THE ARABIAN NIGHTS

"*THE ORIENT MAGIC*"

Tales of the Thousand and One Nights, including Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp, Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves, and Sindbad the Sailor

"Illustrated Edition"

By

ANONYMOUS

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ILLUSTRATIONS:

FROM DRAWINGS IN COLORS, BY MURAT UKRAY & MAXFIELD PARRISH

The Talking Bird

It will be sufficient to break off a branch and carry it to plant in your garden

The Fisherman and the Genie

The smoke ascended to the clouds, and extending itself along the sea and upon the shore formed a great mist

The Young King of the Black Isles

When he came to this part of his narrative the young king could not restrain his tears

Gulnare of the Sea

And she proceeded to burn perfume and repeat spells until the sea foamed and was agitated

Aladdin

At the same time the earth, trembling, opened just before the magician, and uncovered a stone, laid horizontally, with a brass ring fixed into the middle

Prince Agib

And when the boat came to me I found in it a man of brass, with a tablet of lead upon his breast, engraven with names and talismans

Prince Agib

At the approach of evening I opened the first closet and, entering it, found a mansion like paradise

The City of Brass

And when they had ascended that mountain they saw a city than which eyes had not beheld any greater

The Story of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves

Cassim ... was so alarmed at the danger he was in that the more he endeavoured to remember the word *Sesame* the more his memory was confounded

The History of Codadad and His Brothers

As it drew near we saw ten or twelve armed pirates appear on the deck

Second Voyage of Sinbad

The spot where she left me was encompassed on all sides by mountains that seemed to reach above the clouds, and so steep that there was no possibility of getting out of the valley

Third Voyage of Sinbad

Having finished his repast, he returned to his porch, where he lay and fell asleep, snoring louder than thunder

THE ARABIAN NIGHTS

Preface

Little excuse is needed, perhaps, for any fresh selection from the famous "Tales of a Thousand and One Nights," provided it be representative enough, and worthy enough, to enlist a new army of youthful readers. Of the two hundred and sixty-four bewildering, unparalleled stories, the true lover can hardly spare one, yet there must always be favourites, even among these. We have chosen some of the most delightful, in our opinion; some, too, that chanced to appeal particularly to the genius of the artist. If, enticed by our choice and the beauty of the pictures, we manage to attract a few thousand more true lovers to the fountain-book, we shall have served our humble turn. The only real danger lies in neglecting it, in rearing a child who does not know it and has never fallen under its spell.

You remember Maimoune, in the story of Prince Camaralzaman, and what she said to Danhasch, the genie who had just arrived from the farthest limits of China? "Be sure thou tellest me nothing but what is true or I shall clip thy wings!" This is what the modern child sometimes says to the genies of literature, and his own wings are too often clipped in consequence.

"The Empire of the Fairies is no more.
Reason has banished them from ev'ry shore;
Steam has outstripped their dragons and their cars,
Gas has eclipsed their glow-worms and their stars."

Édouard Laboulaye says in his introduction to Nouveaux Contes Bleus: "Mothers who love your children, do not set them too soon to the study of history; let them dream while they are young. Do not close the soul to the first breath of poetry. Nothing affrights me so much as the reasonable, practical child who believes in nothing that he cannot touch. These sages of ten years are, at twenty, dullards, or what is still worse, egoists."

When a child has once read of Prince Agib, of Gulnare or Periezade, Sinbad or Codadad, in this or any other volume of its kind, the magic will have been instilled into the blood, for the Oriental flavour in the Arab tales is like nothing so much as magic. True enough they are a vast storehouse of information concerning the manners and the customs, the spirit and the life of the Moslem East (and the youthful reader does not have to study Lane's learned foot-notes to imbibe all this), but beyond and above the knowledge of history and geography thus gained, there comes something finer and subtler as well as something more vital. The scene is Indian, Egyptian, Arabian, Persian; but Bagdad and Balsora, Grand Cairo, the silver Tigris, and the blooming gardens of Damascus, though they can be found indeed on the map, live much more truly in that enchanted realm that rises o'er "the foam of perilous seas in faery lands forlorn." What craft can sail those perilous seas like the book that has been called a great three-decker to carry tired people to Islands of the Blest? "The immortal fragment," says Sir Richard Burton, who perhaps knew the Arabian Nights as did no other European, "will never be superseded in the infallible judgment of childhood. The marvellous imaginativeness of the Tales produces an insensible brightness of mind and an increase of fancy-power, making one dream that behind them lies the new and unseen, the strange and unexpected—in fact, all the glamour of the unknown."

It would be a delightful task to any boy or girl to begin at the beginning and read the first English version of these famous stories, made from the collection of M. Galland, Professor of Arabic in the Royal College of Paris. The fact that they had passed from Arabic into French and from French into English did not prevent their instantaneous popularity. This was in 1704 or thereabouts, and the world was not so busy as it is nowadays, or young men would not have gathered in the middle of the night under M. Galland's window and cried: "O vous, qui savez de si jolis contes, et qui les racontez si bien, racontez nous en un!"

You can also read them in Scott's edition or in Lane's (both of which, but chiefly the former, we have used as the foundation of our text), while your elders—philologists or Orientalists—are studying the complete versions of John Payne or Sir Richard Burton. You may leave the wiseacres to wonder which were told in China or India, Arabia or Persia, and whether the first manuscript dates back to 1450 or earlier.

