

# **Selim, the Benefactor of Mankind**

James Kirke Paulding



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# Selim, the Benefactor of Mankind

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Selim was the son of a bashaw of three tails, who had governed Smyrna and the surrounding country with such singular humanity and justice, that he escaped the execrations of the people on the one hand, and the bowstring of the Sublime Porte on the other. As an example of his humanity, it will only be necessary to state the fact of his having once pardoned a Jew, or Tchufout, as they are termed by the faithful, who had the impudence to call in question a passage of the commentaries of the Sunnah, in which it was insinuated that the prophet was rather superior to Allah. Nevertheless, the bashaw was such an orthodox Mussulman, that he actually ordered the tree which had sprung up from the staff of St. Policarp, in the midst of the city, to be cut down. Of his inflexible justice, the following anecdote will suffice as a proof.

A Turkish soldier was brought before him on a charge of having pointed his matchlock in a threatening manner at the consul of the United Provinces, who at that period was the only Christian in Smyrna who escaped being called infidel and dog ten times a day. The bashaw ordered the soldier's head to be cut off; the consul solicited his pardon, saying that he freely forgave the offence to himself. "Very well," said the bashaw, "I grant your request so far as respects yourself. He has been guilty of two crimes, one against you, the other against the state, for which he deserved to have his head cut off. But as you forgive him one half his crime, I shall dispense with one half the punishment." So saying, he ordered the head of the soldier to be divided exactly in the middle; and it was not without vanity he reflected on this singularly discreet act of justice, which to this day is spoken of in the city of Smyrna with admiration. As an encouragement to all upright and humane governors, we record with much satisfaction that this exemplary bashaw was permitted to die like a Christian quietly in his bed, of a tertian ague, instead of a quinsy, the disease which commonly proves fatal to great men in the dominions of the commander of the faithful. What was still more miraculous, though he left a good estate behind him, it was not seized to the use of the said commander, who is heir at law to all his great officers, but descended to his son Selim, and his daughter Ayesha, who was called the Lily of Asia Minor.

Selim, at the age of eight years, was placed under the care of one of those wandering dervises so common in the East, who live by begging, and are for that reason especially zealous in encouraging the giving of alms. This was in fact the only lesson inculcated by his teacher, with the exception of one other, namely, that the bestowing of alms on any but a true believer was an offence to Allah and his prophet. "The enemies of Islamism," would he say, "are the enemies of the prophet, and whosoever succours them either by alms or good offices, flies in the face of his precepts." These sentiments he repeated so often, and with such overpowering energy, that they became the ruling guides of the future life of his pupil, who never heard of any other duties than those of giving away to all true believers, and hating the infidels with all his heart. To the former he never denied a petition for alms, while to the latter he was a perfect little tyrant; and his weak indulgence towards the one was strongly contrasted with his obduracy to the other, whenever an opportunity offered.

The old bashaw, his father, observing that he gave away every thing in his possession, left him little opportunity of indulging in the bestowal of alms. Observing, too, that Selim carried this facility of temper to the putting up with every species of imposition and injustice from his companions, he would say to him, "Thou wilt one day learn, my son, when perhaps the knowledge will be of little use to thee, that those who forgive every thing must suffer every thing in this world." Let it be remembered that these were the sentiments of an infidel, and only recorded to show what sort of barbarians these people are.

When Selim repeated this to the dervise, he exhorted him not to mind what the old bashaw said, assuring him that what people called paternal affection, domestic ties, the duties of obedience in the child, and protection in the parent, were beneath the attention of those who aimed at being more extensively useful to mankind, or who

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aspired to a sublime degree of piety. "Thy father," would he say, "hath no right to thy obedience, thy sister no claim on thy affection, nor would thy wife and children, if thou hadst any, be entitled to any sacrifices on thy part which would interfere with the great claim of thy fellow-creatures at large, always excepting the accursed Giaours, and the still more accursed followers of Ali, the dog."

The whole system of the dervise was based on this sacrifice of domestic ties and duties to the claims of strangers, and the interests of the true faith; so that by the time Selim grew up to be a man, he was imbued with a perfect indifference, nay, almost contempt for all those obligations which constitute the cement of society, and administer so effectually to the real happiness of mankind. His feelings in proportion as they expanded abroad contracted their wings at home; and though his natural goodness of heart prevented him from any act of unkindness to his sister, or undutifulness to his father, yet he habitually omitted all those little good offices which are usual among such near kindred.

In good time the old bashaw died, full of years, money, and beard, leaving his ample wealth equally to his son and daughter. "I have the means now, and I will use them," quoth Selim; and accordingly he caused it to be given out that whoever was sick, miserable, or poor, might come to him and be relieved. It is astonishing how many people who were never suspected before became sick, miserable, and poor, immediately after this, in the good city of Smyrna. Distress seemed to multiply with the means he used for its relief, and had not Selim possessed the softest heart in the world, he would have been tired of paying so many doctor's bills, and feeding so many good looking fat people. He wondered how they could look so well, and be at the same time so sick, or how it was possible to be so finely dressed and yet so poor.

One day a stout hearty looking fellow came to him and begged a dozen sequins.

"For what purpose, friend?" asked Selim, "thou lookest as if thou lackest nothing, for thy raiment is good, and thy body wholesome to behold; art thou hungry?"

"No, my good lord, praised be the prophet."

"Art thou sick?"

"No, my good lord, thanks to Allah."

"Art thou not then ashamed to beg?"

"Ashamed! there are too many to keep me in countenance for that."

"If thou art not in want, nor sick, nor an hungered, go thy ways and be thankful."

"But, alas! my lord, you must know that I have so long been accustomed to a certain quantity of opium every day, that I am sure I should die without it, and my purse is empty, as you see."

"Mashallah! poor man, die while I can relieve thee? Use has made opium a necessary of life to thee, and thou requirest it as much as thou dost food. Here are fifty sequins; go and buy opium, and when they are gone, come to me for more."

The man departed, touching his heart and the top of his head with either hand, and bowing almost to the ground. Selim felicitated himself on being the cause of happiness to a human being. At the end of a month or two he began to wonder why the poor man did not come again; but he never came. Ere the fifty sequins were exhausted, he fell a victim to the indulgence of opium.

"Never mind," said Selim, on hearing the news, "never mind—it is not my fault if a man makes a bad use of my bounty."

As he said this, he felt a hand placed lightly on his shoulder, and heard a voice exclaim,

"Thou forgettest, Selim, that those who wilfully supply the means of self-destruction, or enable vice to revel in criminal indulgences, are parties in the crime and responsible for the consequences."

Turning round, he beheld the sage Amurath, a venerable old man, a friend of his father, and one who had always shown a paternal solicitude in the fortunes of Selim. The sole wealth of Amurath consisted in a daughter, one of the most beautiful maidens of the whole city, with whom he sometimes wished to unite this young man. But he was almost discouraged from the design when he saw the mischievous consequences likely to result to himself, and all those who might hereafter become dependent on him, from his indiscriminate bounty alike to the worthy and the worthless. Selim saluted him with respectful courtesy, and answered—

"The giver is not answerable in the eyes of Allah for the uses made of his alms."

"If he knows that he giveth to the sot, the glutton, the sensualist, or the idler, he is answerable," replied Amurath; "to bestow upon them the means of being wicked, is to become an accomplice in their wickedness."

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"I am not to judge of the uses to which my bounty may possibly be applied; if bad, the fault is theirs, not mine. It is too much trouble to inquire into the life and character of all those who apply to me for relief. I cannot submit to the drudgery."

"Then thou givest away thy money because it is no trouble to put thy hand in thy purse. Thy personal exertions thou withholdest because they are a labour?" said Amurath, significantly shaking his head; "this is not the virtue of charity."

"No! what is it, then?" cried Selim, in utter astonishment.

"Weakness; the incapacity to resist importunity, or restrain thyself within proper bounds."

"But," answered Selim, after a pause of reflection; "but if I do these people harm, I am doing good to myself. I am gaining the favour of the prophet, who has promised his blessing to the givers of alms."

"That is selfishness, not charity, except it be the charity which beginneth at home. Thou carest then it seems nothing for the harm thou doest to others, so thou canst benefit thyself," replied the old man, smiling.

"Thou wouldst have me then give nothing away," said the mortified Selim.

"Not so. I would have thee first inquire, where it is practicable, whether vice or misfortune, idleness or extravagance, caused the wretchedness thou art solicited to relieve."

"Well, and if the former, what then?"

"Relieve it, but in such a manner as that it may not increase this vice by affording the means of indulgence. Give them food, but not money."

"Well, and if the latter?"

"Spare not thy bounty, but exceed not the measure of necessity, lest thou encourage extravagance, the mother of want."

"And if the case is doubtful between vice and misfortune, what then?"

The old man paused a moment ere he answered, "Relieve it, and trust the issue to Allah and his great prophet."

"Then you acknowledge," said Selim, "that it is better to run the risk of giving money for the encouragement of vice, than to take the chance of failing to relieve the deserving?"

"I know not; that is a question which only Allah can decide. But this I know, that the obligation to relieve distress is not more solemn than that of doing our utmost to restrain the career of vice and extravagance. All that is left to human virtue and wisdom is so to distribute our alms, as to do the most good and the least harm."

"Harm?" asked Selim, in surprise; "can any harm come of the practice of a virtue?"

"Nothing is a virtue which is not under the guidance of discretion and good sense," replied the aged Amurath; "without this curb, piety becomes fanaticism, scorning all social duties, and rioting in blood; the sword of justice becomes that of a remorseless executioner; and the balm we pour into the wounds of one fellow-creature becomes a poison to the sores of thousands and tens of thousands. Therefore do I say, give, my son, but do not throw away. Love all mankind except the wicked and depraved if thou wilt, but do not forget that it is only by a due observance of the virtues of justice and prudence, that a man can be useful to himself or a blessing to the wretched. Without these, he would pass from the class of benefactors to the poor, into that of those who themselves require the aid of charity."

The muezzym now proclaimed from the tops of the lofty minarets the hour of evening prayer, and the two pious Mussulmans separated to their devotions.

The conversation with Amurath made little impression on Selim, who continued as before to waste his substance on the idle, the thriftless, and the undeserving. The more he gave away, the more did these objects of charity multiply; whereat he was not more discouraged than astonished.

"Times must be growing worse and worse every day," thought he. But the fact was the times were just as they always had been, with this only difference, that the idle and improvident, finding their necessities supplied by Selim, sat themselves down quietly to smoking their pipes, drinking sherbet, and chewing opium, instead of being compelled to labour as they used to do.

One day Selim visited the great mosque, which was once a Christian church dedicated to St. John, and where his devotions were exceedingly disturbed by the sight of a veiled figure, whose beautiful little foot peeped modestly from under her robe, and whose sparkling jet-black eyes seemed almost to have burnt two holes in the envious veil that obscured their lustre. As she left the mosque, curiosity, or that love which in this region is born full grown, prompted him to follow her without appearing to do so. From time to time she turned to look at him,

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and the sparkling of her eyes set his heart in a flame. To his surprise, she stopped at the lowly gate of Amurath, which ere she closed, she gave him a view of the Mahometan paradise by slowly raising her veil, and keeping it suspended for a moment, while she stood with her head depressed, her cheek burning with blushes, and her sparkling eyes shaded by the long silken lashes that fringed their lids.

Selim departed for his home as much in love as if he had danced the waltz and the gallopade, and sung duets with the beautiful Fatima for a whole year. Instead of making himself agreeable to the young lady, he took a shorter cut: he went and demanded her of Amurath in marriage.

The old man hesitated some time; but at length the affection he bore to Selim prompted him to forget the objection to which we have before alluded, and he gave his consent. The beautiful Fatima received him as one who had been lodged in her heart time out of mind, and in due season she became established as the mistress of his household. Ayesha received her as a beloved sister, and nothing could exceed the peaceful happiness of the little family.

