one full of milk and the other of brows swimming in (clarified) butter, which he set before Kannakan, saying, "Favour me by eating of my victual." But he refused and the young man said to him, "What ails thee, O man, that thou wilt not eat?" "I have a vow upon me," replied the prince. "What is the cause of thy vow?" asked the youth, and Kannakan answered, "Know that King Susan seized upon my kingdom wrongfully and oppressively, albeit it was my father's and my grandfather's before me; yet he laid hands upon the throne by force, after my father's death, and took no count of me, for that I was of tender years. So I have bound myself by a vow to eat no man's victual, till I have eased my heart of my enemy." "Rejoice," rejoined the youth; "for God hath fulfilled thy vow. Know that he is in prison and methinks he will soon die." "In what house is he imprisoned?" asked Kannakan. "In yonder high pavilion," answered the other. The prince looked and saw the folk entering and buffeting Susan, who was suffering the agonies of death. So he went up to the pavilion and noted what was therein; after which he returned to his place and
sitting down to meat, ate what sufficed him and put the rest in his budget. Then he waited till it was dark night and the youth, whose guest he was, slept; when he rose and repaired to the pavilion in which Sasam was confined. Now about it were dogs, guarding it, and one of them ran at him; so he took out of his wallet a piece of meat and threw it to him. He ceased not to do thus, till he came to the pavilion and making his way to the place where Sasam was, laid his hand upon his head; whereupon he said in a loud voice, "Who art thou?" "I am Kannakan," replied the prince, "whom thou wast about to kill; but God made thee fall into the evil thyself hadst devised. Did it not suffice thee to take my kingdom and that of my father, but thou must go about to kill me?" And Sasam swore a vain oath that he had not plotted his death and that the report was untrue. So Kannakan forgave him and said to him, "Follow me." Quoth he, "I cannot walk a single step for weakness." "If the case be thus," replied Kannakan, "we will get us two horses and ride forth and seek the open country." So they took horse and rode till daybreak, when they prayed the morning-prayer and fasted on till they came to a garden, where they sat down and talked awhile. Then Kannakan rose and said to Sasam, "Is there aught of bitterness left in thy heart against me?" "No, by Allah!" replied Sasam. So they agreed to return to Baghdad and Sebbah the Bedouin said, "I will go on before you, to give the folk notice of your coming." Then he rode on in advance, accompanying men and women with the news; so all the people came out to meet Kannakan with tabrets and flutes; and Kazia Fekan also came out, like the full moon shining in all her splendour in the thick darkness of the night. Kannakan met her, and their hearts yearned each to each and their bodies longed one for the other. There was no talk among the people of the time but of Kannakan; for the cavaliers bore witness of him that he was the most valiant of the folk of the age and said, "It is not just that other than he should be King over us; but the throne of his grandfather shall revert to him as it was." Meanwhile King Sasam went in to his wife Nuzhet ez Zeman, who said to him, "I hear that the folk talk of nothing but Kannakan and attribute to him such qualities as beggar description." "Hearing is not like seeing," replied the King; "I have seen him, but have noted in him not one of the attributes of perfection. Not all that is heard is said; but the folk ape one another in extolling and cherishing him, and God makes his praise to run on the lips of men, so that there incline to him the hearts of the people of Baghdad and of the perilous traitor the Vizier Denzan, who has levied troops from all countries and arrogates to himself the right of naming a king of the country and chooses that it shall be under the hand of a worthless orphan." "What then dost thou purpose to do?" asked Nuzhet ez Zeman. "I mean to kill him," replied the King, "that the Vizier may be baffled of his intent and return to his allegiance to me, seeing nothing for it but my service." Quoth she, "Perfidy is a foul thing with strangers, and how much more with kinsfolk? Thou wouldst do better to marry him to thy daughter Kazia Fekan and give heed to what was said of old time:

"If Fate set over thee a man, though thou be he Be wretched and this be grievous unto thee, yield him the honour due to his estate; though near or far thou be. Speak not thy thought of him; else wilt thou be of those Who of their own accord do the way of woe do thee.

Many in the haven of are brighter than the bride; But time is on her side, and opportunity." When Sasam heard this, he rose in anger and said to her, "Were it not that to kill thee would bring disgrace
and reproach on me, I would take off thy head with my sword and make an end of thee." Quoth she, "I did but jest with thee." And rose and kissed his head and hands, saying, "Thou art right, and we will cast about for some means to kill him." When he heard this, he was glad and said, "Make haste and contrive some device to relieve me of my affliction; for I am at my wit's end." Said she, "I will make shift to do away his life for thee." "How so?" asked he; and she answered, "By means of our female slave Bokam." Now this Bokam was past mistress in all kinds of knavery and was one of the most pernicious of old women, in whose religion it was not lawful to abstain from wickedness; she had brought up Kannakan and Kuzia Feke, and the former had her in so great affection, that he was wont to sleep at her feet. So when King Sassan heard his wife name her, he said, "This is a good counsel," and sending for the old woman, told her what had passed and bade go about to kill Kannakan, promising her all good. "O my lord," replied she, "thy commandment shall be done: but I would have thee give me a dagger that has been tempered in water of death, 1 that I may despatch him the quicker for thee." "So be it," said Sassan and gave her a knife that would well-nigh forego destiny. Now this woman had heard stories and verses and committed to memory great store of witty traits and anecdotes: so she took the dagger and went out, considering how she should compass Kannakan's destruction. Then she repaired to the prince, whom she found sitting awaiting [the coming of a messenger with] his cousin's tray; so that night his thought was taken up with Kuzia Feke and the fires of love for her raged in his heart. Bokam went in to him, saying, "The time of union is at hand and the days of separation are over and gone." When he heard this, he said, "How is it with Kuzia