We, like many other editors, have shortened the stories here and there, omitting some of the tedious repetitions that crept in from time to time when Arabian story-tellers were adding to the text to suit their purposes.

Mr. Andrew Lang says amusingly that he has left out of his special versions "all the pieces that are suitable only for Arabs and old gentlemen," and we have done the same; but we have taken no undue liberties. We have removed no genies nor magicians, however terrible; have cut out no base deed of Vizier nor noble deed of Sultan; have diminished the size of no roc's egg, nor omitted any single allusion to the great and only Haroun Al-raschid, Caliph of

Bagdad, Commander of the Faithful, who must have been a great inspirer of good stories.

Enter into this "treasure house of pleasant things," then, and make yourself at home in the golden palaces, the gem-studded caves, the bewildering gardens. Sit by its mysterious fountains, hear the plash of its gleaming cascades, unearth its magic lamps and talismans, behold its ensorcelled princes and princesses.

Nowhere in the whole realm of literature will you find such a Marvel, such a Wonder, such a Nonesuch of a book; nowhere will you find impossibilities so real and so convincing; nowhere but in what Henley calls:

"... that blessed brief
Of what is gallantest and best
In all the full-shelved Libraries of Romance.
The Book of rocs,
Sandalwood, ivory, turbans, ambergris,
Cream-tarts, and lettered apes, and Calenders,
And ghouls, and genies—O so huge
They might have overed the tall Minster Tower,
Hands down, as schoolboys take a post;
In truth the Book of Camaralzaman,
Schemselnihar and Sinbad, Scheherezade
The peerless, Bedreddin, Badroulbadour,
Cairo and Serendib and Candahar,
And Caspian, and the dim, terrific bulk—
Ice-ribbed, fiend-visited, isled in spells and storms—
Of Kaf ... That centre of miracles
The sole, unparalleled Arabian Nights."
Kate Douglas Wiggin. August, 1909.

"When the breeze of a joyful dawn blew free
In the silken sail of infancy,
The tide of time flow'd back with me,
The forward-flowing time of time;
And many a sheeny summer morn,
Adown the Tigris I was borne,
By Bagdat's shrines of fretted gold,
High-walled gardens green and old;
True Mussulman was I and sworn,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid.

"Anight my shallop, rustling thro'
The low and bloomèd foliage, drove
The fragrant, glistening deeps, and clove
The citron-shadows in the blue:
By garden porches on the brim,
The costly doors flung open wide,
Gold glittering thro' lamplight dim,
And broider'd sofas on each side:
In sooth it was a goodly time,
For it was in the golden prime
Of good Haroun Alraschid."

Alfred, Lord Tennyson.

The Talking Bird, The Singing Tree, and the Golden Water



There was an emperor of Persia named Kosrouschah, who, when he first came to his crown, in order to obtain a knowledge of affairs, took great pleasure in night excursions, attended by a trusty minister. He often walked in disguise through the city, and met with many adventures, one of the most remarkable of which happened to him upon his first ramble, which was not long after his accession to the throne of his father.

After the ceremonies of his father's funeral rites and his own inauguration were over, the new sultan, as well from inclination as from duty, went out one evening attended by his grand vizier, disguised like himself, to observe what was transacting in the city. As he was passing through a street in that part of the town inhabited only by the meaner sort, he heard some people talking very loud; and going close to the house whence the noise proceeded, and looking through a crack in the door, perceived a light, and three sisters sitting on a sofa, conversing together after supper. By what the eldest said he presently understood the subject of their conversation was wishes: "for," said she, "since we are talking about wishes, mine shall be to have the sultan's baker for my husband, for then I shall eat my fill of that bread, which by way of excellence is called the sultan's; let us see if your tastes are as good as mine." "For my part," replied the second sister, "I wish I was wife to the sultan's chief cook, for then I should eat of the most excellent dishes; and as I am persuaded that the sultan's bread is common in the palace, I should not want any of that; therefore you see," addressing herself to her eldest sister, "that I have a better taste than you." The youngest sister, who was very beautiful, and had more charms and wit than the two elder, spoke in her turn: "For my part, sisters," said she, "I shall not limit my desires to such trifles, but take a higher flight; and since we are upon wishing, I wish to be the emperor's queen-consort. I would make him father of a prince, whose hair should be gold on one side of his head, and silver on the other; when he cried, the tears from his eyes should be pearls; and when he smiled, his vermilion lips should look like a rosebud fresh-blown."

The three sisters' wishes, particularly that of the youngest, seemed so singular to the sultan, that he resolved to gratify them in their desires; but without communicating his design to his grand vizier, he

charged him only to take notice of the house, and bring the three sisters before him the following day.

The grand vizier, in executing the emperor's orders, would but just give the sisters time to dress themselves to appear before his majesty, without telling them the reason. He brought them to the palace, and presented them to the emperor, who said to them, "Do you remember the wishes you expressed last night, when you were all in so pleasant a mood? Speak the truth; I must know what they were." At these unexpected words of the emperor, the three sisters were much confounded. They cast down their eyes and blushed, and the colour which rose in the cheeks of the youngest quite captivated the emperor's heart. Modesty, and fear lest they might have offended by their conversation, kept them silent. The emperor, perceiving their confusion, said to encourage them, "Fear nothing, I did not send for you to distress you; and since I see that without my intending it, this is the effect of the question I asked, as I know the wish of each, I will relieve you from your fears. You," added he, "who wished to be my wife, shall have your desire this day; and you," continued he, addressing himself to the two elder sisters, "shall also be married to my chief baker and cook."