Selim was for a time too blessed to think of any thing but his beloved Fatima, and the cessation of his alms-giving had a most wonderful effect in the city of Smyrna. A number of people who had depended entirely on his bounty for subsistence, discovered, to their great surprise, that they were able to maintain themselves in tolerable comfort without his aid! In the course of three years, Fatima brought him a daughter and a son, and these new and endearing ties and obligations seemed to have diverted him in a great measure from his former habits. He still continued to relieve the distressed, but it was with a discretion becoming the father of a family and the head of a household entirely dependent on himself. Thus he went on happily, when his old preceptor, the dervise, who had been on a begging expedition to Egypt, returned, and in a short time resumed his influence.

Infected with the fiery enthusiasm, or perhaps rather the rank hypocrisy of the wandering mendicant, Selim gradually relapsed into his old weakness of inviting people to become poor and distressed, and relieving them without inquiry or discrimination. In process of time, his alms exceeded the amount of his income, and he was often in want of the means of providing for the daily comforts of his family and dependants. One day he went to the good Amurath, and said,—

"Wilt thou lend me a thousand sequins?"

The old man immediately brought him the money, and delivered it into his hands, after which he said,

"My son, how is it that thou, who art so rich, art necessitated to borrow of me who am poor?"

"Father," replied the young man, "I was applied to yesterday by an unfortunate merchant who wanted money to feast the consuls and great persons of the city at a splendid entertainment, and whose whole estate had been spent in keeping open house to all comers. Such a man deserved all I had to spare, and I gave it him."

"And so thou hast robbed thy wife, thy children, and dependants, all of whom thou art bound to provide for by the highest obligations of nature and society, to administer to the extravagance of a spendthrift, who possesses not even the virtue of generosity, since he is only liberal, after all, at the expense of others."

"But he was so grateful, my father, and thanked me with such a warmth of heart, that I was delighted, and felt the tears in my eyes. Now when I provide for the wants of my family and dependants, nobody thanks me—all seem to think it is only what I am bound to do, and the performance of a mere duty excites no gratitude from anybody. Now I confess to thee, O my father! that I like to be thanked for what I do."

"This is not charity, but selfishness, as I once before said unto thee. O my son! seest thou not that thou art robbing thy wife and children, to give unto strangers, merely because the first receive thy benefits and repay thee only with silent affection and reverence, while the others administer to thy selfish vanity by hollow thanks and empty professions of gratitude?"

Selim did not well know what to say in reply, so he contented himself with grumbling in an under-tone that his old father-in-law was a prosing skinflint, and only chid him in this manner out of pure spite at having been called upon to lend him money.

Amurath suspected or perhaps overheard this charge, and replied—

"Thou dost me injustice, my son. Thou art welcome to the money; it is all I have in the world, but age has circumscribed my wants as well as my wishes. All I ask of thee in return is to send the consuls and chief men of the city to thank me for the entertainment of thy friend, since it appears after all I am to pay for it."

They parted little satisfied with each other, for Amurath foresaw the ruin of Selim, and Selim could not but acknowledge in his heart that the old man was right, and that the gift which is followed by a loan, comes from the



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purse of him that lends, not he that gave. But a single lecture from the wandering dervise destroyed all the effect of the precepts of Amurath, and Selim continued to give to all that came, instead of saving his money to repay the loan of his father-in-law.

"The old man," quoth Selim, "does not want it; and if he did, were I to repay him, he would not grasp my hand, bid Allah bless me, and promise me eternal gratitude. I never heard of anybody becoming illustrious merely by doing their duty, and complying with the obligations of justice. I'll trouble this unreasonable old man no more."

Accordingly whenever he wanted money, either to give away or supply the increasing necessities of his household, he procured it of Ayesha his sister, who, like almost all the gentle sex, was generous to a fault—generous as much from ignorance of the value of what she gave away, as from an innate pliancy of heart, that rendered her equally the dupe of interested hypocrisy, and of pretended distress.

While he continued only to waste his own substance, his excellent and devoted wife sighed and said nothing, except sometimes she would quell the rising feeling of disapprobation at the indiscriminate charities of Selim by whispering to herself—"It is his, let him do with it what he listeth." But when she learned from Ayesha who kept nothing secret from her, that Selim made almost daily drafts on her for the means of supplying the beggars who flocked to his gate, the modest submission of the wife yielded to the higher duty she owed to an unprotected sister and friend. She remonstrated with her husband:

"Thou hast spent all thy substance, but it was thine, and I blame thee not—thou hast beggared thy wife and children to supply the demands of the wives and children of others, who had not the like strong claims upon thee—but thy wife and children are thy own, and thou hast a just claim to their duty and submission. Yet remember, O my husband! the fortune of thy sister is hers by the disposition of her father, and the law of the prophet—meddle not, nor make away with it I beseech thee, in the spirit of a true affection which values thy integrity far beyond the reputation or the rewards thou canst acquire by bestowing upon strangers that which belongeth to thy friends,"—and she kissed him with the modest fervour of a gentle, affectionate helpmate.

Selim received her salute with a bad grace, for this advice accorded not with his long cherished habits and opinions. An idea of the justice of these remonstrances glanced across his mind, but it amounted not to a conviction; and if it had, the actions of man's life are much oftener governed by habit than by reason. Conviction generally comes too late when custom has familiarized us to a certain course of conduct.

"Did Allah create women without souls that they might rule the destinies of their lords and masters," replied he, at length, scornfully, and stalked forth with the air of a grand seignior.

Fatima took occasion at various times, after this, to repeat her exhortations, with that glorious perseverance of virtue conscious of being in the right, which is the most admirable characteristic of women; but her efforts had no other effect than to alienate him from his home and weaken his domestic affections. At length she desired her father to interfere in behalf of Ayesha. He shook his head—

"I will essay my best," said he, "but I fear it will be of little avail. Nothing is more difficult of cure than errors founded in a mistaken idea of virtue."

Amurath sought an interview with Selim, and found him in the act of listening to a beggar, who it was obvious had studied to give himself an air of extreme want and misery, by the aid of dirt and filthiness. But his brawny limbs and athletic frame gave sufficient evidence of his ability to perform every species of labour necessary to his support. The sturdy rogue was entertaining Selim with a story of having lost his all, wife, children, house, and every thing, by an earthquake, which happened as he said a few months before, in the neighbourhood of Mount Olympus.

Selim gave him his last piaster, and received so many thanks and blessings, that he could not help saying to himself—"What a delightful thing it is to be charitable! I have purchased the gratitude of a fellow-creature who will sacrifice his life for me in return for my alms. Had I bestowed the money upon my household, it would have been only what they had a right to expect, and nobody would have thanked me, and called down blessings on my head."

Amurath, who had witnessed the scene with the beggar, now came up and addressed him:

"Thou hast been giving away that which did not belong to thee, and was required for the comfort of thy wife and children, to an imposter who hath filled thine ear with lies. There hath been no earthquake near Mount Olympus, nor in all Asia Minor, for three years past. How then could this rogue have lost his wife, his children, and substance in the manner I have just heard him relate?"

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"Alas!" replied Selim, "to what distress the poor wretch must have been reduced, thus to resort to lying for relief! That he is poor and miserable is evident. Didst thou not see the dirt on his face and hands? Can any thing be a higher proof of his abject poverty?"

"There is plenty of water at the fountains; and at this moment I can hear the waves of the bay dashing against the shore. At either of these places he might have washed his face and hands for nothing. Dirt, my son, is rather the badge of idleness than of poverty."

"But," said the other, "would you have me let a man starve because his poverty forced him to tell me lies?"

"He would not have starved. He is able to work, there is enough of employment in the city, and idle as this rogue may be, he had rather labour than perish."

These observations had some effect for the moment on Selim. But he had long been accustomed to combine all the moral and social duties into one, and scarcely retained in his mind a perception that the exclusive and excessive indulgence of one single virtue almost inevitably led to the neglect if not violation of every other.

Amurath waited patiently for a reply, and receiving none proceeded with his remonstrance:

"Selim, thou meanest well, but thou art proceeding upon a false interpretation of the precepts of the Koran, which indeed inculcate charity, but not that charity which robbeth friends and kindred, or starveth those we are bound by the law and the prophet, by the ties of nature, and the purest affections of the heart to cherish and protect above all others. The neglect of these is a crime which thou canst not atone for by giving away alms to strangers, or stretching forth thy hand to the uttermost ends of the earth, to raise or to enlighten the oppressed or the ignorant."

"But," said the other, "wouldst thou pretend to convince me, my father, that it is not our duty to relieve the distresses, as well as to pardon the offences of our fellow-creatures?"

"To a certain extent assuredly, my son. But thou hast no right to plume thyself upon the practice of a virtue out of doors, which brings famine and distress within, and is maintained at the expense of the sacrifice of thy duties to thy wife, thy children, and thine orphan sister, who has no other guardian but Allah and thee."

"O! the hard-hearted inflexible selfishness of old age!" exclaimed Selim, involuntarily. "It thinks of nothing but itself, or if it extends its contracted views, it is only to those whom long habit has entwined with its affections, or whose good offices and attentions administer to its selfish comforts! True benevolence embraces the universe, and is followed by the benedictions of all mankind."

"Yea," replied the old man—"but not with the same warmth it embraces wife, children, and dear associates. Go home, my son, and behold at what an expense thou hast purchased these benedictions."

Selim entered his habitation, and found his wife sitting with her children and Ayesha, all bathed in tears. A man of whom Selim had borrowed a sum of money, to distribute in alms, had at length become indignant at waiting far beyond the time prescribed for payment, while he saw his debtor employing that which of right belonged to him, in deeds of doubtful mercy, at the same time that he neglected the inflexible obligations of justice, at length complained to the *cadi*, who as was the custom of Smyrna, immediately ordered the house and effects of Selim to be seized, as security for the payment of the debt.

"What a hard-hearted beast!" cried Selim, "to demand payment of a debt from a man who has given away the money to the poor. I will go to the *cadi*, and explain the matter to him, and if he persists in the forfeiture of my house and effects, I will appeal to the people whom I have relieved, who will doubtless rise in my behalf, and prevent such crying injustice."

"What hast thou to say?" asked the *cadi*, when Selim appeared, "and what canst thou urge in excuse for not repaying the money thou hast borrowed from this man?"

"It was better employed," replied Selim.

"As how?"

"In alms to the poor."

"Selim the simple, as thou art aptly called," quoth the *cadi*, in a severe and solemn tone, "hast thou yet to learn how easy it is to practise charity at the expense of thy creditors? or that he who giveth away all he hath to the poor, and payeth not his own debts, commits a fraud, rather than practises a duty?"

"Dog!" thought Selim, "may the soul of his grandfather be devoured by ten millions of locusts!"

"Thou must pay the debt, or thyself and thy wife and thy children must be sold as slaves to satisfy thy creditor."

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"I cannot pay it, my lord," replied Selim.

"No! what hath become of the wealth left thee by the good bashaw thy father?"

"It is gone."

"What, all? Then perhaps thy sister, the fair Ayesha, rather than see the ruin of thy household, will contribute some of her wealth to thy relief."

"I have already borrowed all she had, my lord."

"Dog!" exclaimed the *cadi*, "he is fit for nothing but a Christian! Perhaps thy father, the good Amurath, then, may contribute to thy relief?"

"He possessed no more than a thousand sequins, and those I borrowed of him long ago, to relieve the necessities of a worthy man who had spent all his wealth in acts of hospitality," replied Selim, with great self-complacency.

"Then if he was so generous, why did he not repay the loan?"

"I was not so unreasonable as to ask it of him. I preferred rather to imitate his generosity."

"What, by robbing thy aged father-in-law of the savings of his whole life to supply the extravagance of a stranger? But what hath become of all this wealth, thine own and thy sister's?"