---

1 Meaning, apparently, poisoned.

Fekan?" And she answered, "Know that she is distraught for love of thee." At this he rose and taking off his [upper] clothes, put them on her and promised her all good. Then said she, "Know that I mean to pass this night with thee, that I may repeat to thee what I have heard and divert thee with tales of many a slave of love, whom passion hath made sick." Quoth he, "Tell me a story, that will gladden my heart and dispel my cares." "With all my heart," answered she and sitting down beside him, with the dagger under her clothes, began thus, "The pleasantest thing I ever heard was as follows:

**BAKAM'S STORY OF THE HASHISH-EATER.**

A certain man loved the fair and spent his substance on them, till he became a beggar and used to go about the streets and markets, seeking his bread. One day, as he went along, a splinter of iron pierced his finger and made it bleed; so he sat down and wiping away the blood, bound up his finger. Then he went on, crying out, till he came to a bath, and entering found it clean (and empty). So he took off his clothes and sitting down by the basin, fell to pouring water on his head, till he was tired. When night he went out to the room in which was the tank of cold water. Finding none there, he shut himself up [in a cabinet] and taking out a piece of hashish, swallowed it. The fumes of the drug spread through his brain and he rolled over on to the marble floor. Then the hashish made it appear to him as if a great lord were kneading him and as if two slaves stood at his head, one bearing a bowl and the other washing gear and all the necessities of the bath. When he saw this, he said to himself, 'Mestems these are mistaken in me; or else they are of the company of us hashish-eaters.' Then he stretched out his legs and it seemed to him that the bathman said to
him, 'O my lord, the time of thy going forth draws near and it is to-day thy turn of service (at the palace).’ At this he laughed and said, 'As God wills, O hashish! Then he sat and said nothing, whilst the bakhshish took him by the hand and raising him up, girt his middle with a waist-cloth of black silk, after which the two slaves followed him, with the bowls and implements, till they brought him into a cabinet, whereat they set perfumes burning. He found the place full of various kinds of fruits and sweet-scented flowers, and they cut him a melon and seated him on a stool of ebony, whilst the bakhshish stood to wash him and the slaves poured water on him; after which they rubbed him down well and said, 'O our lord the Vizier, may the bath profit thee and mayst thou come to delight everlasting!’ Then they went out and shut the door on him; and he took up the waistcloth and laughed till he well-nigh lost his senses. He gave not over laughing for some time and saying to himself, 'What ails them to bespeak me as if I were a Vizier and style me, “Master” and “our lord”? Surely they are dreaming now; but presently they will know me and say, “This fellow is a beggar,” and take their fill of cuffing me on the nape of the neck.’ Presently, he felt hot and opened the door, whereupon it seemed to him that a little white slave and an eunuch entered, carrying a parcel. The slave opened the parcel and brought out three kerchiefs of silk, one of which he threw over his head, a second over his shoulders, and a third he tied round his waist. Moreover, the eunuch gave him a pair of bath-clogs, and he put them on; after which in came eunuchs and slaves and supported him, laughing the while, to the outer hall, which he found hung and spread with magnificent furniture, such as becometh none but kings; and the pages hastened up to him and seated him on the dais. Then they fell to kneading him, till sleep overcame him and he dreamt that he had a girl in his arms. So he kissed her and set her between his thighs; then, clipping her as a man clips a woman, took his yard in his hand and was about to have at her, when he heard one saying to him, ‘Awake, thou good-for-nought! The hour of noon is come and thou art still asleep.’ He opened his eyes and found himself lying on the marge of the cold-water tank, with a crowd of people about him, laughing at him; for the napkin was fallen from his middle and discovered his yard in point. So he knew that all this was but an embroglio of dreams and an illusion of hashish and was vexed and said to him who had aroused him, ‘Woe! thou hadst waited till I had put it in!’ Then said the folk, ‘Art thou not ashamed, O hashish-eater, and thou lying asleep and naked, with thy yard on end?’ And they cuffed him, till the marge of his neck was red. Now he was starving, yet had he tasted the savour of delight in sleep.”