As soon as the sultan had declared his pleasure, the youngest sister, setting her elders an example, threw herself at the emperor's feet to express her gratitude. "Sir," said she, "my wish, since it is come to your majesty's knowledge, was expressed only in the way of conversation and amusement. I am unworthy of the honour you do me, and supplicate your pardon for my presumption." The other two sisters would have excused themselves also, but the emperor, interrupting them, said, "No, no; it shall be as I have declared; the wishes of all shall be fulfilled." The nuptials were all celebrated that day, as the emperor had resolved, but in a different manner. The

youngest sister's were solemnized with all the rejoicings usual at the marriages of the emperors of Persia; and those of the other two sisters according to the quality and distinction of their husbands; the one as the sultan's chief baker, and the other as head cook.

The two elder felt strongly the disproportion of their marriages to that of their younger sister. This consideration made them far from being content, though they were arrived at the utmost height of their late wishes, and much beyond their hopes. They gave themselves up to an excess of jealousy, which not only disturbed their joy, but was the cause of great trouble and affliction to the queen-consort, their younger sister. They had not an opportunity to communicate their thoughts to each other on the preference the emperor had given her, but were altogether employed in preparing themselves for the celebration of their marriages. Some days afterward, when they had an opportunity of seeing each other at the public baths, the eldest said to the other: "Well, what say you to our sister's great fortune? Is not she a fine person to be a queen!" "I must own," said the other sister, "I cannot conceive what charms the emperor could discover to be so bewitched by her. Was it a reason sufficient for him not to cast his eyes on you, because she was somewhat younger? You were as worthy of his throne, and in justice he ought to have preferred you."



"Sister," said the elder, "I should not have regretted if his majesty had but pitched upon you; but that he should choose that little simpleton really grieves me. But I will revenge myself; and you, I think, are as much concerned as I; therefore, I propose that we should contrive measures and act in concert: communicate to me what you think the likeliest way to mortify her, while I, on my side, will inform you what my desire of revenge shall suggest to me." After this wicked agreement, the two sisters saw each other frequently, and consulted how they might disturb and interrupt the happiness of the queen. They proposed a great many ways, but in deliberating about the manner of executing them, found so many difficulties that they durst not attempt them. In the meantime, with a detestable dissimulation, they often went together to make her visits, and every time showed her all the marks of affection they could devise, to persuade her how overjoyed they were to have a sister raised to so high a fortune. The queen, on her part, constantly received them with all the demonstrations of esteem they could expect from so near a relative. Some time after her marriage, the expected birth of an heir gave great joy to the queen and emperor, which was communicated to all the court, and spread throughout the empire. Upon this news the two sisters came to pay their compliments, and proffered their services, desiring her, if not provided with nurses, to accept of them.

The queen said to them most obligingly: "Sisters, I should desire nothing more, if it were in my power to make the choice. I am, however, obliged to you for your goodwill, but must submit to what the emperor shall order on this occasion. Let your husbands employ their friends to make interest, and get some courtier to ask this favour of his majesty, and if he speaks to me about it, be assured that

I shall not only express the pleasure he does me but thank him for making choice of you."

The two husbands applied themselves to some courtiers, their patrons, and begged of them to use their interest to procure their wives the honour they aspired to. Those patrons exerted themselves so much in their behalf that the emperor promised them to consider of the matter, and was as good as his word; for in conversation with the queen he told her that he thought her sisters were the most proper persons to be about her, but would not name them before he had asked her consent. The queen, sensible of the deference the emperor so obligingly paid her, said to him, "Sir, I was prepared to do as your majesty might please to command. But since you have been so kind as to think of my sisters, I thank you for the regard you have shown them for my sake, and therefore I shall not dissemble that I had rather have them than strangers." The emperor therefore named the queen's two sisters to be her attendants; and from that time they went frequently to the palace, overjoyed at the opportunity they would have of executing the detestable wickedness they had meditated against the queen.

Shortly afterward a young prince, as bright as the day, was born to the queen; but neither his innocence nor beauty could move the cruel hearts of the merciless sisters. They wrapped him up carelessly in his cloths and put him into a basket, which they abandoned to the stream of a small canal that ran under the queen's apartment, and declared that she had given birth to a puppy. This dreadful intelligence was announced to the emperor, who became so angry at the circumstance, that he was likely to have occasioned the queen's death, if his grand vizier had not represented to him that he could not, without injustice, make her answerable for the misfortune.

In the meantime, the basket in which the little prince was exposed was carried by the stream beyond a wall which bounded the prospect of the queen's apartment, and from thence floated with the current down the gardens. By chance the intendant of the emperor's gardens, one of the principal officers of the kingdom, was walking in the garden by the side of this canal, and, perceiving a basket floating, called to a gardener who was not far off, to bring it to shore that he might see what it contained. The gardener, with a rake which he had in his hand, drew the basket to the side of the canal, took it up, and gave it to him. The intendant of the gardens was extremely surprised to see in the basket a child, which, though he knew it could be but just born, had very fine features. This officer had been married several years, but though he had always been desirous of having children, Heaven had never blessed him with any. This accident interrupted his walk: he made the gardener follow him with the child, and when he came to his own house, which was situated at the entrance to the gardens of the palace, went into his wife's apartment. "Wife," said he, "as we have no children of our own, God has sent us one. I recommend him to you; provide him a nurse, and take as much care of him as if he were our own son; for, from this moment, I acknowledge him as such." The intendant's wife received the child with great joy, and took particular pleasure in the care of him. The intendant himself would not inquire too narrowly whence the infant came. He saw plainly it came not far off from the queen's apartment, but it was not his business to examine too closely into what had passed, nor to create disturbances in a place where peace was so necessary.