"I employed it in alms to beggars."

"And thus reducing thy wife and children to beggary!"

"I but obeyed the precepts of the prophet."

"Thou hast misinterpreted these precepts. Those of whom thou exactest service, obedience, and duty, have claims on thy protection and support far superior to the stranger of whom thou knowest nothing, and who for aught thou canst tell is unworthy of thy bounty. I pity thee, but the obligations of justice must be fulfilled."

The magistrate then decreed that as the house and furniture of Selim were insufficient for the discharge of the debt, himself, his wife, and his children should become the slaves of the creditor, who, however, humanely declined to avail himself of the sentence, and permitted them to go whither they pleased. They accordingly retired to a miserable abode in the suburbs of the city, the house of the good Amurath being too small and desolate to afford them either shelter or subsistence.

As they were departing sorrowfully to their miserable abode, the beggars of the city flocked round him, as was their custom, asking alms.

"Alas!" replied Selim, "I have nothing left to give; I am a beggar like yourselves."

"Mean avaricious wretch!" they cried out, with one voice; "his heart has become hardened, and he affects poverty, that he may have an excuse for denying us. May he eat nothing but turtle 1 all the rest of his life."

So they pelted him with mud and dirt, and cast sand into the faces of Selim and his family, until they could scarcely see which way to run to avoid the missives of these ungrateful wretches, who had received ninety and nine favours, yet now committed violence against their benefactor, because he was unable to grant them the hundredth.

"Mistaken mortals!" sighed Selim, wiping the dust from his eyes; "yet I forgive them."

A little farther on they met the *dervise*, his preceptor, who, having been absent roaming through various parts of Asia Minor, as yet knew nothing of his misfortunes. He approached with eagerness; expressed his joy at once again seeing his beloved pupil, and concluded by begging a thousand piasters, in the name of Allah and his prophet.

"I have neither money, nor house, nor lands, nor goods," replied Selim; "my family are outcasts, and myself a beggar. Canst thou not afford me the means of procuring a meal for my wife, my sister, and my children?"

"The prophet will reward thee. I leave thee to his bounty," replied the *dervise*, devoutly placing his hand on his head and whirling round six times. After this he departed in haste, and Selim never saw him more.

The family at length arrived at their desolate abode, a wretched fisherman's hut by the seaside, which had been abandoned on account of its decayed condition. All that the good Amurath, who was now verging to an extreme old age, could do, was to supply them with a few necessary utensils, a net, and some furniture of the most homely kind, with which they commenced their new system of housekeeping. Their first want was that of food, and Selim accordingly went down to the shore, and casting his net brought up a few small fishes, which might suffice for a scanty meal for the family. As he was returning home with these, he encountered a fisherman, who told him a piteous story of his having been all the day casting his nets in vain, and that he was going home to his starving

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family with nothing to alleviate their hunger. The truth is, he had been idling away his time with some dissipated companions. But Selim believed every word he said, and forgetting the wants of his wife and children, bestowed upon him the fish he had caught.

It was now too late to cast his net any more that day, and he returned home with his basket empty. His wife met him eagerly at the door; but when she looked into the basket, she turned aside and wept.

"Thou hast taken nothing?" at length she asked in a sad voice.

"I caught a few fish," replied Selim, "but I met a poor man who had caught none, and whose family was starving at home. So I gave him all I had, because, as the good dervise always told me, it is our duty to give to those who are in want."

"But he did not tell thee, my husband, that it was thy duty to deprive thy own children of food when they were starving, to bestow upon the children of strangers."

This was the first word of reproach she had ever used towards her husband, for the feelings of the mother at length overcame those of the dutiful wife. Turning on Selim a look of sorrowful yet tender reproach, she went forth to the house of the good Amurath, whom she found just about to eat his scanty supper, and begged of him to spare something for the pressing wants of her children. The old man delivered to her the untasted dish, though he had eaten nothing since early in the morning.

"Take it, my daughter," said he, "and may the blessing of the prophet accompany it, as does that of thy father." So saying, he blessed her thrice, and they parted. Fatima carried the food home, and though faint with hunger, would not taste a morsel, lest her children might be deprived of that which was necessary to their support. But Selim declared he should perish if he did not taste the food; and he tasted, and tasted, until he had devoured more than half the portion of his children. Fatima sat looking on, and though she loved her husband, she could not help grudging him every morsel he put to his mouth.

The next morning the news came that the aged Amurath had been found dead on his couch, and the story went that he had perished from debility occasioned by want of that nourishment which is essential to the feebleness of age. Fatima wrung her hands and wept, and accused herself of having been the cause of her father's death.

"But I did it for the best," said she to her own heart, "I did it for the sake of my children, and Allah will pardon me for having been the death of him who gave me birth, in striving to preserve those who owe their life to me."

Amurath had left behind only sufficient to bury him, and that day Selim again went forth towards the seaside with his net, but meeting an old man by the way, who was bearing a burden to the city, which long habit had enabled him to support without difficulty, he was so smitten with compassion that he insisted on carrying it himself; and laying his net down by the road-side, he placed the burden on his own shoulders, and went towards the city followed by the old man. When they came to the place where the burden was to be deposited, the old man thanked him and offered payment for his trouble, but Selim refused it indignantly, saying, "Old man, dost thou think I make a trade of my good offices?"

Coming to the place where he had deposited his net, he found it gone, and after looking for it in vain until it was dark, he returned home without net or food. Fatima, pale and exhausted, staggered towards him; Ayesha could not rise from the floor, where she sat leaning against the wall, and the little children ran to his arms and cried out that they were starved almost to death.

Selim was touched for a moment with the scene; but he said to himself, in the pride of his heart, "Did I not relieve the old man of a burden which his age must have made painful for him to carry."

"Where hast thou been?" at length asked his wife, with a faint and feeble voice; "where hast thou been, and what hath become of thy net and thy basket?"

Selim related, with not a little self-sufficiency, the disinterested act he had performed towards the old man. Fatima forbore to reproach him, but the clamours of his children were sufficient to stab the heart of the father, had he not cherished a mistaken idea of the relative duties to strangers and kindred.

Darkness now enveloped the earth, but Fatima, who could not endure the sight of her children's distresses, and their moanings for food, once more went forth, to beg for something to save them from perishing.

"Wilt thou not go with me, Selim?" said she.

"Alas!" replied he, "I am so tired with carrying the burden for the old man, that I can scarcely support myself. Go thou, and do not return without food, for I am faint with hunger and fatigue."

The night was dark, and Fatima bent her steps as well as she could judge towards a distant point of the bay of

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Smyrna, where the fishermen were wont to catch fish by decoying them with lights. But she missed her way, and after wandering she knew not whither, at length, overcome by fatigue and hunger, she sunk down on the beach near a point of rocks jutting far out into the sea. Here she was found by a party of marauding Greek pirates, who had concealed their vessel behind the group of islands which lies off the harbour of Smyrna, who carried her on board, and setting sail soon after, bore her away with them. Their brutal insults and harsh inhumanity, cooperating with hunger and debility, soon brought the existence of poor Fatima to a close, and the third day from her capture saw her remains consigned to the waves amid the scoffs of these unfeeling wretches.

After the departure of Fatima, Ayesha, the children, and Selim waited anxiously awhile for her return, but at length, overpowered by hunger and weakness, they sunk into a disturbed sleep, from which they awoke giddy and unrefreshed. The morning came, but no Fatima; and at length Selim resolved to go forth in pursuit of her, while Ayesha was to exert her remaining strength in an attempt to crawl as far as the city in search of something to relieve their necessities. The children, now too weak to stand, they shut up in the hut for safety, and went on their way.

Selim had proceeded little more than a couple of miles along the winding shore, ere he was accosted by a young boy, who came running towards him, and when he got nigh, cried out, beseeching him to hasten and protect him from a dog that growled and showed his teeth at him as if he intended to bite.

"I am going, it is true, in search of my wife, who may be perishing," thought Selim, "but this will only delay me a few moments, and it is our duty to protect strangers." Accordingly he followed the young lad until he was past all fear of the dog, which indeed was not dangerous, and being invited into the house of his father, received such warm thanks for his kindness that he could not help thinking to himself, "I dare say, if I had found Fatima, she would not have been half so grateful. What a pleasure to confer benefits on those who have no claim upon us, and thus entitle ourselves to their warmest thanks!"

He was so pleased with himself, and with the refreshments offered him, of which he partook largely, that he forgot the object for which he went forth until he persuaded himself it was too late to prosecute his search any farther, most especially, as in all probability nobody would thank or praise him for this act of mere duty. Accordingly, feeling himself much invigorated with the food he had eaten, he rose to depart for home. The thought occurred to him that he would ask for some food to take to his children; but he said to himself, "This will enable these people to repay the obligation I have conferred on them, and they will no longer be grateful. Besides, no doubt but my sister has long before this time brought them relief." Accordingly he departed for home, cheered with the vain thought of having entitled himself to the thanks of strangers.

As he wound round the projecting point that hid from his view the miserable hut where he dwelt, and which was situated at a considerable distance from any other habitation, he saw a smoke ascending in that direction, and people running in great haste towards it.

"Thy habitation is on fire!" cried one who passed him with all his speed.

Selim followed on as fast as his weakness would permit; but his footsteps were arrested by a voice crying out for relief. He stopped and beheld a child, about six or eight years old, up to the knees in a slough by the road-side. Selim, with some difficulty and no small delay, extricated the boy, who was so grateful for his kindness, that he could not help congratulating himself on having spent almost half an hour in relieving him. Presently a man came running towards him, and exclaimed—

"Infidel! Knowest thou not thy house is consuming, and thy children perishing in the flames, that thou dalliest thus on thy way?"

The words smote upon the heart of Selim, and he rushed towards his home with the speed of an Heirie. The scene that met his eye was enough to turn his heart to stone, and urge his brain to madness. The hut was of the most combustible materials, and thatched with dry reeds that kindled with the slightest spark. A chill wind was blowing from the mountains of the interior, and the children it was supposed, had replenished the embers on the hearth with some little sticks that lay in the chimney corner. But how the fire communicated to the hut none ever knew exactly; once on fire the progress of the flames must necessarily have been rapid, and the children, being too weak, in all probability, to escape through the window, had perished miserably. Nothing was left of the hut but its ashes, and nothing of the poor children but whitened bones.

Selim grovelled in the dust and tore his beard at the sight. One of the fishermen took him home, gave him food, and offered him all the consolation in his power. But he rejected his kindness for a time, until the violence

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of his grief had exhausted itself, and nature began to peep forth from the dark cavern of sorrow in search of topics of consolation. Occasionally his conscience told him that he had neglected his household, and sacrificed his wife and children in his exclusive devotion to the benefit of mankind; but, on the other hand, a secret vanity whispered comfort to his heart by reminding him that in doing so he had entitled himself to the praise and gratitude of strangers. "It is no great stretch of humanity," he would say to himself, "it is no great stretch of humanity to take care of one's own, and the less claim people have upon us for benefits, the greater is the virtue of bestowing them. Kindness to our families is nothing more than an instinct; even the brutes set us the example of taking care of their offspring."

When by degrees he had wrought himself into a conviction that he was not to blame for the misfortunes which had befallen his family, but on the contrary entitled to the rewards of disinterested benevolence, he one day bethought himself of his wife and sister, and resolved to go in pursuit of them. He was just on the eve of setting out, when he was diverted from his intention by receiving information that a number of pilgrims were about to embark at Smyrna for Alexandria in Egypt, and thence to proceed on a pilgrimage to Mecca. The vessel was to stop at the Isle of Scio and other places for recruits. This opportunity offered a great temptation to Selim, who reflected that his poverty now precluded him from administering to the happiness of mankind by bestowing alms, and that all that was left to him now, was the chance of benefiting them by his precepts and example. Besides, it was the duty of every good Mussulman to visit the tabernacle of the prophet at least once in his life, in order to obtain a remission of his sins. In addition to these motives, the idea of being called Hadgi, and entitling himself to the respect of the Imams, was a great inducement.

