ZADIG, OR DESTINY.

AN EASTERN TALE.

(1747.)
ZADIG, OR DESTINY:  
AN EASTERN TALE.  
(1747)

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL.—I, the undersigned, who have succeeded in making myself pass for a man of learning and even of wit, have read this manuscript, and found it, in spite of myself, curious and amusing, moral and philosophical, and worthy even of pleasing those who hate romances. So I have disparaged it, and assured the cadi that it is an abominable work.

DEDICATORY EPISTLE OF ZADIG TO THE SULTANA SHERAH, 
BY SADI.

The 10th day of the month Shawal, in the year 837 of the Hegira.

Delight of the eyes, torment of the heart, and lamp of the soul, I kiss not the dust of thy feet, because thou dost scarcely ever walk, or only on Persian carpets or over rose leaves. I present thee with the translation of a book written by an ancient sage, to whom, being in the happy condition of having nothing to do, there occurred the happy thought of amusing himself by writing the story of Zadig, a work that means more than it seems to do. I beseech thee to read it and form thy judgment on it; for although thou art in the springtime of life, and courted by pleasures of every kind; although thou art fair, and thy talents add to
thy beauty; and although thou art loaded with praises from morning to night, and so hast every right to be devoid of common sense, yet thou hast a very sound intelligence and a highly refined taste, and I have heard thee argue better than any old dervish with a long beard and pointed cap. Thou art cautious yet not suspicious; thou art gentle without being weak; thou art beneficent with due discrimination; thou dost love thy friends, and makest to thyself no enemies. Thy wit never borrows its charm from the shafts of slander; thou dost neither say nor do evil, in spite of abundant facilities if thou wert so inclined. Lastly, thy soul has always appeared to me as spotless as thy beauty. Thou hast even a small stock of philosophy, which has led me to believe that thou wouldst take more interest than any other of thy sex in this work of a wise man.

It was originally written in ancient Chaldee, which neither thou nor I understand. It was translated into Arabic for the entertainment of the famous Sultan Oulook, about the time when the Arabs and Persians were beginning to compose "The Thousand and One Nights," "The Thousand and One Days," etc. Oulook preferred to read "Zadig"; but the ladies of his harem liked the others better.

"How can you prefer," said the wise Oulook, "senseless stories that mean nothing?"

"That is just why we are so fond of them," answered the ladies.

I feel confident that thou wilt not resemble them, but that thou wilt be a true Oulook; and I venture to hope that when thou art weary of general conversation, which is of much the same character as "The Arabian Nights Entertainment," except that it is less amusing, I may have the honour of talking to thee for a few minutes in a rational manner. If thou hadst been Thalestris in the time of Alexander, son of Philip, or if thou hadst been the
Queen of Sheba in the days of Solomon, those kings would have travelled to thee, not thou to them.

I pray the heavenly powers that thy pleasures may be unalloyed, thy beauty unfading, and thy happiness everlasting.

CHAPTER I.

THE MAN OF ONE EYE.

In the time of King Moabd har there lived at Babylon a young man named Zadig, who was born with a good disposition, which education had strengthened. Though young and rich, he knew how to restrain his passions; he was free from all affectation, made no pretension to infallibility himself, and knew how to respect the foibles of others. People were astonished to see that, with all his wit, he never turned his powers of raillery on the vague, disconnected, and confused talk, the rash censures, the ignorant judgments, the scurvy jests, and all that vain babble of words which went by the name of conversation at Babylon. He had learned in the first book of Zoroaster that self-conceit is a bladder puffed up with wind, out of which issue storms and tempests when it is pricked. Above all, Zadig never prided himself on despising women, nor boasted of his conquests over them. Generous as he was, he had no fear of bestowing kindness on the ungrateful, therein following the noble maxim of Zoroaster: When thou eatest, give something to the dogs, even though they should bite thee. He was as wise as man can be, for he sought to live with the wise. Instructed in the sciences of the ancient Chaldeans, he was not ignorant of such principles of natural philosophy as were then known, and knew as
much of metaphysics as has been known in any age, that is to say, next to nothing. He was firmly persuaded that the year consists of 365 days and a quarter, in spite of the latest philosophy of his time, and that the sun is the centre of our system; and when the leading magi told him with contemptuous arrogance that he entertained dangerous opinions, and that it was a proof of hostility to the government to believe that the sun turned on its own axis and that the year had twelve months, he held his peace without showing either anger or disdain.

Zadig, with great riches, and consequently well provided with friends, having health and good looks, a just and well-disciplined mind, and a heart noble and sincere, thought that he might be happy. He was to be married to Semira, a lady whose beauty, birth, and fortune rendered her the first match in Babylon. He felt for her a strong and virtuous attachment, and Semira in her turn loved him passionately. They were close upon the happy moment which was about to unite them, when, walking together towards one of the gates of Babylon, under the palm trees which adorned the banks of the Euphrates, they saw a party of men armed with swords and bows advancing in their direction. They were the satellites of young Orcan, the nephew of a minister of state, whom his uncle's haugers-on had encouraged in the belief that he might do what he liked with impunity. He had none of the graces nor virtues of Zadig; but, fancying he was worth a great deal more, he was provoked at not being preferred to him. This jealousy, which proceeded only from his vanity, made him think that he was desperately in love with Semira, and he determined to carry her off. The ravishers seized her, and in their outrageous violence wounded her, shedding the blood of one so fair that the tigers of Mount Imaus would have melted at the sight of her. She pierced the sky with her lamentations. She cried aloud:
"My dear husband! They are tearing me from him who is the idol of my heart."