When Kanmakân heard this story, he laughed till he fell backward and said to Bakem, “O my nurse, this is indeed a rare story; I never heard its like. Hast thou any more?” “Yes,” answered she and went on to tell him diverting stories and laughable anecdotes, till sleep overcame him. Then she sat by him till the most part of the night was past, when she said to herself, “It is time to profit by the occasion.” So she unheath the dagger and drawing near to Kanmakân, was about to slaughter him, when, behold, in came his mother. When Bakem saw her, she rose to meet her, and fear got hold on her and she fell a-trembling, as if she had the ague. The prince’s mother marvelled to see her thus and accused her son, who awoke and found her sitting at his head. Now the reason of her coming was that Kusin Fekan heard of the plot to kill Kanmakân and said to his mother, “O wife of my uncle, go to thy son, ere that wicked bag-
gave Bakoon kill him." And she told her what had passed, from beginning to end. So she rose at once and stayed not for aught, till she came to her son's lodgings, just as Bakoon was about to slay him. When he awoke, he said to his mother, "O my mother, indeed thou comest at a good time, for my name Bakoon has been with me this night." Then he turned to Bakoon and said to her, "My life on thee, knowest thou any story better than those thou hast told me?" "What I have told thee," answered she, "is nothing to what I will tell thee; but that must be for another time." Then she rose to go, hardly believing that she should escape with her life, for she perceived of her cunning that his mother knew what was toward; and he said, "Go in peace." So she went her way, and his mother said to him, "O my son, blessed be this night, wherein God the Most High hath delivered thee from this accursed woman!" "How so?" asked he, and she told him the whole story. "O my mother," said he, "whose is fate to live finds no slayer; nor, though he be slain, will he die; but now it was wise that we depart from amongst these enemies and let God do what He will." So, as soon as it was day, he left the city and joined the Vicer Dendan, and certain things befell between King Susara and Nushet ez Zeman, which caused her also to leave the city and join herself to Kannakan and Dendan, as did likewise such of the King's officers as inclined to their party. Then they took counsel together what they should do and agreed to make an expedition into the land of the Greeks and take their revenge for the death of King Omar ben Enman and his son Sherkan. So they set out with this intent and after adventures which it were tedious to set out, but the drift of which will appear from what follows, they fell into the hands of Rumian, King of the Greeks. Next morning, King Rumian caused Dendan and Kannakan and their company to be brought before him

and seating them at his side, bade spread the tables of food. So they ate and drank and took heart of grace, after having made sure of death, for then, when they were summoned to the King's presence, they said to one another, "He has not sent for us but to put us to death." Then said the King, "I have had a dream, which I related to the monks and they said, 'None can expos'd it to thee but the Vicer Dendan.'" "And what didst thou see in thy dream, O king of the age?" asked Dendan. "I dreamt," answered the King, "that I was in a pit, as it were a black well, where massacred folk were tormenting me; and I would have risen, but fell on my feet and could not get out of the pit. Then I turned and saw on the ground a girdle of gold and put out my hand to take it; but when I raised it from the ground, I saw it was two girdles. So I girt my middle with them, and behold, they became one girdle; and this, O Vicer, is my dream and what I saw in sleep." "O our lord the Sultan," said Dendan, "this thy dream denotes that thou hast a brother or a brother's son or an uncle's son or other near kinsman of thy flesh and blood [of whom thou knowest not]." When the King heard this, he looked at Kannakan and Dendan and Nushet of Zeman and Kunun Fukan and the rest of the captives and said in himself, "If I cut off these people's heads, their troops will lose heart for the loss of their chiefs and I shall be able to return speedily to my realm, lest the kingdom pass out of my hands." So he called the headman and bade him strike off Kannakan's head, when behold, up came Rumian's name and said to him, "O august King, what wilt thou do?" Quoth he, "I mean to put these captives to death and throw their heads among their troops; after which I will fall upon them, I and all my men, and kill all we may and put the rest to the rout; so will this be the end of the war and I shall return speedily to my kingdom, ere aught befall among my subjects."
When the nurse heard this, she came up to him and said in the Frank tongue, "How canst thou slay thine own brother's son and thy sister and thy sister's daughter?" When he heard this, he was exceeding angry and said to her, "O accursed woman, didst thou not tell me that my mother was murdered and that my father died by poison? Didst thou not give me a jewel and say to me, "This jewel was thy father's? Why didst thou not tell me the truth?"