Such were the considerations which wrought upon Selim to set out on his pilgrimage to the temple of Mecca. He forgot his wife and sister, and embarked in the vessel for Alexandria in company with a number of pilgrims, male and female. Besides these, there were many others, Turks, Arabs, Greeks, Latins, Armenians, and Jews, all going on their several occasions, to the different ports at which the vessel was to touch on her way. Among the pilgrims was a rich Turk and his wife, who had left her children to the care of an old nurse. Selim was resolved to lose no time in doing all the good in his power to the miserable mistaken people that happened to fall in his way, and to convert as many as possible to the true faith. "I have nothing," said he, "to give away, but I will make it up in good offices."

The Greeks, Armenians, and Latins perpetually disputed on the subject of their respective creeds, and cherished a bitter antipathy towards each other, which appeared not a little extraordinary to Selim, who considered them all dogs alike. He thought it a signal proof of folly, as well as impudence, to pretend that any one religion was preferable to another, with the exception of the true faith; but at the same time, acting upon the principle of benefiting mankind, he attempted to reconcile them, by convincing them they were all infidels. To his great surprise and indignation, they united in abusing him soundly in their own tongues, which was all they dared to do, seeing he was a Mussulman. The vessel arrived at the port of Scio, where she was detained several days waiting for the pilgrims who had not yet finished their preparations.

Selim employed this interval in making excursions on foot into various parts of the island, for the purpose if possible, of bettering the condition of the inhabitants. One day while on his way to the beautiful village of Salavia, situated on a charming plain near the centre of this delightful island, which may be called the paradise of the world, he chanced to encounter several Greek women going on a party of pleasure to amuse themselves among the groves of olives, figs, and mastic. They were riding on horseback after the fashion of men, without veils, and laughing and joking with each other in high spirits. Selim felt highly indignant at these violations of decorum, and placing himself right before them in the highway, made them a long harangue on the extreme indecency of their conduct. After listening to him with great gravity, they burst into a loud laugh, and spurring their horses, ran right over him, trampling him in the dirt, and bruising him sorely.

"Mashallah!" exclaimed he, rising and brushing the dirt from his face and eyes—"Mashallah! what a return for attempting to benefit these wicked women. No wonder the prophet has denied them the possession of souls!"

He was not, however, discouraged by the ill-treatment of these abominable females, who had the impudence to show their faces, and laugh on horseback, but continued his endeavours to benefit mankind in various ways during his stay in the island. One day he met with a Greek who was labouring in a beautiful vine-yard, redundant with rich clusters of grapes, on one extremity of which was a pleasant house and garden, exhibiting every appearance of competence if not wealth.

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"What a fool is this Greek to make a slave of himself thus, while he has every thing he wants ready to his hands. I will go and convince him of his error," thought Selim. Accordingly he went to him, saying what folly it was to be labouring for that which, when he had gained it, was not worth the purchase, and assuring him that he himself was much happier, with his ragged, miserable garment, and with not a para in his purse, than such a sordid hard-working slave as the Greek.

"Follow me," he cried, "and I will teach thee a proper estimate of the worthlessness of these things."

The Greek, with that lowly reverence which this down-trodden race is obliged to display towards their masters the Turks, invited Selim into his house to take some rest and refreshment. Selim found his grapes right excellent, and banqueted lustily on the products of that labour which he so much despised. But he still continued his exhortations, and treated the poor Greek and his pursuits with very little ceremony.

On going away he said, "Thy grapes, thy figs, and thy sweetmeats are good, to say naught of thy sherbet. Whence and how didst thou procure them?"

"By that labour which thou hast exhorted me to abandon," replied the other, with a lowly obeisance.

"Hum," thought Selim, "the fruit is good, though the means of raising it are naught. What a miserable race are these infidels, whose whole life is spent in labouring for that which they give away for nothing!" He made another and a last attempt to convince the Greek of the superior delights of the more rational course pursued by the children of the prophet, who did nothing but smoke and drink sherbet, and chew opium, while he was slaving in his fields all day long. The Greek, however, continued modestly to defend his mode of life, until Selim at length fell into a passion, and declared his determination to accept of nothing at the hands of such an obstinate Giaour. When he came to consult his pocket, however, he found that he had reckoned without his host. There was not a single para in it. The Greek perceived the dilemma and said jestingly—

"Shall I lend thee the money, that thou mayst be under no obligation to such a poor creature as thy servant?"

Selim accepted the offer, and the Greek, in counting out a few pieces, displayed a hoard of golden ducats, which caught the eye of Selim, who could not help thinking what a pleasant accompaniment they would be to his pilgrimage.

"What business has a Giaour with so much money?" said he, as he turned towards the port; "it would be better employed in a pilgrimage to the tabernacle of the prophet." But he was too good-natured to follow up this suggestion, and contented himself with telling the story a day or two afterwards to the collector of the grand seignior's tribute of mastic, who, the next time he went his rounds, took occasion to bring an accusation against the poor Greek, of having embezzled a portion of what was due to the representative of the prophet. The punishment for such impiety is death, and the unlucky Greek was glad to compound with his purse of golden ducats. "Thou hast ruined me," said he, meeting Selim as he came forth from an audience of the collector, and related his story.

"Beard of Mahomet! but it is a judgment upon thee," cried Selim; "yet who would have thought my attempt to better the condition of this miserable sinner would have led to such a catastrophe!"

Happening to hear that the janizaries stationed on the island, which depends greatly for the subsistence of the common people on the fish caught in the bay of Scio, practised the most horrible impositions, by suffering none but themselves to keep nets, and selling out the fish at their own prices to the poor, Selim thought this a favourable opportunity of practising in his vocation of bettering the condition of mankind. He accordingly sought an audience with the aga of the janizaries, and remonstrated with him on his conduct to the faithful. If it had been the infidels only who suffered, he would have thought it sufficiently reasonable.

"Do the dogs complain?" asked the aga.

"Very much," replied the other.

"The Greek dogs?"

"Ay, and the Tchufouts, all complain."

"They do; then, by the hump of the prophet's camel, I will give them something to complain of," cried the aga, and sent his janizaries to bring up as many of these grumblers as they could catch, and give them the bastinado. This was accordingly done in the presence of Selim, who was detained to witness this exemplary act of justice. He afterwards went among these people condoling with them, and telling how he had striven to better their condition by remonstrating with the aga, but without effect.

"O ho! you did, did you," exclaimed they all at once, "mashallah! then it is to you we are indebted for this

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treat. It would be ungrateful to lose a single moment in repaying thy favours."

Accordingly they laid hold of Selim, and dragging him into a by-place, belaboured him until he could scarce find breath in his body to cry out for mercy. When they had done, they sent him about his business.

"O holy prophet!" exclaimed Selim, as he crawled away, "what a return for attempting to benefit man-kind!"

The pilgrims having completed their preparations, and all being in readiness, Selim departed from Scio, with the consolation of having attempted to do as much good as possible. "It is not my fault that I did not succeed," said he. A day or two after they were becalmed close to the little island of Nizari, which is famous for having the best divers in all the Archipelago. Nor is this at all wonderful, since when a rich man intends marrying his daughter, he appoints a day for all the young men of the island to repair to the seaside, and there in his presence and that of his child to dive for her. He who goes deepest and remains under water the longest wins the prize.

It happened that a trial of this kind was going on at the moment the vessel was becalmed close to the shore, and seeing a great crowd collected, the passengers, with the exception of the Turkish lady, who refused to be guilty of such an indecorum, all went ashore to witness the ceremony.

Upwards of a hundred fine looking young men were collected, and the trial commenced in the presence of a crowd of spectators. The prize was a charming girl who sat at some distance with eyes modestly averted. It was said that she ardently wished success to a youth who was present, and who excelled all his competitors in the beauty of his face, as well as the symmetry of his person. The lots had been cast to decide the order in which each of the candidates was to dive, and the turn of the handsome young man was the last.

A little bag was tied round the neck of the diver, the depth of the water correctly measured in different places, and it was astonishing to see the time they remained under water, as well as the vast depth whence they brought up their pearl-oysters. All had now done their best, when the handsome youth advanced to essay his fortune. It was observed that the robe which enveloped the bosom of the young virgin rose and fell with more than usual rapidity, as the young man plunged into the sea at a spot where as yet no one had reached the bottom.

As the period of his immersion lengthened beyond all the others, shouts of victory resounded from the spectators, and the bosom of the young prize damsel increased in its throbbings, like the waves of the sea when the tempest is rising. A few moments more, and the shouts gradually subsided into low murmurs, while the crowd eagerly advanced to the verge of the ocean, and seemed agitated by a painful anxiety to see him rise. A few moments more, and a hollow moan announced increasing and almost hopeless anxiety. The prize damsel appeared agitated by the most violent emotions, and at length voices exclaimed, "It is time for him to return."

"He will never return!" exclaimed the distracted maid, rushing towards the beach, and beseeching the other young men to dive to his rescue, if it was not yet too late. They obeyed, but it was some time ere they reappeared, during which the maiden wrung her hands, and exclaimed in piteous despair. At length, after a lapse of a few moments, one of the young men appeared bearing the body of the handsome youth without sense or motion to the shore. Various means were taken for his restoration, during which the distracted girl remained fixed as a statue with her hands clasped and her eyes raised as if beseeching the interference of Heaven. In a little while the limbs of the youth became stiff, his muscles rigid and inflexible, and it was declared that he was stone dead, beyond all hope.

No one was so ungenerous as to claim the victory, or demand the prize from the deceased diver, and the poor girl was led home in silent despair by her father and nearest relatives. Selim, who had witnessed this scene, thought to himself that here was a capital opportunity of benefiting mankind by abolishing this dangerous practice of diving, which had proved fatal to so fine a youth, and blasted the happiness of so beautiful a damsel.

When the young maiden and her friends had retired, he mounted on a rock, and made a speech to the crowd on the dangerous and mischievous consequences of diving, which was received with great indignation.

"He would persuade us to give up our livelihood!" cried one.

"He would abolish the practice of diving for a wife, which our ancestors followed from time immemorial!" cried another.

"Duck him! duck him!" exclaimed a thousand voices; and poor Selim, before he had time to argue the question, was seized and plunged headlong into the sea, where he would have perished but for the assistance of one of the pilgrims, who compassionated his situation and came to his relief.

"Mashallah!" exclaimed Selim, "but this is a mighty poor return for attempting to better the situation of these ignorant people."



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From Nizari they sailed on their voyage to Samos, and thence to the famous island of Rhodes, the chief city of which was exclusively occupied by Turks and Jews, none other being permitted to reside there. At this island they spent several days, enjoying the sweet air which excels that of all other places in the Archipelago, and replenishing their provisions amid the plenty which reigns in this fine island. Selim, being of an inquisitive turn, and anxious on all occasions to benefit mankind, rambled about in different directions, asking questions and inquiring into every thing, in order that he might be the better able to improve the condition of the people.

The Turks, who like to sit cross-legged, smoke, and do nothing but play with a string of beads; and who abhor answering questions, cannot form an idea of any good motive for a man being inquisitive. They always take him for a spy, and treat him accordingly. One day Selim made up to a venerable Turk, who was sitting quietly under the shade of an orange-tree smoking his long pipe, with a beard as long as his pipe, and asked him the meaning of certain inscriptions, in Greek and Latin, over the doors of a ruined church once belonging to the knights of Rhodes, and dedicated to our Lady of victory.

"Dost thou take me for an infidel, that I should understand any language but that of the prophet," exclaimed the man with the long pipe and beard indignantly. "Who and what art thou, to be asking such foolish questions?"