The following year another prince was born, on whom the unnatural sisters had no more compassion than on his brother, but exposed him likewise in a basket and set him adrift in the canal,

pretending, this time, that the sultana had given birth to a cat. It was happy also for this child that the intendant of the gardens was walking by the canal side, for he had it carried to his wife, and charged her to take as much care of it as of the former, which was as agreeable to her inclination as it was to his own.

The emperor of Persia was more enraged this time against the queen than before, and she had felt the effects of his anger if the grand vizier's remonstrances had not prevailed. The third year the queen gave birth to a princess, which innocent babe underwent the same fate as her brothers, for the two sisters, being determined not to desist from their detestable schemes till they had seen the queen cast off and humbled, claimed that a log of wood had been born and exposed this infant also on the canal. But the princess, as well as her brothers, was preserved from death by the compassion and charity of the intendant of the gardens.

Kosrouschah could no longer contain himself, when he was informed of the new misfortune. He pronounced sentence of death upon the wretched queen and ordered the grand vizier to see it executed.

The grand vizier and the courtiers who were present cast themselves at the emperor's feet, to beg of him to revoke the sentence. "Your majesty, I hope, will give me leave," said the grand vizier, "to represent to you, that the laws which condemn persons to death were made to punish crimes; the three extraordinary misfortunes of the queen are not crimes, for in what can she be said to have contributed toward them? Your majesty may abstain from seeing her, but let her live. The affliction in which she will spend the rest of her life, after the loss of your favour, will be a punishment sufficiently distressing."

The emperor of Persia considered with himself, and, reflecting that it was unjust to condemn the queen to death for what had happened, said: "Let her live then; I will spare her life, but it shall be on this condition: that she shall desire to die more than once every day. Let a wooden shed be built for her at the gate of the principal mosque, with iron bars to the windows, and let her be put into it, in the coarsest habit; and every Mussulman that shall go into the mosque to prayers shall heap scorn upon her. If any one fail, I will have him exposed to the same punishment; and that I may be punctually obeyed, I charge you, vizier, to appoint persons to see this done." The emperor pronounced his sentence in such a tone that the grand vizier durst not further remonstrate; and it was executed, to the great satisfaction of the two envious sisters. A shed was built, and the queen, truly worthy of compassion, was put into it and exposed ignominiously to the contempt of the people, which usage she bore with a patient resignation that excited the compassion of those who were discriminating and judged of things better than the vulgar.

The two princes and the princess were, in the meantime, nursed and brought up by the intendant of the gardens and his wife with the tenderness of a father and mother; and as they advanced in age, they all showed marks of superior dignity, which discovered itself every day by a certain air which could only belong to exalted birth. All this increased the affections of the intendant and his wife, who called the eldest prince Bahman, and the second Perviz, both of them names of the most ancient emperors of Persia, and the princess, Periezade, which name also had been borne by several queens and princesses of the kingdom.

As soon as the two princes were old enough, the intendant provided proper masters to teach them to read and write; and the princess, their sister, who was often with them, showing a great

desire to learn, the intendant, pleased with her quickness, employed the same master to teach her also. Her vivacity and piercing wit made her, in a little time, as great a proficient as her brothers. From that time the brothers and sister had the same masters in geography, poetry, history, and even the secret sciences, and made so wonderful a progress that their tutors were amazed, and frankly owned that they could teach them nothing more. At the hours of recreation, the princess learned to sing and play upon all sorts of instruments; and when the princes were learning to ride she would not permit them to have that advantage over her, but went through all the exercises with them, learning to ride also, to bend the bow, and dart the reed or javelin, and oftentimes outdid them in the race and other contests of agility.

The intendant of the gardens was so overjoyed to find his adopted children so accomplished in all the perfections of body and mind, and that they so well requited the expense he had been at in their education, that he resolved to be at a still greater; for, as he had until then been content simply with his lodge at the entrance of the garden, and kept no country-house, he purchased a mansion at a short distance from the city, surrounded by a large tract of arable land, meadows, and woods. As the house was not sufficiently handsome nor convenient, he pulled it down, and spared no expense in building a more magnificent residence. He went every day to hasten, by his presence, the great number of workmen he employed, and as soon as there was an apartment ready to receive him, passed several days together there when his presence was not necessary at court; and by the same exertions, the interior was furnished in the richest manner, in consonance with the magnificence of the edifice. Afterward he made gardens, according to a plan drawn by himself. He took in a large extent of ground, which he walled around, and

stocked with fallow deer, that the princes and princess might divert themselves with hunting when they chose.