"All that I told thee is true," replied she: "but thy case and my own are wonderful and thine and my history extraordinary. My name is Merjanah and thy mother's name was Abrizech. She was gifted with such beauty and grace and valour that proverbs were made of her, and her prowess was renowned among men of war. Thy father was King Omar ben Emaunam, Lord of Baghdad and Khorassan. He sent his son Sherkan on an expedition, in company with this very Villier Donian; and Sherkan thy brother separated himself from the troops and fell in with thy mother Queen Abrizech, in a private garden of her palace, whither we had resorted to wrestle, she and I and her other damsels. He came on us by chance and wrestled with thy mother, who overcame him by the splendour of her beauty and her valour. Then she entertained him five days in her palace, till the news of this came to her father, by the old woman Shewahi, summoned Dhat ed Dewahi, whereupon she embraced Islam at Sherkan's hands and he carried her by stealth to Baghdad, and with her myself and Rihanah and other twenty damsels. When we came to thy father's presence, he fell in love with thy mother and going in to her one night, forsoothed her with her, and she became with child by him of thee. Now thy mother had three jewels, which she gave to thy father, and he gave one of them to his daughter Nushet ez Zeman, another to thy brother Zoumueskan and the third to thy brother Sherkan. This last thy mother took from Sherkan, and I kept it for thee. When the time of the princess's delivery drew near, she yearned after her own people and discovered her secret to me; so I went privately to a black slave called Ghezbam and telling him our case, bribed him to go with us. Accordingly, he took us and fled forth the city with us by stealth towards the land of the Greeks, till we came to a desert place on the borders of our own country. Here the pangs of labour came upon thy mother, and the slave, being moved by lust, sought of her a shameful thing: whereas she cried out loudly and was sore affrighted at him. In the excess of her alarm, she gave birth to thee at once, and at this moment these arose, in the direction of our country, a clout of dust which spread till it covered the plain. At this sight, the slave feared for his life; so, in his rage, he smote Queen Abrizech with his sword and slew her, then mounting his horse, went his way. Presently, the dust lifted and discovered thy grandfather, King Herdoub, who, seeing thy mother his daughter dead on the ground, was sorely troubled and questioned me of the manner of her death and why she had left her father's kingdom. So I told him all that had happened, first and last; and this is the cause of the feud between the people of the land of the Greeks and the people of Baghdad. Then we took up thy dead mother and buried her; and I took thee and reared thee, and hung this jewel about thy neck. But, when thou camest to man's estate, I dared not acquaint thee with the truth of the matter, lest it should stir up a war of revenge between you. Moreover, thy grandfather had enjoined me to seclude, and I could not gainsay the commandment of thy mother's father, Herdoub, King of the Greeks. 'This, then, is why I forbore to tell thee that thy father was King Omar ben Emaunam; but, when thou camest to the throne, I told thee [what thou knowest]; and the rest I could not reveal to thee till this moment. So now, O king of the age, I have discovered
to thee my secret and have acquainted thee with all that
I know of the matter; and thou knowest best what is
in thy mind." And when Nuzhet ez Zeman heard what the
King's nurse said, she cried out, saying, "This King
Rumzan is my brother by my father King Omar ben Ennum-
man, and his mother was the Princess Abtrizeh, daughter
of Herdoosh, King of the Greeks; and I know this damsel
Merjaneh right well." With this, trouble and perplexity
got hold upon Rumzan and he caused Nuzhet ez Zeman
to be brought up to him forthright. When he looked
upon her, blood drew to blood and he questioned her
of his history. So she told him all she knew, and her
story talked with that of his nurse; whereupon he was
assured that he was indeed of the people of Iraq and that
King Omar ben Ennuman was his father. So he caused
his sister to be unbond, and she came up to him and
kissed his hands, whilst her eyes ran over with tears. He
saw also to see her weeping, and brotherly love entered
into him; and his heart yearned to his brother's son Kan-
manak. So he sprang to his feet and taking the sword
from the headman's hands, bade bring the captives up to
him. At this, they made sure of death; but he cut their
bonds with the sword and said to Merjaneh, "Explain the
matter to them, even as thou hast explained it to me."
"O King," replied she. "I know that this old man is the
Vizier Demdan and he is the best of witnesses to my story,
seeing that he knows the truth of the case." Then she
turned to the captives and repeated the whole story to
them and to the princes of the Greeks and the Franks who
were present with them, and they all confirmed her words.
When she had finished, changing to look at Kannamanak,
saw on his neck the fellow jewel to that which she
had hung round King Rumzan's neck, whereupon she gave
such a cry, that the whole palace rang again, and said to
the King, "Know, O my son, that now my certainty is
still more assured, for the jewel that is about the neck of
younger captive is the fellow to that I hung to thy neck, and
this is indeed thy brother's son Kannamanak." Then she
turned to Kannamanak and said to him, "O King of the
age, let me see that jewel." So he took it from his neck
and gave it to her. Then she asked Nuzhet ez Zeman of
the third jewel and she gave it to her, whereupon she
delivered the two to King Rumzan, and the truth of the
matter was made manifest to him and he was assured that
he was indeed Prince Kannamanak's uncle and that his
father was King Omar ben Ennuman. So he rose at once
and going up to the Vizier Demdan, embraced him; then
he embraced Prince Kannamanak, and they cried aloud
for very gladness. The joyful news was blazed abroad
and they beat the drums and cymbals, whilst the flutes sounded
and the people held high festival. The army of Iraq
and Syria heard the clamour of rejoicing among the Greeks;
so they mounted, all of them, and King Ziblcan also took
horse, saying in himself, "What can be the cause of this
clamour and rejoicing in the army of the Franks?" Then
the Muslim troops made ready for fight and advancing
into the field, drew out in battle array. Presently, King
Rumzan turned and seeing the army deployed in battle,
ensured the reason and was told the state of the case;
so he bade Kazan Fekan return at once to the Muslim
troops and acquaint them with the accord that had been
deed and how it was come to light that he was Kannamanak's
uncle. So she set out, putting away from her sorrows and
troubles, and stayed not till she came to King Ziblcan,
whom she found tearful-eyed, fearing for the captive
chiefs and princes. She saluted him and told him all that
had passed, whereat the Muslims' grief was turned to
gladness. Then he and all his officers took horse and
followed the princess to the pavilion of King Rumzan,
whom they found sitting with his nephew, Prince Kann-
kan. Now they had taken counsel with the Vizier Dendan concerning King Ziblan and had agreed to commit to his charge the city of Damascus of Syria and leave him king over it as before, whilst themselves entered Irak. Accordingly, they confirmed him in the vice-royalty of Damascus and bade him set out at once for his government; so he departed with his troops and they rode with him a part of the way, to bid him farewell. Then they returned and gave orders for departure, whereupon the two armies united and King Rumzan and his nephew set out, surrounded by their nobles and grandees. And indeed Kannakan rejoiced in his uncle King Rumzan and called down blessings on the name Merjanah, who had made them known to each other; but the two Kings said to one another, "Our hearts will never be at rest nor our wrath appeased, till we have taken our wreak of the old woman Shewaili, named Dhat ed Dewali, and wiped out the blot upon our honour." So they fared on till they drew near Baghdad, and Susan, hearing of their approach, came out to meet them and kissed the hand of the King of the Greeks, who bestowed on him a dress of honour. Then King Rumzan sat down on the throne and seated his nephew at his side, who said to him, "O my uncle, this kingdom befits none but thee." "God forbid," replied Rumzan, "that I should supplant thee in thy kingdom!" So the Vizier Dendan counselled them to share the throne.