"I am a pilgrim, on my way to the tabernacle of the prophet, and the sole business of my life is to relieve the distresses, and cure the errors of mankind," answered Selim.

"Well, go about thy business, friend, and trouble me with no more questions; I am no Tchufout or infidel to plague myself with these heathenish marks on an old wall. Go ask the Tchufouts."

"Tchufouts!" cried Selim, in astonishment. "Do the followers of the prophet permit Tchufouts to live among them, and enjoy the sweet air of this island?"

"'Tis the will of the prophet," replied the Turk, "or it would not be thus, that they should be permitted to live among us, as our slaves, to perform those labours which are beneath a true believer; and that we may have something to spit upon now and then."

"What fools are these Tchufouts," thought Selim, "to be slaves and to be spit upon, when they might escape these indignities by becoming true believers. I will go and convert them, and so better their condition."

Accordingly he went into the quarter where they resided, and told them without any circumlocution that as there was but one Allah and that Mahomet was his prophet, it was a great proof of their ignorance as well as wickedness not to believe in them, in preference to their own false divinity and his prophets, who had thus left them to all the drudgery and insults of the true believers.

An old rabbi, to whom he addressed this consolatory exhortation, calmly replied—

"That we are exiles, and wanderers, and down-trodden, and oppressed,—that we have no country, no home, no rights, and no protection but that of Jehovah, is true. But it is the will of heaven, declared in ancient prophecies which are every day fulfilling, and we submit not only with patience, but with a degree of happiness thou canst not comprehend, arising from the conviction that when the prophecy is fulfilled, the people of the Lord will be gathered from the uttermost parts of the earth, the kingdom of Jerusalem be restored in tenfold honour and glory, and our enemies and oppressors become in their turn our slaves."

Selim was the best natured man in the world, except when he found people so unreasonable and obstinate in their prejudices, that they refused to be happy in the way he desired. That these miserable people, who had neither country nor rights, and who were the instruments of the labours, as well as the victims of Turkish tyranny, should pretend to be happy or even contented, was enough to provoke a saint, much more a mere pilgrim.

He spat on the ground, and wished that the soul of the rabbi's great grandmother might be turned into a pomegranate, and eaten by swine. After which he went to the cadı, and advised him to order the Tchufouts to be all bastinadoed six times a day.

"To what purpose," asked the cadı, "wouldst thou inflict this punishment, and what offence have they committed against thee?"

"None," replied Selim, "save that they pretend to be happy in their present condition, and refuse to believe in the Koran. Besides, did not these Tchufouts rebel against their own prophet, and may they not be lawfully maltreated according to the precepts of Mahomet?"

"Knowest thou not that the representative of the prophet, the sublime Solyman, has decreed that the Tchufouts shall remain unmolested so long as they demean themselves with the humility of dogs? Wherefore dost thou attempt to interfere with his will?" answered the cadı.

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"Upright and overwise magistrate," exclaimed Selim, "I bow to thy words with the submission of humility; but permit thy slave to observe that one of the most infallible modes of bettering the condition of man—kind, is to make their present state so uncomfortable, that they will gladly adopt any other that offers them relief from their sufferings. I only wish to recommend such a course towards these obstinate infidels."

"What right hast thou to interfere with the will of the commander of the faithful, son of a swineherd!— It is written in the Koran that the man who neglects his own proper business to meddle in the affairs of others is worse than a Giaour. Thou art such an advocate for flagellation that I will administer it to thee presently." So he ordered the bastinado, though Selim could not for the soul of him recollect having ever read in the Koran the precept quoted by the cadi. The judgment was, however, inflicted upon him, and he could not help exclaiming at intervals—

"O Mahomet! what a world is this, where all that a man gets for attempting to benefit his fellow—creatures is stripes and a ducking! But I will leave these abominable Tchufouts to themselves, and may they be obliged to live upon pork all their lives."

From Rhodes they voyaged to the famous island of Cyprus, the birthplace of the goddess of love and beauty, where the women are all ugly and the men handsome, in consequence, it is affirmed, of a dercee of Venus, to revenge the neglect of the former to sacrifice on her altar. Having a fair wind, they soon passed the little rocky island of Castro Rosso, and came opposite the gulf of Satalia, whence sailing by cape Sampisana, and Fonte Amoroso, on the seventh day they came in sight of Baffee, one of the principal ports of the island of Cyprus, not far from the site of the ancient Paphos. The next morning they anchored in the bay of Salina, where the ships lie at about a league from the shore.

They arrived just at the end of a long drought, which had not only destroyed the harvest of the present year, but so dried up the streams, that the water—mills, by which all the corn in the island is ground, were stopped, and they had no means of converting what little grain remained of the preceding year into flour. There was consequently a great scarcity, and a complete famine would have ensued, had not the European merchants residing on the island taken the precaution to lay up a quantity of grain beforehand, which they distributed among the people. It is affirmed that several good Mussulmans died of starvation, some because they considered it disrespectful to counteract the will of the prophet, who had decreed a famine; and others because they considered it degrading to their dignity to grind their own corn, now that the mills were all stopped. Another harvest was, however, just gathered in, and the streams of water had been replenished with rains, so that plenty again reigned in the island.

Among other places they visited during their stay to refresh themselves, was the city of Famagosta, where there are a great many fens and salt—pans, which infect the air, and cause such a great mortality among the inhabitants, that it is remarked but few of them arrive at a good old age. A Frank merchant with whom Selim had formed an acquaintance observed one day to him, how easy it would be to render the place healthy by draining the fens, and shutting the sea—water out of the salt—pans, the exhalations from which no doubt occasioned the frequent fevers which desolated the neighbourhood.

"Why don't you persuade them to do it," said Selim, "and thus confer a great benefit on mankind?"

"Because," replied the other, smiling, "I don't wish to become a martyr. They would tear me in pieces for depriving them of their salt."

"Such considerations," thought Selim, "could influence none but an infidel, who thinks more of money than the good of mankind."

He went to the chief men of Famagosta, and proposed a plan for draining the fens; but they treated it with scorn, and he was lucky in escaping the bastinado. Not discouraged, he walked down to the pans, where many thousands were engaged in gathering salt, and exhorted them to listen to his proposal.

"What! beggar the whole city by draining the fens and destroying the salt—pans!" exclaimed thousands with one voice.

"What! counteract the decree of Allah, who hath ordained there shall be fens and fevers in this very spot!" cried several devout Mussulmans.

"Give him the bastinado!"

"Tear him in pieces!"

"Pickle him alive!" shouted they from different quarters.

The picklers carried the day, and Selim was tossed neck and heels into a salt—pan, where he lay in the sun till

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he was nearly scorched to death, and his body incrustated with a coat of salt half an inch thick. From this perilous situation he was delivered by the Frank merchant, who threw a handful of paras, during the scramble for which Selim was lifted up and conducted out of danger by the merchant.

"I told thee how it would be," said he to Selim.

"But, mother of the prophet!" cried the other, "who would have thought of being pickled alive for only attempting to better the condition of his fellow-creatures!"

Our pilgrim was somewhat discouraged by this unreasonable antipathy of the people of Famagosta to having their condition bettered, and had almost determined not to trouble himself any more about them, until one day he met a number of women in the fields without veils, and whose complexions were as brown as a berry. Seeing this, he could not resist the temptation of doing them a good turn, and accordingly remonstrated in strong terms against this exposure, which was not only immodest in itself, but spoiled their complexions, as was plainly to be seen, making them look like so many wild Arabs of the desert. Now the women of Cyprus are very apt to think themselves all Venuses, because Venus was once queen of the island, and they resented this comparison of the wild Arabs by pelting honest Selim with pomegranates till he was fain to retreat as fast as his legs could carry him.

"This comes," quoth he, "of taking the trouble to enlighten people without souls. If I ever attempt to better the condition of women again, may my beard be turned into the tail of a cow."

All things being ready, the vessel again set sail from the island, for the famous port of Alexandria, and proceeded on her voyage without any accident worth recording until the fourth day, when they encountered an adverse wind, which drove them to the leeward, and finally increasing to a gale, carried the vessel far out of her course towards the coast of Judea.

Finding that nothing but the most vigorous exertions of all hands on board would prevent the vessel from going on shore, each one essayed his utmost. The Greek sailors forthwith lighted a lamp before the Virgin, and began saying all the prayers they could remember; the Latins, disdaining the Greek superstition, refused to kneel at their shrine, but offered their devotions to another virgin they considered more orthodox. The Arabians laughed at these infidels, and indulged in some odd mummeries of their own; while the Mussulmans, despising them all, lighted their pipes and quietly submitted to destiny. "Allah is great, and Mahomet is his prophet!" exclaimed they at intervals, and smoked away.

The confusion on board, and the violent rolling of the vessel had brought the rich Turk and his wife, who were going with valuable presents of jewels to the tabernacle of the prophet, on deck, where they sat in a quiet dignified apathy awaiting the result, which was what might be expected, where they agreed in nothing except in neglecting the means of safety. It happened that Selim was sitting next the rich Turk, smoking his pipe, and thinking to himself what a glorious thing it would be to be drowned on a pilgrimage to Mecca. For some time not a word was exchanged between them, until a cry from the sailors announced that the land was in sight and close at hand.

The Turk then quietly knocked the ashes out of his pipe, put away his beads carefully, and proceeding to the cabin soon returned with a little box of curious workmanship.

"Thou art a true believer," said he to Selim, "and no infidel, therefore I will trust thee. In a little while, unless the storm abates, our vessel will be dashed to pieces, and in all likelihood every soul on board will perish. In such a situation it becomes me to devote all my cares to the preservation of her who is dearer to me than life, or any of the goods of life. This casket contains the wealth which I meant to devote to the glory of the prophet. It will only embarrass me in the crisis that is approaching. Wilt thou take charge of it for me, and preserve it as long as thou canst without sacrificing thyself? If I survive, I will amply reward thee."

"I will," replied Selim; "but suppose that thou and thy wife should perish, which Allah forbid!"

The Turk considered a moment, and replied—

"If such is the will of Allah, and thou shouldst survive with the treasure, keep it and devote one half in my name and the name of my dear Zeid, at the shrine of the prophet. The other is thine to do with it what thou wilt."

Selim received the casket, and promising faithfully to fulfil the wishes of the Turk, if he should outlive the storm, fastened it round his waist in the best manner the time and circumstances would permit. It was almost dark night, and he had scarcely done this when the vessel struck the ground with her stern, and wheeling around suddenly encountered a rock, against which she in a few moments beat herself to pieces. All was now confusion

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and despair, and each one essayed his own safety with the exception of the Turk, who clasped his beloved wife in his arms, and they both perished together. The shore was rocky and almost everywhere steep, and so barren that it was seldom visited by the inhabitants of the interior. No one came to their assistance, even if aid had been practicable, and of all that had embarked on board the ship not one escaped alive but Selim, who was thrown upon a narrow strip of sandbeach among the rocks, bruised and exhausted, yet still having sufficient of the vital spirit remaining to recover of himself in the course of half an hour. The casket remained fastened to his body as it was when the vessel struck against the rocks.

The place where this happened was at the foot of Mount Hebron, between Joppa, or Jaffa, and Gaza, to which latter place he bent his way as fast as his bruised limbs would carry him. It was chance that directed him in his course, for the day had not yet dawned, and he could not distinguish the town, which indeed was hid by a high projecting cape. As his steps were embarrassed by the darkness as well as by weakness of body, he advanced but slowly, and it was daylight before he came to Gaza. Approaching the town, which, like almost all the ancient and famous cities along this coast, is now reduced to a miserable village, half Turkish and half Arabian, with perhaps a few Christians under the protection of a consul,—he encountered a couple of Arabs, who looked hard at him, and seemed very much inclined to investigate the contents of his casket. But the approach of a Turk on horseback, with a long beard, it would seem, prevented the indulgence of their curiosity, and they scampered away without looking behind them.