Taking no heed of her own danger, it was of her beloved Zadig alone that she thought, who, meanwhile, was defending her with all the force that love and valour could bestow. With the help of only two slaves he put the ravishers to flight, and carried Semira to her home unconscious and covered with blood. On opening her eyes she saw her deliverer, and said:

"O Zadig, I loved you before as my future husband, I love you now as the preserver of my life and honour."

Never was there a heart more deeply moved than that of Semira; never did lips more lovely express sentiments more touching, in words of fire inspired by gratitude for the greatest of benefits and the most tender transports of the most honourable love. Her wound was slight, and was soon cured; but Zadig was hurt more severely, an arrow had struck him near the eye and made a deep wound. Semira's only prayer to Heaven now was that her lover might be healed. Her eyes were bathed in tears night and day; she longed for the moment when those of Zadig might once more be able to gaze on her with delight; but an abscess which attacked the wounded eye gave every cause for alarm. A messenger was sent as far as Memphis for Hermes, the famous physician, who came with a numerous train. He visited the sick man, and declared that he would lose the eye; he even foretold the day and the hour when this unfortunate event would happen.

"If it had been the right eye," said he, "I might have cured it, but injuries to the left eye are incurable."

All Babylon, while bewailing Zadig's fate, admired the profound scientific research of Hermes. Two days afterwards the abscess broke of itself, and Zadig was completely cured. Hermes wrote a book, in which he proved to him that he ought not to have been cured; but Zadig
did not read it. As soon as he could venture forth, he prepared to visit her in whom rested his every hope of happiness in life, and for whose sake alone he desired to have eyes. Now Semira had gone into the country three days before, and on his way he learned that this fair lady, after loudly declaring that she had an insurmountable objection to one-eyed people, had just married Orcan the night before. At these tidings he fell senseless, and his anguish brought him to the brink of the grave; he was ill for a long time, but at last reason prevailed over his affliction, and the very atrocity of his treatment furnished him with a source of consolation.

"Since I have experienced," said he, "such cruel caprice from a maiden brought up at the court, I must marry one of the townspeople."

He chose Azora, who came of the best stock and was the best behaved girl in the city. He married her, and lived with her for a month in all the bliss of a most tender union. The only fault he remarked in her was a little giddiness, and a strong tendency to find out that the handsomest young men had always the most intelligence and virtue.

CHAPTER II.

THE NOSE.

ONE day Azora returned from a walk in a state of vehement indignation, and uttering loud exclamations.

"What is the matter with you, my dear wife?" said Zadig; "who can have put you so much out of temper?"

"Alas!" she replied, "you would be as indignant as I.
if you had seen the sight which I have just witnessed. I went to console the young widow Cosrou, who two days ago raised a tomb to her young husband beside the stream which forms the boundary of this meadow. She vowed to Heaven, in her grief, that she would dwell beside that tomb as long as the stream flowed by it."

"Well!" said Zadig, "a truly estimable woman, who really loved her husband!"

"Ah!" returned Azora, "if you only knew how she was occupied when I paid her my visit!"

"How then, fair Azora?"

"She was diverting the course of the brook."

Azora gave vent to her feelings in such lengthy invectives, and burst into such violent reproaches against the young widow, that this ostentatious display of virtue was not altogether pleasing to Zadig.

He had a friend named Cador, who was one of those young men in whom his wife found more merit and integrity than in others; Zadig took him into his confidence, and secured his fidelity, as far as possible, by means of a considerable present.

Azora, having passed a couple of days with one of her lady friends in the country, on the third day returned home. The servants, with tears in their eyes, told her that her husband had died quite suddenly the night before, that they had not dared to convey to her such sad news, and that they had just buried Zadig in the tomb of his ancestors at the end of the garden. She wept, and tore her hair, and vowed that she would die. In the evening Cador asked if she would allow him to speak to her, and they wept in company. Next day they wept less, and dined together. Cador informed her that his friend had left him the best part of his property, and gave her to understand that he would deem it the greatest happiness to share his fortune with her. The lady shed tears, was
offended, allowed herself to be soothed; the supper lasted longer than the dinner, and they conversed together more confidentially. Azora spoke in praise of the deceased, but admitted that he had faults from which Cador was free.

In the middle of supper, Cador complained of a violent pain in the spleen. The lady, anxious and attentive, caused all the essences on her toilet table to be brought, to try if there might not be some one among them good for affections of the spleen. She was very sorry that the famous Hermes was no longer in Babylon. She even condescended to touch the side where Cador felt such sharp pains.