When this country seat was finished and fit for habitation, the intendant of the gardens went and cast himself at the emperor's feet, and, after representing how long he had served, and the infirmities of age which he found growing upon him, begged that he might be permitted to resign his charge into his majesty's disposal and retire. The emperor gave him leave, with the more pleasure, because he was satisfied with his long services, both in his father's reign and his own, and when he granted it, asked what he should do to recompense him. "Sir," replied the intendant of the gardens, "I have received so many obligations from your majesty and the late emperor, your father, of happy memory, that I desire no more than the honour of dying in your favour." He took his leave of the emperor and retired with the two princes and the princess to the country retreat he had built. His wife had been dead some years, and he himself had not lived above six months with his charges before he was surprised by so sudden a death that he had not time to give them the least account of the manner in which he had discovered them. The Princes Bahman and Perviz, and the Princess Periezade, who knew no other father than the intendant of the emperor's gardens, regretted and bewailed him as such, and paid all the honours in his funeral obsequies which love and filial gratitude required of them. Satisfied with the plentiful fortune he had left them, they lived together in perfect union, free from the ambition of distinguishing themselves at court, or aspiring to places of honour and dignity, which they might easily have obtained.

One day when the two princes were hunting, and the princess had remained at home, a religious old woman came to the gate, and desired leave to go in to say her prayers, it being then the hour. The

servants asked the princess's permission, who ordered them to show her into the oratory, which the intendant of the emperor's gardens had taken care to fit up in his house, for want of a mosque in the neighbourhood. She bade them, also, after the good woman had finished her prayers, to show her the house and gardens and then bring her to the hall.

The old woman went into the oratory, said her prayers, and when she came out two of the princess's women invited her to see the residence, which civility she accepted, followed them from one apartment to another, and observed, like a person who understood what belonged to furniture, the nice arrangement of everything. They conducted her also into the garden, the disposition of which she found so well planned, that she admired it, observing that the person who had formed it must have been an excellent master of his art. Afterward she was brought before the princess, who waited for her in the great hall, which in beauty and richness exceeded all that she had admired in the other apartments.

As soon as the princess saw the devout woman, she said to her: "My good mother, come near and sit down by me. I am overjoyed at the happiness of having the opportunity of profiting for some moments by the example and conversation of such a person as you, who have taken the right way by dedicating yourself to the service of God. I wish every one were as wise."

The devout woman, instead of sitting on a sofa, would only sit upon the edge of one. The princess would not permit her to do so, but rising from her seat and taking her by the hand, obliged her to come and sit by her. The good woman, sensible of the civility, said: "Madam, I ought not to have so much respect shown me; but since you command, and are mistress of your own house, I will obey you."

When she had seated herself, before they entered into any conversation, one of the princess's women brought a low stand of mother-of-pearl and ebony, with a china dish full of cakes upon it, and many others set round it full of fruits in season, and wet and dry sweetmeats.

The princess took up one of the cakes, and presenting her with it, said: "Eat, good mother, and make choice of what you like best; you had need to eat after coming so far." "Madam," replied the good woman, "I am not used to eat such delicacies, but will not refuse what God has sent me by so liberal a hand as yours."

While the devout woman was eating, the princess ate a little too, to bear her company, and asked her many questions upon the exercise of devotion which she practised and how she lived; all of which she answered with great modesty. Talking of various things, at last the princess asked her what she thought of the house, and how she liked it.

"Madam," answered the devout woman, "I must certainly have very bad taste to disapprove anything in it, since it is beautiful, regular, and magnificently furnished with exactness and judgment, and all its ornaments adjusted in the best manner. Its situation is an agreeable spot, and no garden can be more delightful; but yet, if you will give me leave to speak my mind freely, I will take the liberty to tell you that this house would be incomparable if it had three things which are wanting to complete it." "My good mother," replied the Princess Periezade, "what are those? I entreat you to tell me what they are; I will spare nothing to get them."

"Madam," replied the devout woman, "the first of these three things is the Talking Bird, so singular a creature, that it draws round

it all the songsters of the neighbourhood which come to accompany its voice. The second is the Singing Tree, the leaves of which are so many mouths which form an harmonious concert of different voices and never cease. The third is the Golden Water, a single drop of which being poured into a vessel properly prepared, it increases so as to fill it immediately, and rises up in the middle like a fountain, which continually plays, and yet the basin never overflows."

"Ah! my good mother," cried the princess, "how much am I obliged to you for the knowledge of these curiosities! I never before heard there were such rarities in the world; but as I am persuaded that you know, I expect that you should do me the favour to inform me where they are to be found."

"Madam," replied the good woman, "I should be unworthy the hospitality you have shown me if I should refuse to satisfy your curiosity on that point, and am glad to have the honour to tell you that these curiosities are all to be met with in the same spot on the confines of this kingdom, toward India. The road lies before your house, and whoever you send needs but follow it for twenty days, and on the twentieth only let him ask the first person he meets where the Talking Bird, the Singing Tree, and the Golden Water are, and he will be informed." After saying this, she rose from her seat, took her leave, and went her way.

The Princess Periezade's thoughts were so taken up with the Talking Bird, Singing Tree, and Golden Water, that she never perceived the devout woman's departure, till she wanted to ask her some question for her better information; for she thought that what she had been told was not a sufficient reason for exposing herself by undertaking a long journey. However, she would not send after her visitor, but endeavoured to remember all the directions, and when

she thought she had recollected every word, took real pleasure in thinking of the satisfaction she should have if she could get these curiosities into her possession; but the difficulties she apprehended and the fear of not succeeding made her very uneasy.

She was absorbed in these thoughts when her brothers returned from hunting, who, when they entered the great hall, instead of finding her lively and gay, as she was wont to be, were amazed to see her so pensive and hanging down her head as if something troubled her.

"Sister," said Prince Bahman, "what is become of all your mirth and gaiety? Are you not well? or has some misfortune befallen you? Tell us, that we may know how to act, and give you some relief. If any one has affronted you, we will resent his insolence."