The Turk came up, and seeing that Selim was in the habit of a pilgrim, and that he was feeble and tired, stopped his horse, and saluting him respectfully, inquired why his garments were so wet and his body so bruised. Selim told his story, and the Turk, dismounting his horse, assisted him to his place, and walking before, conducted him to his house, which was the largest and best in the village. He was the chief governor of the surrounding district, and was called Abdallah el Hakim by the Arabs, whom he had drubbed into a great respect for his character and office. Abdallah furnished Selim with dry garments, ordered his wounds to be washed, and sent for the French consul, who was a physician, to dress them. When Selim found he was an infidel, he refused his good offices, and requested that one of the faithful might be called in. Accordingly a dervise of the neighbourhood was summoned, who, after whirling round a hundred and fifty times without stopping, exclaiming each time, "Allah is great, and Mahomet is his prophet," pronounced him cured. Selim tried to believe him, but the pains in his bones made him sometimes doubt a little; and finally he was astonished to find, that he was three weeks before he could walk out into the village.

"Thou wouldst have been cured in one quarter of the time hadst thou employed the Frank doctor," said Abdallah one day to him.

"But what true believer would not prefer being lame a few days to the contamination of an infidel's touch?" asked Selim.

"Not I," quoth Abdallah, coolly; "but, as these Christians have it, 'Every one to his notion.' It is not for me to find fault with thy cherishing a pain in thy bones."

"He is little better than an infidel himself!" thought Selim. "Where is the use of going on a pilgrimage to the tomb of the prophet, if the faith of a Giaour comes so near that of a true believer, that he may be permitted to touch him with his hand in the way of his profession? Better be guilty of the sin of ingratitude than to remember the favours of Abdallah el Hakim."

From this time, such was the indignation of the good pilgrim against Abdallah, that he actually forgot his kind offices, and determined not to trust him with the secret of the contents of the casket, half of which he considered as justly belonging to himself, provided the Turk did not appear to claim the whole. He was too conscientious, in regard to strangers at least, to avail himself of the contents of the casket until he had ascertained with certainty the death of the rich Turk and his wife. For this purpose, as soon as his strength would permit, he visited the spot where the vessel was wrecked, and became certain that both had perished by meeting a party of strolling Arabs, some of whom wore portions of the garments of the two unfortunate pilgrims, who, as they informed him, had been stripped and buried in the sands.

Selim was now rich once more, and he resolved to prosecute his pilgrimage to the shrine at Mecca, with the double view of complying with the injunctions of the prophet and fulfilling, at the same time, his promise to the rich Turk. Learning that immediately after the close of the month Ramozan, a caravan, composed of pilgrims from Asia Minor, was to set out from Damascus to join that which departs from Cairo thirty days after, he

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determined to travel to the former city, visiting Joppa, Samaria, Cæsarea, Ptolemais, Tyre, and other places by the way, with a view to improve the condition of the people if he found occasion.

Bidding farewell to his kind host, whom he scarcely thanked because he wished him to be cured by an infidel, Selim departed for Joppa in company with a party of merchants, among whom, to his infinite disgust, were a couple of monks belonging to a convent of Armenians at that place. The merchants were all well armed, and advised him to equip himself also with the means of defence. This, however, he declined, saying that he would reason with the Arabs if they offered to molest a man who was journeying in obedience to the precepts of the prophet, and for the benefit of his fellow-creatures.

Nothing particular happened until the party came to the large and beautiful plain which, commencing near Joppa, extends as far as the eye can reach.

"Behold!" cried one of the monks; "behold the spot where Joshua defeated the five kings, and caused the sun and moon to stand still!"—and they both crossed themselves with pious devotion.

"Fools and unbelievers!" exclaimed Selim, in a rage: "dost thou not know that the sun and moon are always in motion, and cannot be stayed but by Allah himself or his prophet?"

"That is what I say," replied one of the monks. "It was Joshua, one of our great prophets, who stayed the course of the sun and moon, by the permission of the Most High."

"Thou liest, dog!" cried Selim. "Joshua was an impostor, and thy book of faith is nothing but lies."

The monks felt indignant at this rude attack on their religion; but the sight of the armed Turkish merchants indicated the necessity of prudence, and crossing their arms in pious submission, they uttered not another word.

Arriving at the wretched village, but once famous port, of Joppa, which some say was the place where Noah lived and built his ark, Selim put up at a khan, or caravanserai, appropriated to the pilgrims who, like himself, were on their way to Damascus to join the caravan for Grand Cairo. Here he staid two or three days, waiting for a party who were collecting for Damascus, and spending most of the time in strolling about the city, with a view of benefiting mankind in some way or other. He was shocked to see the children of the Arabs, who formed a large portion of the population of Joppa, running about almost, and some of them quite, naked, while their mothers wore two veils, one black, the other white; thus indulging themselves in superfluities, while their offspring were without raiment. But what appeared to him a still greater absurdity, these little creatures wore chains about their legs and arms, some of them of silver.

"These ignorant people want bettering sadly," thought Selim; and finding a number of them collected together by the seaside, dabbling in the water, and enjoying themselves in spite of their miserable condition, he addressed them in a long speech, setting forth the propriety of wearing one veil, which was quite enough for a reasonable woman in this hot climate, and of converting the silver chains into garments to cover the nakedness of the children.

"What an unreasonable ignorant fool is this!" exclaimed they, "to pretend that women can exist with but one veil, or that it is not more dignified and proper to put silver chains on the legs, than garments on the bodies of our children."

So they set up a great shout, and cried out, "A barbarian! a barbarian!" while they pelted him so soundly with sand and pebbles that he was almost blinded, and could scarcely find his way to the khan, where he found the pilgrims in a state of great confusion, all gathered about one of their number, and seeming on the point of tearing him in pieces.

"Detestable unbeliever! dog of a Shiite! enemy of the prophet!" cried they in all the discord of rage.

"I am no unbeliever," answered the poor man meekly, "I believe in one God, and that Mahomet is his prophet."

"But thou dost not believe in the commentators—thou rejectest the *Sunnah*, and yet darest to join thyself to the *Sunnites* in a pilgrimage to the shrine of the prophet. Detestable follower of an impostor! thou shalt die for intruding among us as one of the faithful, unless thou renoucest the accursed Ali!"

"O Mahomet!" exclaimed the poor Shiite, "what will become of me, wretch that I am! I have travelled over the world, and tried to please everybody, but found no rest to the soles of my feet. At Goa they clapped me up in the inquisition, saying I was a Tchufout, because I ate not of swines' flesh,—so I became a Catholic, and did eat of all sorts of things. At Benares they told me I should be changed into a tiger after death because I tasted flesh,—so I turned Bramin, and lived on rice. In the great city of London they laughed at me for believing in the doctrines of Brama, and I became a Protestant. At Stamboul they spat upon me, and called me dog and infidel, so I became a

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Sunnite. From thence I travelled into Persia, where they affirmed the Sunnites were no better than Tchufouts, so I became a Shiite. And now behold! I am about to be put to death, because I have joined myself to those who believe in the prophet as well as I do. Mashallah! when shall I believe in such wise as to satisfy all mankind?"

"He has backslided! he has deserted the only true faith! Tear him in pieces!" cried the pilgrims, with one voice; "he is a follower of the detestable Ali."

"He was the son-in-law of the prophet," said the poor Shiite.

"He was a dog and a liar!" cried they again, and were proceeding to put their threats into execution, when the unfortunate man begged for mercy.

"Nothing but becoming a true believer will save thee."

"With all my heart; only tell me what is a true believer."

"A Sunnite! a Sunnite."

"Then am I a Sunnite from this time forward. So I beseech of you to let me rest in peace."

"He is converted! he is converted!" shouted the pilgrims; and the Shiite became from that time forward the chief object of their attentions. Selim was so delighted with this triumph of the true faith, that he attached himself to the new disciple, and in a short time made him the confidant of his whole history, even to the secret of the casket, half the contents of which he professed his intention of leaving in the possession of a merchant of Damascus, until he returned from Mecca.

Not long after the conversion of the Shiite, Selim happened to encounter a monk, who had been sent as a missionary to the Arabs, and who belonged to an establishment of Spanish ecclesiastics in the Holy Land. The opportunity seemed so apt to endeavour the conversion of this Christian dog, that Selim at once accosted him in the Arabian tongue, of which he had got a smattering in his travels, and exhorted him to become a true believer. The monk meekly replied that he was already a true believer, and that his special business was the conversion of infidels, such as Turks, Arabs, Armenians, and Tchufouts.

The indignation of Selim at being thus associated with Tchufouts and Armenians was terrible, and he vented it on the poor monk with all his might, calling him Giaour, dog, infidel, and treating him as a wandering beggar, who got his bread by lying and cheating. Never were two people so astonished and confounded at the blindness and obstinacy of each other, as were the two zealous partizans, who finally separated, each with a full conviction that he had encountered Satan himself in a human form. Selim forthwith laid an information before the *cadi*, and the unfortunate missionary would have expiated with his life the crime of having attempted to undermine the faith of a true believer, had not the French consul interfered in his behalf, and deprived him of the honours of martyrdom.

"Dog!" said Selim; "you have got off this time, but beware how you blaspheme again."

"Wretched follower of a barbarian and an impostor, how I pity thee!" replied the monk.

Leaving Joppa, the pilgrims, escorted by some armed Turks furnished by the governor, passed through Saphet, a village inhabited principally by Jews, and held in such veneration, that the first wish of their hearts is to lay their bones in the sacred spot. They believe that their Messiah will make his first appearance here.

"What fools are these Israelites, to expect a *new* Messiah, when already seventeen hundred years have elapsed since he appeared!" said the pilgrims bound to Jerusalem.

"What fools are these Christians, to believe the Messiah has already appeared, and to go to Jerusalem to visit his burial place!" said the Israelites.

"What dogs are these infidels and Tchufouts to dispute about such nonsense, when every true believer knows they are both equally wrong. La ilahi il Allah!" cried the pilgrims to Mecca. And thus they parted, mutually hating and despising one another.

The next day, towards evening, they halted at a miserable little tented village inhabited by Arabs, with an intention of passing the night there. Everybody knows that throughout all Syria and Palestine these people subsist in a great degree by plundering the Christian and Jewish villages, and robbing pilgrims and travellers. Yet with all this they live in a wretched state of poverty, wandering about and encamping in different places, and one-half the time subsisting on dates. Selim thought this a most capital opportunity of bettering the condition of his fellow-creatures; and going among them in the cool of the evening, found them at supper. "Wretched wanderers of the desert," cried he, "who live on horseback, starve on dates, and rob on the highways, listen to the friend of mankind!"

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"Hear him!" cried they, interrupting Selim with one voice; "hear him! he has the insolence to call us wretched, we who possess the finest horses and the most delicious fruit in the world; who go where we please and take what we please, and instead of labouring ourselves, live on the labours of others!"

Perceiving they were about following up these indignant exclamations with certain demonstrations of hostility, the zealous pilgrim departed in haste, but not before he had been soundly pelted with handfuls of dates by the little children, who did not stand in the same awe of the Turkish soldiers as their parents.

"Head of the prophet!" cried he; "has Allah condemned all mankind but the faithful to be fools as well as infidels? I have a great mind to let them all die in ignorance, and attend to my own affairs, instead of preaching in vain to these miserable wretches, who have the insolence to think themselves happy."