Night between them, ruling each one day in turn, and they agreed to this. Then they made feasts and offered sacrifices and held high festival, whilst King Kannakan spent his nights with his cousin Kunia Fekan; and they abode thus awhile.

One day, as the two kings sat, rejoicing in the happy ending of their troubles, they saw a crowd of dust arise and up came a merchant, who ran to them, shrieking and crying out for succour. "O kings of the age," said he,
lay hands on these three and set the rest free, after taking from them all the goods in their possession and giving them to the merchant, who examined them and found that a fourth of his stock was missing. The two Kings engaged to make good his loss, whereupon he pulled out two letters, one in the handwriting of Scharkan and the other in that of Nuzhet ez Zeman; for this was the very merchant who had bought Nuzhet ez Zeman of the Bedouin, as hath been before set forth. Kammad examined the letters and recognized the handwriting of his uncle Scharkan and his aunt Nuzhet ez Zeman; then (for that he knew the latter's history) he went in to her with that which she had written and told her the merchant's story. She knew her own handwriting and recognizing the merchant, despatched to him guest-gifts (of victual and what not) and commended him to her brother and nephew, who ordered him gifts of money and slaves and servants to wait on him, besides which the princess sent him a hundred thousand dirhems in money and fifty loads of merchandize, together with other rich presents. Then she sent for him and made herself known to him, whereat he rejoiced greatly and kissed her hands, giving her joy of her safety and union with her brother and thanking her for her bounty: and he said to her, "By Allah, a good deed is not lost upon thee!" Then she withdrew to her own apartment and the merchant sojourned with them three days; after which she took leave of them and set out to return to Damascus. After this, the two Kings sent for the three robber-chiefs and questioned them of their condition, whereupon one of them came forward and said, "Know that I am a Bedouin, who use to lie in wait, by the way, to steal children and virgin girls and sell them to merchants; and this I did for many a year until these latter days, when Sathan invited me to join these two gallows-birds in gathering together all the riff-raff of the Arabs and other peoples, that we might waylay merchants and plunder caravans." Said the two Kings, "Tell us the rarest of the adventures that have befallen thee in kidnapping children and girls." "O kings of the age," replied he, "the strangest thing that ever happened to me was as follows. Two-and-twenty years ago, being in Jerusalem, I saw a girl come out of the khan, who was possessed of beauty and grace, albeit she was but a servant and was clad in worn clothes, with a piece of camel-cloth on her head; so I entrapped her by guile and setting her on a camel, made off with her into the desert, thinking to carry her to my own people and there set her to pasture the camels and collect their dung (for fuel); but she wept so sore, that after beating her soundly, I carried her to Damascus, where a merchant saw her and being astounded at her beauty and accomplishments, bid me more and more for her, till at last I sold her to him for a hundred thousand dinars. I heard after that he clothed her handsomely and presented her to the Vicency of Damascus, who gave him for her her price thrice told; and thus, by my life, was but little for such a damsel! This, O kings of the age, is the strangest thing that ever befell me." The two Kings wondered at his story: but, when Nuzhet ez Zeman heard it, the light in her face became darkness, and she cried out and said to her brother, "Sire, this is the very Bedouin who kidnapped me in Jerusalem!" And she told them all that she had endured from him in her strangerhood of hardship and blows and hunger and humiliation, adding, "And now it is lawful to me to slay him." So saying, she seiz'd a sword and made at him; but he cried out and said, "O kings of the age, let her not kill me, till I have told you the rare adventures that have befallen me." And Kammad said to her, "O my aunt, let him tell his story, and after do with him as thou wilt." So she held
HEMMAD THE BEDOUIN'S STORY.

Awhile ago, I was sore wakeful one night and thought the dawn would never break: so, as soon as it was day, I rose and girding on my sword, mounted my steed and set my lance in rest. Then I rode out to hunt, and as I went along, a company of men accosted me and asked me whither I went. I told them, and they said, 'We will bear thee company.' So we all fared on together, and presently we saw an ostrich and gave chase; but it evaded us and spreading its wings, fled before us and drew us on after it, till it brought us to a desert, wherein there was neither grass nor water, nor was ought to be heard there save the hissing of serpents, the wailing of jinn and the howling of ghoulis. Here we lost sight of the ostrich, nor could we tell whether it had flown up into the sky or sunk into the ground. Then we turned our horses' heads and thought to go back; but found that our return would be treacherous and dangerous at that time of exceeding heat; for the heat was grievous to us, so that we were sore athirst and our horses stood still. So we made sure of death; but as we were in this case, we espied a spacious meadow afar off, wherein were gazelles fishing. There was a tent pitched and by the tent-side a horse tethered and a spear stuck in the earth, whose head glittered in the sun. When we saw this, our hearts revived, after we had despairned, and we turned our horses' heads towards the meadow and rode on, till we came to a spring, where we alighted and drank and watered our beasts. Then I was seized with a frenzy of curiosity and went up to the door of the tent, where I saw a young man like the new moon, without hair on his cheeks, and on his right hand a slender damsel, as she were a willow wand. No sooner did I set eyes on the girl, than love of her got hold upon my heart and I saluted the young man, who returned my greeting. Then said I to him, 'O brother of the Arabs, tell me who thou art and what is this damsel to thee?' With this, he bent down his head awhile, then raised it and replied, 'Tell me first who thou art and what are these horsemen with thee.' 'I am Hennad, son of El Fenni,' answered I, 'the renowned cavalier, who is reckoned as five hundred horse among the Arabs. We went forth this morning to hunt and were overcome by thirst; so I came to the door of this tent, thinking to get of thee a draught of water.' When he heard this, he turned to the fair maiden and said to her, 'Bring this man water, and what there is of food.' So she went in, trilling her skirts, whilst her feet stumbled in her long hair and the golden bangles tinkled on her ankles, and returned after a little, bearing in her right hand a silver vessel of cold water and in her left a bowl full of milk and dates and flesh of wild cattle. But, of the excess of my passion for her, I could take of her not meat nor drink, and I recited to her the following verses, applying them to her:

The eye of the damsel upon her hand doth show, As 'twere a raven now lighted on fresh-fallen snow:

And see the full moon and the sun beside her face, This day and the other fearful for shame and woe.

Then, after I had eaten and drunk, I said to the youth, 'O chief of the Arabs, I have told thee truly who and what I am, and now I would fain have thee do the like by me and tell me the truth of thy case.' 'As for this damsel,' replied he, 'she is my sister.' Quoth I, 'It is my desire that thou give her to me to wife of free will; else will I slay thee and take her by force.' With this, he bowed his
head awhile, then raised his eyes to me and answered, 'Thou sayest sooth: I avouch myself a renowned cavalier and a famous champion and the lion of the desert; but if ye all attack me treacherously and slay me and take my sister by force, it will be a stain upon your honour. If ye be, as thou sayest, cavaliers that are counted among the champions and fear not the shock of battle, give me time to don my armour and gird on my sword and set my lance in rest and mount my horse. Then will we go forth into the field and fight; and if I conquer you, I will kill you, every man of you; and if you overcome me and slay me, this damsel my sister is thine.' 'This is but just,' answered I, 'and we oppose it not.' Then I turned my horse's head, mad for love of the damsel, and rode back to my companions, to whom I set forth her beauty and grace, as also the comeliness of the young man and his valour and strength of soul and how he avouchèd himself a match for a thousand horse. Moreover, I described to them the tent and all the riches and rarities it contained and said to them, 'Be sure that this youth would not have taken up his abode alone in this desert place, were he not a man of great prowess: so I propose that whoso slays him shall take his sister.' And they agreed to this. Then we armed ourselves and mounting, rode to the tent, where we found the young man armed and mounted; but his sister ran up to him, with her veil drenched with tears, and laying hold of his stirrup, cried out, saying, 'Alas! and 'Woe worth the day!' in her fear for her brother, and recited the following verses:

To God above I make my plea of sorrow and affliction. May he, the emperor's Lord, will send him with disarray. They shan't kill thee, brother mine, with malice unforethought. Though never cause of anger was nor fault forewent the fray. Yea, for a champion art thou known among the men of war. The dauntless knight that East or West goes camping by the way.

Thou wilt thy sister's honour guard, whose might is small, for thou Her brother art and she for thee unto the Lord doth pray. Let not the foe possess my soul nor seize on me perchance. And what their cruel will on me, without my eye or say. By God! His truth, I'll never live in any land where thou Art not, albeit all the goods of plenty it display! But I will slay myself for love and yearning for thy sake. And in the darksome tomb I'll make my bed upon the clay.

When he heard her words, he wept sore and turning his horse's head towards her, made answer with the following verses:

Stand by and see the woeful deeds that I will do this day. Whereas we meet and I on them rain blows in the moly. Even though the lion of the war, the captain of the host. The stoutest champion of them all, spurs out into the fray. I'll deal a Thakalehya! blow at him and in his heart I'll let my spear, even to the shaft, its thirst for blood alloy. If I defeat thee not from all that seek thee, sister mine, May I be slaughtered and my core given to the birds a prey! Ay, I will battle for thy sake, with all the might I may. And books shall story after me the marvels of this day.

Then said he, 'O my sister, give ear to what I shall enjoin on thee.' And she answered, 'I hear and obey.' Quoth he, 'If I fall, let none possess thee;' and she buffeted her face and said, 'God forbid, O my brother, that I should see thee laid low and yield myself to thine enemies!' With this he put out his hand to her and drew aside her veil, whereinon her face shone forth, like the sun from out clouds. Then he kissed her between the eyes and bade her farewell; after which he turned to us and said, 'Ho, cavaliers! Come ye as guests or are ye minded to cut and thrust? If ye come as guests, rejoice in hospitality; and if ye covet the shining moon, come out against me, one by one, and fight.' Then came out

* I.e. with a blow worthy of the members of the family of Thakaleh to which (see note p. 368) he belonged. ** i.e. his sister.
to him a sturdy horseman, and the young man said to him;

'Tell me thy name and thy father's name, for I have sworn to fight with none whose name and whose father's name tally with mine and my father's, and if it be thus with thee, I will give thee up the girl.' 'My name is Bihal,' answered the other; and the young man repeated the following verses:

Thou liest when thou tak'st of 'benefits'; for lo, Thou comest with mischief and malevolence and woe! So, as thou be dauntless, heed well what I say: I'm he who the bravest
in the battle lays low
With a keen-cutting sword, like the bow of the moon; So look (and beware) for a killing-stroke!