The princess remained in the same posture some time without answering, but at last lifted up her eyes to look at her brothers, and then held them down again, telling them nothing disturbed her.

"Sister," said Prince Bahman, "you conceal the truth from us; there must be something of consequence. It is impossible we could observe so sudden a change if nothing was the matter with you. You would not have us satisfied with the evasive answer you have given; do not conceal anything, unless you would have us suspect that you renounce the strict union which has hitherto subsisted between us."

The princess, who had not the smallest intention to offend her brothers, would not suffer them to entertain such a thought, but said: "When I told you nothing disturbed me, I meant nothing that was of importance to you, but to me it is of some consequence; and since you press me to tell you by our strict union and friendship, which are so dear to me, I will. You think, and I always believed so too, that

this house was so complete that nothing was wanting. But this day I have learned that it lacks three rarities which would render it so perfect that no country seat in the world could be compared with it. These three things are the Talking Bird, the Singing Tree, and the Golden Water." After she had informed them wherein consisted the excellency of these rarities, "A devout woman," added she, "has made this discovery to me, told me the place where they are to be found, and the way thither. Perhaps you may imagine these things of little consequence; that without these additions our house will always be thought sufficiently elegant, and that we can do without them. You may think as you please, but I cannot help telling you that I am persuaded they are absolutely necessary, and I shall not be easy without them. Therefore, whether you value them or not, I desire you to consider what person you may think proper for me to send in search of the curiosities I have mentioned."

"Sister," replied Prince Bahman, "nothing can concern you in which we have not an equal interest. It is enough that you desire these things to oblige us to take the same interest; but if you had not, we feel ourselves inclined of our own accord and for our own individual satisfaction. I am persuaded my brother is of the same opinion, and therefore we ought to undertake this conquest, for the importance and singularity of the undertaking deserve that name. I will take the charge upon myself; only tell me the place and the way to it, and I will defer my journey no longer than till to-morrow."

"Brother," said Prince Perviz, "it is not proper that you, who are the head of our family, should be absent. I desire my sister should join with me to oblige you to abandon your design, and allow me to undertake it. I hope to acquit myself as well as you, and it will be a more regular proceeding." "I am persuaded of your goodwill, brother," replied Prince Bahman, "and that you would succeed as

well as myself in this journey; but I have resolved and will undertake it. You shall stay at home with our sister, and I need not recommend her to you."

The next morning Bahman mounted his horse, and Perviz and the princess embraced and wished him a good journey. But in the midst of their adieus, the princess recollected what she had not thought of before. "Brother," said she, "I had quite forgotten the accidents which attend travellers. Who knows whether I shall ever see you again? Alight, I beseech you, and give up this journey. I would rather be deprived of the sight and possession of the Talking Bird, the Singing Tree, and the Golden Water, than run the risk of never seeing you more."

"Sister," replied Bahman, smiling at her sudden fears, "my resolution is fixed. The accidents you speak of befall only those who are unfortunate; but there are more who are not so. However, as events are uncertain, and I may fail in this undertaking, all I can do is to leave you this knife."

Bahman pulling a knife from his vestband, and presenting it to the princess in the sheath, said: "Take this knife, sister, and give yourself the trouble sometimes to pull it out of the sheath; while you see it clean as it is now, it will be a sign that I am alive; but if you find it stained with blood, then you may believe me dead and indulge me with your prayers."

The princess could obtain nothing more of Bahman. He bade adieu to her and Prince Perviz for the last time and rode away. When he got into the road, he never turned to the right hand nor to the left, but went directly forward toward India. The twentieth day he

perceived on the roadside a hideous old man, who sat under a tree near a thatched house, which was his retreat from the weather.

His eyebrows were as white as snow, as was also the hair of his head; his whiskers covered his mouth, and his beard and hair reached down to his feet. The nails of his hands and feet were grown to an extensive length, while a flat, broad umbrella covered his head. He had no clothes, but only a mat thrown round his body. This old man was a dervish for so many years retired from the world to give himself up entirely to the service of God that at last he had become what we have described.

Prince Bahman, who had been all that morning very attentive, to see if he could meet with anybody who could give him information of the place he was in search of, stopped when he came near the dervish, alighted, in conformity to the directions which the devout woman had given the Princess Periezade, and leading his horse by the bridle, advanced toward him and saluting him, said: "God prolong your days, good father, and grant you the accomplishment of your desires."

The dervish returned the prince's salutation, but so unintelligibly that he could not understand one word he said and Prince Bahman, perceiving that this difficulty proceeded from the dervish's whiskers hanging over his mouth, and unwilling to go any further without the instructions he wanted, pulled out a pair of scissors he had about him, and having tied his horse to a branch of the tree, said: "Good dervish, I want to have some talk with you, but your whiskers prevent my understanding what you say; and if you will consent, I will cut off some part of them and of your eyebrows, which disfigure you so much that you look more like a bear than a man."

The dervish did not oppose the offer, and when the prince had cut off as much hair as he thought fit, he perceived that the dervish had a good complexion, and that he was not as old as he seemed. "Good dervish," said he, "if I had a glass I would show you how young you look: you are now a man, but before, nobody could tell what you were."

The kind behaviour of Prince Bahman made the dervish smile and return his compliment. "Sir," said he, "whoever you are, I am obliged by the good office you have performed, and am ready to show my gratitude by doing anything in my power for you. You must have alighted here upon some account or other. Tell me what it is, and I will endeavour to serve you."