Within a short distance of the famous city of Damascus, they encountered a troop of dervises of the order of the Beyktachys, which is held in great veneration among the Turks, because, as it is said, Hadgi Beyktach, the founder of the order, placed his sleeve on the head of Orkhan, second emperor of the Turks, by way of giving him his blessing. They were going through their exercises in a beautiful valley through which ran the little river Pharphar, close at the foot of Mount Hermon, and the pilgrims halted to witness them. After making their obeisance to their cheykh, or high-priest, who was seated under a spreading tree with an altar before him, they successively fell on their knees and kissed his hand, after which they sung the first chapter of the Koran. This was succeeded by a prayer to the prophet, in repeating which, one of the dervises had the misfortune to sneeze, which is reckoned so great an indecorum, that he was sentenced to stand on one leg for the next twelve hours.

After this the dervises rose with one accord, arranged themselves in a circle, and began balancing on the right leg, and seesawing backwards and forwards, crying out at the same time, "Ya Allah, ya hou," with accompanying sighs and groans, while the tears and the perspiration rolled down their cheeks. Laying aside their turbans, and resting their arms on each others' shoulders, they then walked round and round in a circle, stamping and leaping with great violence and howling at the same time, till their strength became quite exhausted. In a little while this languor was changed into a sort of strange unnatural ecstasy, amid the delirium of which they called aloud for the ordeal of red-hot iron. Several cimeters and other instruments were accordingly heated, which, after being slightly touched by the cheykh with his lips, were handed to the most fervent and excited devotees of the troop, who seemed transported with joy on receiving them. Some bit, and licked, and champed the red-hot irons, till they became perfectly cooled in their mouths. Others stuck them into different parts of their bodies, enduring the pain with a triumphant satisfaction, and finally sinking under it without a single murmur. The cheykh then examined them all, blew upon their wounds, rubbed them with spittle, and repeating certain prayers assured them of being cured in twenty-four hours.

"La ilahi il Allah!" cried the pilgrims at intervals, as they witnessed the scene; "Can any other than the true faith account for such a miracle!"

"La ilahi il Allah!" cried Selim in an ecstasy of orthodoxy; "Can the dogs of infidels produce such incontrovertible proofs of the support of Allah as these holy men have just exhibited?" He had never heard of Monsieur Chabert, the fire-king, or the sleight-of-hand people of Hindostan.

Winding round the fort of Mount Lebanon, they were regaled with one of the most beautiful prospects in the world. The city of Damascus, with its rivers, one running through the centre, the other winding around it—its gardens, fruits, and rich meadows—its delightful climate, glittering fountains, and lofty minarets, constitute one of the fairest portions of the earth. The Turks believe it to be the site of paradise, and that Adam was formed of the earth taken from a delightful meadow, called by the Latins the Ager Damascenus,—by the Mahometans, Marssi, or the pleasant field.

The evening after the arrival of Selim at Damascus, the moon of Ramazan being about to rise, the Muezzyns, from the tops of the minarets, proclaimed that the fast of Ramazan was come. The mosques, the galleries of the minarets were all at once lighted up by innumerable lamps within and without, and ropes were stretched from one to another, hung with variegated lights, which resembled illuminated flowers. From the time of the proclamation of the fast until the setting of the sun the next day, a rigid abstinence is enjoined and practised by all devout Mussulmans. But the moment that period arrives, they make themselves amends for their fasting. They first fall to smoking their pipes, then take refreshment, and afterward sally forth to the public places and coffee-houses, where plenty of sherbet, and sweetmeats, and dainties of all kinds are for sale. Or else they visit the tables of the rich, which are well stored, and open to all comers. The fast of Ramazan is a sort of Saturnalia, during which

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crimes are committed with impunity, and justice sleeps. If any complaint is made before the *cadi*, the answer will be, "The poor man has fasted so long that he is excusable for being quarrelsome, or for having defrauded you."

Selim and the converted Shiite had by this time become intimate friends. They fasted together, they visited the coffee-houses, the *Ager Damascenus*, and the mosques in company, and were, in fact, inseparable. One morning, however, on awaking from a sleep which had lasted some hours beyond the usual time, Selim missed his friend, who was accustomed to rest by his side. This circumstance did not at first excite any particular solicitude, but after waiting his return some time, he happened to look at the place where he had deposited his casket, and found it was gone. For some minutes he remained immersed in a chaos of astonishment, which prevented his coming to any conclusion as to the cause of its disappearance. By degrees his suspicions concentrated themselves on the new convert, who he found, on inquiry, had departed at break of day, alleging that he was going to take his morning walk towards the beautiful meadow, with the intention of spending the day in fasting and prayer in the solitudes of Mount Lebanon. When Selim declared the loss of the casket, and his suspicions, the pilgrims with one voice shouted aloud,

"He is no Sunnite after all. He is a believer in the detestable Ali in his heart. Let us go in pursuit of him!"

Accordingly they sallied forth with one accord, and inquiring as they went along, learned that a person answering his description had been seen on the road towards Sidonijah, a town about four hours' journey from Damascus, inhabited by Greeks, whose priests keep the Turks from settling among them by assurances that some great misfortune would befall them if they do. About three hours' journey from Damascus they encountered a troop of Arabs who, seeing they were a poor and ragged company, and not worth robbing, permitted them to pass. The mid-day being extremely hot, they diverged from the high road into a cool sequestered spot where was a fountain, and began to regale themselves with the finest grapes in the world, which were as large as pigeons' eggs. It happened that Selim strayed farther into the glen than his companions, in doing which he came to a beautiful little grotto hewn out of the solid rock, according to the ancient custom of the Israelites, who once possessed this country, and which offered a refreshing refuge from the noontide heat. He entered, and who should he find there but his old friend and associate, the new convert to Islamism, whom he seized without ceremony, and dragging him forth, called to his companions. Divers were the insults, reproaches, kicks, and cuffs, bestowed on the delinquent, who however maintained his innocence with great obstinacy, and demanded to be searched. This was accordingly done, but no casket found. They then proceeded to the grotto and examined it with the greatest care, but without success. After continuing the search in every direction which seemed likely to conceal the treasure in vain, they determined to carry him to Damascus, to be judged by the *cadi*. The seclusion of the new convert in the grotto is explained by the circumstance of his having spied the band of Arabs at a distance, which the pilgrims had met, and apprehending a search, as is customary with these roving vagabonds; to escape whose depredations the Christian inhabitants of Syria and Judea are accustomed to drive their cattle in the evening to the tops of their houses, which are flat, for safety during the night. To secure his treasure in case of being discovered, he had disposed of it in a manner so as to elude the search of the pilgrims, as before related.

It was within an hour of the period in which the fast of Ramazan was to be renewed, when the delinquent was brought before the chief judge, a respectable Mussulman with a high turban, a crooked pipe, and a long beard, which he valued above all price. He had been chief cook to the Janizaries, and afterwards thyrnakdjy, or nail-parer to the Grand Seignior, who for some offence or other had degraded him from this high station to that of judge.

The Turks are beyond doubt the most honest people in the world; they will not cheat you in making a bargain, or overcharge in any mode whatever. But they have another way of coming at your purse. It is impossible to get on with high or low, rich or poor; from the sultan to the man that paddles you from Buyukdere to Scutari—nothing can be done without "baesth tasch;" no favour from the great, or good office from the little can be obtained without "baesth tasch," or a present. The whole machinery of the social system among them is kept in motion by "baesth tasch," and it may be said to form the very cement of Turkish society.

When the first American ship arrived at Constantinople, under the new arrangement between the United States and the Grand Seignior, some difficulties occurred, and the captain found it necessary to resort to *baesth tasch* to remove them. But the number to be *baesth tasched* was rather alarming. There was the *Caimacan pasha*, a bag of coffee and a barrel of sugar; the *Seraskier*, the *Serkiatibe*, the *Reis Effendi*, the *Kiakiya*, the *Belikje Effendi*, the *Mektanhaje Effendi*, and half a hundred more, each to be conciliated by a bag of coffee and a barrel of sugar.



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Besides this, it was doubtful whether a small baesth tasch would be received by such important personages, and the consignee was in a dilemma between the expense of giving to so many, and the consequences of omitting any one of them. He determined to consult the old capudan pasha, who was a friend of the Americans, and to whom he stated his difficulties. "Mashallah!" exclaimed the little old man, "you are very right; there is too little for all of them; send all to me, and give yourself no further trouble about the matter."

Acting under this universal stimulus, the judge before whom the supposed offender was brought by Selim, first cast about in his own mind whether it was at all likely that a man who had just lost all he had in the world, would be able to comply with the ceremony of the baesth tasch. The answer was a decided negative, and the magistrate at once felt a rising preference in favour of the thief.

"Of what dost thou accuse this man?" asked he.

"Of stealing a casket, containing all my wealth, my lord," replied Selim.

"Where is the casket?" asked the cadı.

"It is not to be found, my lord."

"Then he had it not in his possession when you took him?"

"No, my lord, but he was missing at the same time with the treasure, and I found him hid away in a grotto on the way to Sidonijah."

"What induced you to enter the grotto?"

"I retired thither for shelter from the heat of the sun, my lord."

"Might he not have done the same?" Then turning to the accused he asked,

"What caused thee to hide thyself in the grotto?"

The new convert took the hint given by the cadı, and affirmed that he had sought the sequestered fountain for the purposes of retirement and devotion, and the grotto to escape the heat of the sun."

"Was thy treasure disposed where none else but this man knew of it?" asked the cadı of Selim.

"I know not, my lord."

"Truly, friend, thou goest upon slight presumptions. I cannot condemn this man merely on thy suspicions, which may be just or not. The true believer must not be judged as if he were a Tchufout or a Christian dog."

"He is a Shiite, my lord," cried Selim.

"A Shiite!" exclaimed the Turk, snatching the pipe from his mouth and laying it down with emphasis; "that alters the case, and I swear by my beard he shall be punished whether he is guilty or not. Give him the bastinado till he confesses his crime."

It was in vain that the new convert declared himself a Sunnite, and denounced Ali as a dog and the son of a dog. The judge was inexorable, the punishment was inflicted; and thus the thief who had escaped the penalty of a crime of which he was really guilty, suffered for an offence of which, in all probability, he was innocent.

"Allah is just!" exclaimed Selim, forgetting in the triumph of bigotry and intolerance that he had lost all he had in the world. Passing through the gate of the magnificent palace of the illustrious nail-parer, he happened to turn about and cast a look towards a latticed window, where he imagined he saw two bright eyes reconnoitring him with great attention. The heart of a Mussulman is like tinder, and his love takes fire as easily. He thought of nothing but the fair and sparkling eyes all night, as he fasted from every thing but the indulgence of his imagination.

The next day, towards sunset, while sitting at the foot of a cascade formed by the river Barrady among the hills about a mile from Damascus, indulging in the recollection of the two bright eyes, and passing from thence to the reality of his forlorn and miserable state, a black, in the habit of a slave, came near, and after eying him some time, asked,

"Art thou Selim, son of Achmet, once governor of the famous city of Smyrna?"

"I am that miserable man," replied Selim.

"Follow me, then," said the black.

"For what purpose?"

"Thou wilt know when the purpose is answered."

Selim paused a moment,— "I cannot be worse off than I am," thought he; "Go on, I will follow."

By the time they arrived at the city it was quite dark, save in the vicinity of the mosques, where the thousands of lamps imitated the splendours of the rising sun. The black led him by a circuitous route to the rear of the palace

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of the magnificent nail-parer, and taking out a key opened a little obscure gate.

"Enter," said he.

Selim looked up towards the building and recognised the palace of the judge, who the day before had inflicted such exemplary justice on the infamous Shiite; he remembered the pair of sparkling eyes, and his imagination began to glow. Still the danger of entering the house of a Mussulman, under these circumstances was not a little alarming, and he hesitated.

"My lord is absent, what fearest thou?" said the black slave, pushing him in and locking the gate inside.

"Remain here till I come back," continued he, and left him abruptly.

Selim remained alone a considerable time, and every moment brought with it new apprehensions.