Then they ran at one another, and the youth smote his adversary in the breast, that the lance-head issued from his back. With this, another came out, and the youth repeated the following verses:

O dog, that art scarce of steel and of sight, What is there of worth that to come by it light?
'Tis only the lion of race and of might Right noble, recks little of life in the fight.

Nor was it long before he left him also drowned in his blood and cried out, 'Who will come out to me?' So a third horseman pricked out, reciting the following verses:

I come to thee, with a fire in my breast that blazes keen, And call on my comrades all to the fight to follow me.

Though thou hast slain the chiefs of the Arabs, yet, peerless, Thou shalt not escape this day from those that follow thee!

When the youth heard this, he answered him, saying:

Thou canst, like a right evil fiend that thou art, With a lie on thy lips and a frown at thy brow

This day shall thou taste of a death-dealing dart And a spear that shall rid thee of life with its smart.

Then he smote him on the breast, that the spear-point:

issued from his back, and cried out, saying, 'Will another come out?' So a fourth came out and the youth asked him his name. He replied, 'My name is Bihal!' And the youth repeated these verses:

Thou erst, that wouldst plunge in my sea of affray And thinkkest to daunt me with lies and slaver,

Lo, I, to whose chant thou hast hearkened this day, Thy soul, ere thou knew'st it, will ravish away!

Then they drove at one another and exchanged blows; but the youth's stroke forewent that of his adversary and slew him; and thus he went on to kill all who called out against him. When I saw my comrades slain, I said in myself, 'If I fight with him, I shall not be able to withstand him, and if I flee, I shall become a byword among the Arabs.' However, the youth gave me no time to think, but ran at me and laying hold of me, dragged me from my saddle. I swooned away and he raised his sword to cut off my head; but I clung to his skirts and he lifted me in his hand, as I were a sparrow [in the clutches of a hawk]. When the maiden saw this, she rejoiced in her brother's prowess and coming up to him, kissed him between the eyes. Then he delivered me to her, saying, 'Take him and entertain him well, for he is come under our rule.' So she took hold of the collars of my coat-of-arms and led me away by them as one would lead a dog. Then she did off her brother's armour and clad him in a robe, after which she brought him a stool of ivory, on which he sat down, and said to him, 'May God whiten thine honour and make thee to be as a provision against the shifts of fortune!' And he answered her with the following verses:

My sister said, (who saw my lustre forehead blaze Midmost the war, as shee the sun's meridian says)

"God bless thee for a brave, to whom, when he falls on, The desert lions bow in terror and amaze!"
"Question the men of war," I answered her, "of me, Whose the champions face before my flashing gaze. I am the world-renowned for fortune and for might, Whose proven is uplift to what a height of praise! O Hemnad, thou hast rounded a lion, who shall show Thee death that comes as swift as vipers in the ways."

When I heard what he said, I was perplexed about my affair, and considering my condition and how I was become a captive, I was lessened in my esteem. Then I looked at the damsel and said to myself, 'Is she who is the cause of all this trouble?' and I fell a-marvelling at her beauty and grace, till the tears streamed from my eyes and I recited the following verses:

Reproach me not, O friend, nor chide me for the past, For I will pay no heed to chiding and dispraise.
Lo, I am clean distraught for one, whom when I saw, Face in my breast forthlight the love of her did mine.
Her brother was my foe and rival in her love, A man of niggard might and cruelest in affairs.

Then the maiden set food before her brother, and he bade me eat with him, whereat I rejoiced and felt assured of my life. When he had made an end of eating, she brought him a flagon of wine and he drank, till the fumes of the wine mounted to his head and his face flushed. Then he turned to me and said, 'Harkye, Hemnad, dost thou know me?' 'By thy life,' answered I, 'I am rich in nought but ignorance.' Said he, 'I am Hadd ben Tenilm ben Thaaleleh, and indeed God giveth thee thy liberty and spareth thee confusion.' Then he drank to my health and gave me a cup of wine and I drank it off. Then he filled me a second and a third and a fourth, and I drank them all; and he made merry with me and took an oath of me that I would never betray him. So I swore to him a thousand oaths that I would never deal perfidiously with him, but would be a friend and a helper to him.

Then he bade his sister bring me ten dressses of silk; so she brought them and laid them on me, and this gown I have on my body is one of them. Moreover, he made her bring one of the best of the riding camels, laden with staffs and victual, and a sorel horse, and gave the whole to me. I abode with them three days, eating and drinking, and what he gave me was with me to this day. At the end of this time, he said to me, 'O Hemnad, O my brother, I would fain sleep awhile and rest myself. I trust myself to thee; but if thou see homewards making either, fear not, for they are of the Beni Thaaleleh, seeking to wage war on me.' Then he laid his sword under his head and slept; and when he was drowned in slumber, the devil prompted me to kill him; so I rose, and drawing the sword from under his head, dealt him a blow that severed his head from his body. His sister heard what I had done, and rushing out from within the tent, threw herself on his body, tearing her clothes and repeating the following verses:

Carry the tidings to the folk, the saddest news can be; But man from God's ordiance no whither might to flee.
Now art thou slaughtered, brother mine, laid prostrate on the earth,
Thou whose bright face was as the round of the full moon to see.
Indeed, as evil day it was, the day thou wertest them, And after many a fight, thy spear is shattered, woe is me!
No rider, now that thou art dead, in horses shall delight Nor every one shall woman bear a man to match with thee.
Hence this day hath played thee false and fealty done to death: Unto his oath and plighted faith a traitor base is he.
He deemeth thus to have his will and compass his desire; But Satan both to his depths in all he doth decoy.