"Good dervish," replied Prince Bahman, "I am in search of the Talking Bird, the Singing Tree, and the Golden Water; I know these three rarities are not far from hence, but cannot tell exactly the place where they are to be found; if you know, I conjure you to show me the way, that I may not lose my labour after so long a journey."

The prince, while he spoke, observed that the dervish changed countenance, held down his eyes, looked very serious, and remained silent, which obliged him to say to him again: "Good father, tell me whether you know what I ask you, that I may not lose my time, but inform myself somewhere else."

At last the dervish broke silence. "Sir," said he to Prince Bahman, "I know the way you ask of me; but the regard which I conceived for you the first moment I saw you, and which is grown stronger by the service you have done me, kept me in suspense as to whether I should give you the satisfaction you desire." "What motive can hinder you?" replied the prince; "and what difficulties do you find in

so doing?" "I will tell you," replied the dervish; "the danger to which you are going to expose yourself is greater than you may suppose. A number of gentlemen of as much bravery as you can possibly possess have passed this way, and asked me the same question. When I had used all my endeavours to persuade them to desist, they would not believe me; at last I yielded to their importunities; I was compelled to show them the way, and I can assure you they have all perished, for I have not seen one come back. Therefore, if you have any regard for your life, take my advice, go no farther, but return home."

Prince Bahman persisted in his resolution. "I will not suppose," said he to the dervish, "but that your advice is sincere. I am obliged to you for the friendship you express for me; but whatever may be the danger, nothing shall make me change my intention: whoever attacks me, I am well armed, and can say I am as brave as any one." "But they who will attack you are not to be seen," replied the dervish; "how will you defend yourself against invisible persons?" "It is no matter," answered the prince, "all you say shall not persuade me to do anything contrary to my duty. Since you know the way, I conjure you once more to inform me."

When the dervish found he could not prevail upon Prince Bahman, and that he was obstinately bent to pursue his journey, notwithstanding his friendly remonstrance, he put his hand into a bag that lay by him and pulled out a bowl, which he presented to him. "Since I cannot prevail on you to attend to my advice," said he, "take this bowl and when you are on horseback throw it before you, and follow it to the foot of a mountain, where it will stop. As soon as the bowl stops, alight, leave your horse with the bridle over his neck, and he will stand in the same place till you return. As you ascend you will see on your right and left a great number of large black

stones, and will hear on all sides a confusion of voices, which will utter a thousand abuses to discourage you, and prevent your reaching the summit of the mountain. Be not afraid; but, above all things, do not turn your head to look behind you, for in that instant you will be changed into such a black stone as those you see, which are all youths who have failed in this enterprise. If you escape the danger of which I give you but a faint idea, and get to the top of the mountain, you will see a cage, and in that cage is the bird you seek; ask him which are the Singing Tree and the Golden Water, and he will tell you. I have nothing more to say; this is what you have to do, and if you are prudent you will take my advice and not expose your life. Consider once more while you have time that the difficulties are almost insuperable."

"I am obliged to you for your advice," replied Prince Bahman, after he had received the bowl, "but cannot follow it. However, I will endeavour to conform myself to that part of it which bids me not to look behind me, and I hope to come and thank you when I have obtained what I am seeking." After these words, to which the dervish made no other answer than that he should be overjoyed to see him again, the prince mounted his horse, took leave of the dervish with a respectful salute, and threw the bowl before him.

The bowl rolled away with as much swiftness as when Prince Bahman first hurled it from his hand, which obliged him to put his horse to the same pace to avoid losing sight of it, and when it had reached the foot of the mountain it stopped. The prince alighted from his horse, laid the bridle on his neck, and having first surveyed the mountain and seen the black stones, began to ascend, but had not gone four steps before he heard the voices mentioned by the dervish, though he could see nobody. Some said: "Where is that fool going? Where is he going? What would he have? Do not let him pass."

Others: "Stop him, catch him, kill him:" and others with a voice like thunder: "Thief! assassin! murderer!" while some in a gibing tone cried: "No, no, do not hurt him; let the pretty fellow pass, the cage and bird are kept for him."

Notwithstanding all these troublesome voices, Prince Bahman ascended with resolution for some time, but the voices redoubled with so loud a din, both behind and before, that at last he was seized with dread, his legs trembled under him, he staggered, and finding that his strength failed him, he forgot the dervish's advice, turned about to run down the hill, and was that instant changed into a black stone; a metamorphosis which had happened to many before him who had attempted the ascent. His horse, likewise, underwent the same change.

From the time of Prince Bahman's departure, the Princess Periezade always wore the knife and sheath in her girdle, and pulled it out several times in a day, to know whether her brother was alive. She had the consolation to understand he was in perfect health and to talk of him frequently with Prince Perviz. On the fatal day that Prince Bahman was transformed into a stone, as Prince Perviz and the princess were talking together in the evening, as usual, the prince desired his sister to pull out the knife to know how their brother did. The princess readily complied, and seeing the blood run down the point was seized with so much horror that she threw it down. "Ah! my dear brother," cried she, "I have been the cause of your death, and shall never see you more! Why did I tell you of the Talking Bird, Singing Tree, and Golden Water; or rather, of what importance was it to me to know whether the devout woman thought this house ugly or handsome, or complete or not? I wish to Heaven she had never addressed herself to me!"