"If that black dog has deceived me," said he to himself, "may he be condemned to ride a dromedary all the days of his life."

The slave at length returned, bringing with him a companion bearing a long mat, which they spread on the ground and bade him lie down upon. This he did after some little demur, and rolling him up, they lifted him on their shoulders.

"I shall be smothered alive, or, if I escape, have my head sliced from my body at one blow, if the *cadi* discovers me," thought Selim.

After proceeding a distance which Selim thought at least a thousand miles, the slaves at length stopped, and laying down their burthen, one of them asked—

"Is all safe?" He was answered by a female voice,

"All is safe, unroll the mat."

They did so, and Selim was lifted up almost deprived of breath as well as reason, by want of air, and want of courage. Staring about as by degrees he came to himself, he was astonished at the magnificence which surrounded him, far exceeding that of the house of his father, which excelled all others in Smyrna. He found himself in a large court in the midst of which was a superb marble fountain that diffused a delicious coolness around, and threw its waters into a basin, on one side of which was a magnificent seat, under a lofty arch wainscoted with beautiful wood, and carved in the Turkish taste. On both sides of this room were apartments splendidly furnished, and looking into delightful gardens, illuminated by a thousand lamps in honour of the fast of Ramazan. In front of this seat was a grand saloon, floored with exquisite mosaic work, the walls incrusting with the richest marbles, and in the centre another basin and fountain of white marble ornamented with Grecian sculpture of the purest style. The room was adorned with sofas of surprising richness, and all around the ledges rising above the level floor were richly gilt, and ornamented with gold and silver toys. In the centre of the roof was a square tower, which admitted the fresh air, and rendered the place deliciously cool.

Selim knew enough of the manners of his countrymen to be aware that he was in the female apartments, and having recovered his breath as well as his courage, waited impatiently the issue of the adventure. In a few minutes he was conducted to an adjoining apartment, and left alone, a circumstance he did not like, as he had not come there to enjoy solitude. Presently another door opened, and a lady richly attired entered, apparently in great agitation. After contemplating Selim, for a moment, she clasped her hands, and exclaimed—

"It is he indeed! Allah be praised!" and burst into a passion of tears.

"In the name of the prophet," thought Selim, "what can all this mean. Surely I have heard that voice before!"

The lady recovered herself, and after a little hesitation asked him, at the same time holding a handkerchief to her mouth,—

"Art thou not Selim the son of Achmet, formerly governor of the city of Smyrna?"

"The same miserable man," said he.

"I am grieved that thou art miserable," replied the lady, "but hadst thou not an only sister called Ayesha?"

"I had."

"And what hath become of her?"

"Alas! I know not, most probably she perished miserably in seeking food for my children."

"Didst thou love her, Selim?"

"I did; though I did not show it by my actions?"

"Wouldst thou know her again?"

"Assuredly."

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"Look at me!" and unveiling her face, Selim beheld with astonishment his lost sister, though truth obliges us to say, his astonishment was mingled with a little chagrin.

Ayesha threw herself into his arms and wept, while Selim, overpowered by her tenderness and affection, mingled his tears with hers, and answered her embraces with kisses of awakened love.

"By what miracle do I find thee here?" at length asked Selim, after a pause.

"You remember," answered Ayesha, "the day we parted in search of food for the children. I went towards the city, but such was my weakness that after proceeding a little way through one of the streets, I sunk to the earth at the door of a house in which sojourned Ibrahim, the rich merchant of Damascus who had come to Smyrna on some business connected with his profession, and whom thou wast acquainted with. He saw me, had me conveyed into the house, and aid administered. When I recovered, I told him my errand, and besought him to give me food for your poor children. He not only gave me the food, but sent a female slave who carried a basket filled with refreshments, with which we hurried as fast as my weakness would permit. On coming in sight of the house, I beheld nothing but a black smoke arising from the spot where it once stood. But you know the rest, and I will not dwell on the sad catastrophe. I became again insensible, and was carried back to the house of the merchant, who compassionated my situation, and took me into his house, during a severe illness which followed. In the mean time he made inquiries concerning you, and at length ascertained that you had departed on a pilgrimage to Mecca. Finding that I had no other kindred in the city, and being an old man without children, he adopted me as his daughter, and took me with him to this city, where the chief judge, happening one day to see me, demanded me in marriage, and I became his wife about a week ago. Yesterday I caught sight of you through the lattice, and believing, though not certain, it was my brother, for you are sadly changed, I took the means to which only a Mussulman's wife can resort to satisfy my doubts, and procure an interview. Now let me hear thy story. My husband is so engaged with fasting that he will not interrupt us."

At this moment the attendant who had introduced Selim came in, exclaiming in breathless terror,

"Fly! fly!—my lord is coming!"

Selim would have made his escape, but Ayesha detained him with the assurance that this was impossible.

"We are innocent," said she firmly; "do not put on the appearance of guilt by attempting to flee!"

At this instant the door burst open; the nailparer rushed in with a naked cimeter in his hand, and making towards Selim would have cleft his head in twain in an instant, had not Ayesha placed herself between them, exclaiming at the same time,

"Forbear, my lord—slay not my brother!"

"Brother!" cried the enraged Turk, "dost thou add falsehood to infidelity?"

"I swear by the prophet he is my brother—my only brother, Selim, of whom thou hast often heard me speak."

The Turk paused a moment.

"Why then this secrecy, was it necessary to see thy brother at night and in my absence? But I will not condemn thee unheard. Does the merchant Ibrahim know thy brother?"

"He doth, my lord; send for him and I will abide the issue."

The merchant was accordingly sent for, and at once recognised Selim as the brother of Ayesha.

"'Tis well," said the nail-parer, "I rejoice that thou hast found thy brother, and that I have recovered his treasure for him. This was the cause of my absence to-day. The dog of a Shiite confessed the theft under the bastinado, and I carried him with me to show where he had hidden it." Then, retiring for a moment, he returned and delivered the casket to Selim; who desired him to retain it in his possession, explaining the nature and conditions of the bequest of the Turk who was drowned on his voyage to Alexandria, and his intention of devoting one-half at the shrine of the prophet.

"As thou wilt," said the nail-parer—I like to give him his highest title.—" 'Tis well; in the mean time this is thy home, thou art welcome," and he embraced him as a brother.

Selim, however, declined the offer, saying he was bound on a pilgrimage, and would not leave his companions, especially as the fast of Ramazan ended on the morrow, and they were to depart forthwith for Alexandria. The Turk assented, and thus the matter was settled.

In due time Selim set out on his pilgrimage, leaving half his wealth in the hands of his brother-in-law, and taking the other half with him to bestow according to the destination of its giver. It is not our purpose to follow him to Mecca, where he arrived in safety, kissed the Hadjar el asouad, or black stone, which descended from

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heaven white, but which became black by being touched by so many sinful lips; marched seven times round the caaba; plunged into the well of Zemzem with his clothes on; drank a cup of its muddy fetid water; cut his hair and nails at the Djebel Arafat, or Mount of Gratitude, and threw seven stones behind him, to indicate that from that time forward he held the good things of this world in contempt. Having devoted the half of the contents of the casket at the shrine of the prophet, for which the Imam assured him of a free remission of all his sins, Selim departed in company with his old friends and arrived safely at the beautiful city of Damascus. Here he was received with affectionate welcome by Ayesha, and brotherly kindness by her husband, who was an honest man and of a kind heart, though he did hate a Shiite, abhor a Tchufout, and spit at the very thought of a Giaour.

The remainder of the contents of the casket, being disposed of by the merchant Ibrahim, made Selim rich, and he might now have repaid the money of which he had robbed Ayesha, who had never disclosed this part of her history to her husband, out of affection for her brother whom she loved sincerely.

"My sister has every thing she wants in this world," thought Selim, "and I can employ it so much better in administering to the happiness of mankind, that upon the whole I think it best to keep the money. It would be robbing the poor to repay her."

He debated with himself some time ere he could decide whether to remain in Damascus, return to Smyrna, or make a tour through the northern parts of Europe for the purpose of converting the infidels. Ayesha was the only relation he had in the world, and she loved him with a true sisterly affection. But somehow or other the sight of her was not altogether agreeable; for though he had satisfied his conscience that he was acting for the happiness of mankind in withholding the payment of what he owed her, still a qualmish feeling occasionally arose in his mind, especially when, as was perpetually the case, his sister bestowed on him any token of kindness and affection.

In the mean time Selim, while balancing between these different plans, amused himself by frequenting the coffee-houses, and conversing with the people he met there, among whom he found natives of various countries, of different habits, manners, and religions. Here he smoked his pipe, and indulged himself in chewing opium occasionally, until by degrees it became a confirmed habit, gradually approaching to excess. One day a Frank merchant came into the coffee-house not a little elevated with wine, and entered into conversation with Selim, who was more than half-seas over with opium. At parting, the merchant said to himself,

"What a beast is this infidel, to befuddle himself with opium!"

But Selim was even with him.

"What a dog of an infidel is this," quoth he, "thus to indulge in the forbidden liquor, till he resembles a swine! As for myself, I confess that I sometimes chew a little more opium than is good for me, but then I make amends by doing all I can for the benefit of mankind."

The silent influence of a daily routine of habits, amusements, and occupations, by degrees attached Selim to Damascus, and he resolved to end his days in that delightful city. He bought a house beautifully situated on the border of the Ager Damascenus, and opened it for the reception of the poor of the city, who straightway abandoned their labours and flocked to him for food and raiment. One day a poor man came to him for charity, but just as he was about to relieve him, the beggars, who were always found about his gate, exclaimed,

"He is an infidel!"

Whereupon Selim spat upon and drove him away with a most pious indignation.

In this manner he passed his time greatly to his satisfaction, and, as he believed, to the happiness of mankind, when one day, as he was distributing alms to a crowd of beggars, the black slave who had introduced him to the palace of the nail-pairer in the manner before related, came running out of breath to inform him that a message had arrived from Stamboul, with an order to bring his master to the bowstring, and that the operation had just been performed, his property confiscated, and his wife turned out of doors.

"Mashallah!" exclaimed he, "what a piece of business. But what hath become of thy mistress? If I was not so busily engaged in benefiting mankind, I would go to her dwelling. Where is she now?"

"The merchant Ibrahim, her adopted father, hath taken her to his house."

"That is proper," said Selim, lighting his pipe; "she will be perfectly happy under his protection, and hath a right to demand it as the daughter of his adoption. For my part, I have higher duties to attend to, and am so busily employed in relieving the distresses of strangers, that I have no leisure for trifling matters of domestic interest. Go and tell my sister my heart is sorrowful for her misfortunes, and I will visit her as soon as I can find time."

The black slave bowed his head and departed with the message. It was some days before Selim found leisure to

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visit Ayesha, who received him with her wonted affection. She expected he would proffer the payment of her debt, now that she was in want, or at least that he would press her to take up her abode with him. But he departed without doing either, thinking to himself, that whatever might be expended for either of these purposes would be so much taken from the fund for benefiting mankind. Ayesha remained with the good merchant, who had the character of being a hard-hearted man, because he had refused to contribute to the erection of an hospital for the reception of cats and dogs.

The immoderate use of opium gradually undermined the constitution of Selim, and brought him to his grave not long after the death of the nail-parer. Everybody thought he would have made his sister his heir, though they knew not that if he had, it would only have been repaying the debt which he owed her. Great, therefore, was the surprise of all when they found he had left his house, and every thing he was worth, the former as a carvanserai, and the rest for its maintenance, to entertain the pilgrims to Mecca who might come from his native city of Smyrna. Ayesha wept for the death of her brother, but more for his injustice and unkindness; Ibrahim was indignant at his want of natural affection; but the Imans declared from the mosques that he was received into the bosom of the prophet, and he was ever afterwards called by the name of Selim, THE BENEFACITOR OF MANKIND.