When she had ended, she turned to me and said, 'O man of accursed lineage, wherefore didst thou play my brother false and slay him, whereas he purposed to send thee back to thy country with gifts and victual and it was his intent also, to marry thee to me at the first of the
month? Then she drew a sword she had with her, and planting it in the ground, with the point set to her breast, threw herself thereon and pressed upon it, till the blade issued from her back and she fell to the ground, dead. I mourned for her and wept and repented when repentance availed me nothing. Then I went in haste to the tent and taking whatever was light of carriage and great of worth, went my way: but in my haste and fear, I took no heed of my (dead) comrades, nor did I bury the maiden and the youth. This, then, is my story, and it is still more extraordinary than that of the serving-maid I kidnapped in Jerusalem.

When Nazibet az Zeman heard these words of the Night Bedouin, the light in her eyes was changed to darkness, and she rose and drew the sword, smote him amiddleward the shoulder-blades, that the point issued from his throat. The bystanders said to her, "Why hast thou made haste to slay him?" And she answered, "Praised be God who hath granted me to avenge myself with my own hand!" And she bade the slaves drag the body out by the feet and cast it to the dogs. Then they turned to the second prisoner, who was a black slave, and said to him, "What is thy name? Tell us the truth of thy case." "My name is Gheeban," answered he and told them what had passed between himself and the princess Aibrizh and how he had slain her and fled. Hardly had he made an end of his story, when King Rumzan struck off his head with his sabre, saying, "Praised be God that gave me life! I have avenged my mother with my own hand." Then he repeated to them what his nurse Merjemach had told him of this same Gheeban; after which they turned to the third prisoner and said to him, "Tell us who thou art and speak the truth." Now this was the very cannel-driver, whom the people of Jerusalem hired to carry Zoulekan to the hospital at Damascus; but he threw him down on the fuel-heap and went his way. So he told them how he had dealt with Zoulekan, whereupon Kannakan took his sword forthright and cut off his head, saying, "Praised be God who hath given me life, that I might requite this traitor what he did with my father, for I have heard this very story from King Zoulekan himself!" Then they said to each other, "It remains only for us to take our wreak of the old woman Shewahl, yelept Dhat ed Dewahl, for that she is the prime cause of all these troubles. Who will deliver her into our hands, that we may avenge ourselves upon her and wipe out our dishonour?" And King Rumzan said, "Needs must we bring her hither." So he wrote a letter to his grandmother, the aforesaid old woman, giving her to know that he had subdued the kingdom of Damascus and Mosul and Irak and had broken up the host of the Muslims and captured their princes and adding, "I desire thee of all urgency to come to me without delay, bringing with thee the princess Sulaykh, daughter of King Afridoum, and whom thou wilt of the Nazaréne chiefs, but no troops; for the country is quiet and under our hand." And he despatched the letter to her, which when she read, she rejoiced greatly and forthwith equipping herself and Sulaykh, set out with their attendants and journeyed, without stopping, till they drew near Baghdad. Then she sent a messenger to acquaint the King of her arrival, whereupon quoth Rumzan, "We should do well to den the habit of the Franks and go out to meet the old woman, to the intent that we may be assured against her craft and perjury." So they clad themselves in Frankish apparel, and when Kazia Fekan saw them, she exclaimed, "By the Lord of Worship, did I not know you, I should take you to be indeed Franks!" Then they sallied forth, with a thousand horse, to meet the old woman, and King Rumzan rode on before them. As soon as his eyes met hers, he dismounted and walked
towards her, and she, recognizing him, dismounted also and embraced him; but he pressed her ribs with his hands, till he well-nigh broke them. Quoth she, "What is this, O my son?" But before she had done speaking, up came Kansakan and Dzatan, and the horsemen with them cried out at the women and slaves and took them all prisoners. Then the two kings returned to Baghdad, with their captives, and Rumzan bade decorate the city three days long, at the end of which time they brought out the old woman, with a tall red bonnet of palm-leaves on her head, diadem'd with asses' dung, and preceded by a herald, proclaiming aloud, "This is the reward of those who presume to lay hands on kings and kings' sons!" Then they crucified her on one of the gates of Baghdad; and her companions, seeing what befell her, all embraced the faith of Islam. As for Kansakan and his uncle Ramzan and his aunt Nushet ez-Ze'man, they marvelled at the wonderful events that had befallen them and bade the scribes set them down orderly in books, that those who came after might read. Then they all abode in the enjoyment of all the delights and comforts of life, till these overtook them the Destroyer of Delights and the Sunderer of Companies; and this is all that hath come down to us of the dealings of fortune with King Omar ben Ermuman and his sons Sherkan and Zodi'makan and his son's son Kansakan and his daughter Nushet ez-Ze'man and her daughter Kusia Fokan.

END OF VOL. II.