Prince Perviz was as much afflicted at the death of Prince Bahman as the princess, but not to waste time in needless regret, as he knew that she still passionately desired possession of the marvellous treasures, he interrupted her, saying: "Sister, our regret for our brother is vain; our lamentations cannot restore him to life; it is the will of God; we must submit and adore the decrees of the Almighty without searching into them. Why should you now doubt of the truth of what the holy woman told you? Do you think she spoke to you of three things that were not in being, and that she invented them to deceive you who had received her with so much goodness and civility? Let us rather believe that our brother's death is owing to some error on his part, or some accident which we cannot conceive. It ought not therefore to prevent us from pursuing our object. I offered to go this journey, and am now more resolved than ever; his example has no effect upon my resolution; to-morrow I will depart."

The princess did all she could to dissuade Prince Perviz, conjuring him not to expose her to the danger of losing two brothers; but he was obstinate, and all the remonstrances she could urge had no effect upon him. Before he went, that she might know what success he had, he left her a string of a hundred pearls, telling her that if they would not run when she should count them upon the string, but remain fixed, that would be a certain sign he had undergone the same fate as his brother; but at the same time told her he hoped it would never happen, but that he should have the delight of seeing her again.

Prince Perviz, on the twentieth day after his departure, met the same dervish in the same place as his brother Bahman had done before him. He went directly up to him, and after he had saluted, asked him if he could tell him where to find the Talking Bird, the

Singing Tree, and the Golden Water. The dervish urged the same remonstrances as he had done to Prince Bahman, telling him that a young gentleman, who very much resembled him, was with him a short time before; that, overcome by his importunity, he had shown him the way, given him a guide, and told him how he should act to succeed, but that he had not seen him since, and doubted not but he had shared the same fate as all other adventurers.

"Good dervish," answered Prince Perviz, "I know whom you speak of; he was my elder brother, and I am informed of the certainty of his death, but know not the cause." "I can tell you," replied the dervish; "he was changed into a black stone, as all I speak of have been; and you must expect the same transformation, unless you observe more exactly than he has done the advice I gave him, in case you persist in your resolution, which I once more entreat you to renounce."

"Dervish," said Prince Perviz, "I cannot sufficiently express how much I am obliged for the concern you take in my life, who am a stranger to you, and have done nothing to deserve your kindness; but I thoroughly considered this enterprise before I undertook it; therefore I beg of you to do me the same favour you have done my brother. Perhaps I may have better success in following your directions." "Since I cannot prevail with you," said the dervish, "to give up your obstinate resolution, if my age did not prevent me, and I could stand, I would get up to reach you a bowl I have here, which will show you the way."

Without giving the dervish time to say more, the prince alighted from his horse and went to the dervish, who had taken a bowl out of his bag, in which he had a great many, and gave it him, with the same directions he had given Prince Bahman; and after warning him

not to be discouraged by the voices he should hear, however threatening they might be, but to continue his way up the hill till he saw the cage and bird, he let him depart.

Prince Perviz thanked the dervish, and when he had remounted and taken leave, threw the bowl before his horse, and spurring him at the same time, followed it. When the bowl came to the bottom of the hill it stopped, the prince alighted, and stood some time to recollect the dervish's directions. He encouraged himself, and began to walk up with a resolution to reach the summit; but before he had gone above six steps, he heard a voice, which seemed to be near, as of a man behind him, say in an insulting tone: "Stay, rash youth, that I may punish you for your presumption."

Upon this affront the prince, forgetting the dervish's advice, clapped his hand upon his sword, drew it, and turned about to revenge himself; but had scarcely time to see that nobody followed him before he and his horse were changed into black stones.

In the meantime the Princess Periezade, several times a day after her brother's departure, counted her chaplet. She did not omit it at night, but when she went to bed put it about her neck, and in the morning when she awoke counted over the pearls again to see if they would slide.

The day that Prince Perviz was transformed into a stone she was counting over the pearls as she used to do, when all at once they became immovably fixed, a certain token that the prince, her brother, was dead. As she had determined what to do in case it should so happen, she lost no time in outward demonstrations of grief, which she concealed as much as possible, but having disguised herself in man's apparel, she mounted her horse the next morning, armed and

equipped, having told her servants she should return in two or three days, and took the same road that her brothers had done.

The princess, who had been used to ride on horseback in hunting, supported the fatigue of so long a journey better than most ladies could have done; and as she made the same stages as her brothers, she also met with the dervish on the twentieth day. When she came near him, she alighted from her horse, leading him by the bridle, went and sat down by the dervish, and after she had saluted him, said: "Good dervish, give me leave to rest myself; and do me the favour to tell me if you have not heard that there are somewhere in this neighbourhood a Talking Bird, a Singing Tree, and Golden Water."

"Princess," answered the dervish, "for so I must call you, since by your voice I know you to be a woman disguised in man's apparel, I know the place well where these things are to be found; but what makes you ask me this question?"

"Good dervish," replied the princess, "I have had such a flattering relation of them given me, that I have a great desire to possess them." "Madam," replied the dervish, "you have been told the truth. These curiosities are more singular than they have been represented, but you have not been made acquainted with the difficulties which must be surmounted in order to obtain them. If you had been fully informed of these, you would not have undertaken so dangerous an enterprise. Take my advice, return, and do not urge me to contribute toward your ruin."

"Good father," said the princess, "I have travelled a great way, and should be sorry to return without executing my design. You talk of difficulties and danger of life, but you do not tell me what those