"Are you subject to this cruel malady?" she asked in a tone of compassion.

"It sometimes brings me to the brink of the grave," answered Cador; "and there is only one remedy which can relieve me: it is to apply to my side the nose of a man who has been only a day or two dead."

"What a strange remedy!" said Azora.

"Not more strange," was his reply, "than the scent-bags of Mr. Arnoult being an antidote to apoplexy." ¹

That reason, joined to the distinguished merit of the young man, at last decided the lady.

"After all," said she, "when my husband shall pass from the world of yesterday into the world of to-morrow over the bridge Chinavar, the angel Azrael will not grant him a passage any the less because his nose will be a little shorter in the second life than in the first."

She then took a razor, and went to her husband's tomb; after she had watered it with her tears, she approached to cut off Zadig's nose, whom she found stretched at full

¹ Our author has here a note to the effect that there was at that time a Babylonian [Parisian] named Arnoult, who, according to his announcement in the newspapers, cured and prevented all sorts of fits by means of a bag hung round the neck.
length in the tomb, when he suddenly got up, and, holding his nose with one hand, stopped the razor with the other.

"Madam," said he, "do not cry out so loudly another time against young Cosrou; your intention of cutting off my nose is as bad as that of turning aside a stream."

CHAPTER III.

THE DOG AND THE HORSE.

ZADIG found by experience that the first month of marriage is, as it is written in the book of the Zendavesta, the moon of honey, and that the second is the moon of wormwood. He was some time afterwards obliged to put away Azora, who became too unmanageable to live with, and he sought for happiness in the study of nature.

"There is no delight," he said, "equal to that of a philosopher, who reads in this great book which God has set before our eyes. The truths which he discovers are his own: he nurtures and educates his soul, he lives in peace, he fears no man, and no tender spouse comes to cut off his nose."

Full of these ideas, he retired to a country house on the banks of the Euphrates. There he did not spend his time in calculating how many inches of water flowed in a second under the arches of a bridge, or whether a cubic line of rain fell in the month of the mouse more than in the month of the sheep. He did not contrive how to make silk out of cobwebs, nor porcelain out of broken bottles; but he studied most of all the properties of animals and plants; and soon acquired a sagacity that showed him a thousand differences where other men see nothing but uniformity.
One day, when he was walking near a little wood, he saw one of the queen's eunuchs running to meet him, followed by several officers, who appeared to be in the greatest uneasiness, and were running hither and thither like men bewildered and searching for some most precious object which they had lost.

"Young man," said the chief eunuch to Zadig, "have you seen the queen's dog?"

Zadig modestly replied: "It is a bitch, not a dog."

"You are right," said the eunuch.

"It is a very small spaniel," added Zadig; "it is not long since she has had a litter of puppies; she is lame in the left forefoot, and her ears are very long."

"You have seen her, then?" said the chief eunuch, quite out of breath.

"No," answered Zadig, "I have never seen her, and never knew that the queen had a bitch."

Just at this very time, by one of those curious coincidences which are not uncommon, the finest horse in the king's stables had broken away from the hands of a groom in the plains of Babylon. The grand huntsman and all the other officers ran after him with as much anxiety as the chief of the eunuchs had displayed in his search after the queen's bitch. The grand huntsman accosted Zadig, and asked him if he had seen the king's horse pass that way.

"It is the horse," said Zadig, "which gallops best; he is five feet high, and has small hoofs; his tail is three and a half feet long; the bosses on his bit are of gold twenty-three carats fine; his shoes are silver of eleven pennyweights."

"Which road did he take? Where is he?" asked the grand huntsman.

"I have not seen him," answered Zadig, "and I have never even heard anyone speak of him."

The grand huntsman and the chief eunuch had no doubt
that Zadig had stolen the king's horse and the queen's bitch, so they caused him to be brought before the Assembly of the Grand Desterham, which condemned him to the knout, and to pass the rest of his life in Siberia. Scarcely had the sentence been pronounced, when the horse and the bitch were found. The judges were now under the disagreeable necessity of amending their judgment; but they condemned Zadig to pay four hundred ounces of gold for having said that he had not seen what he had seen. He was forced to pay this fine first, and afterwards he was allowed to plead his cause before the Council of the Grand Desterham, when he expressed himself in the following terms:

"Stars of justice, fathomless gulfs of wisdom, mirrors of truth, ye who have the gravity of lead, the strength of iron, the brilliance of the diamond, and a close affinity with gold, inasmuch as it is permitted me to speak before this august assembly, I swear to you by Ormuzd that I have never seen the queen's respected bitch, nor the sacred horse of the king of kings. Hear all that happened: I was walking towards the little wood where later on I met the venerable eunuch and the most illustrious grand huntsman. I saw on the sand the footprints of an animal, and easily decided that they were those of a little dog. Long and faintly marked furrows, imprinted where the sand was slightly raised between the footprints, told me that it was a bitch whose dugs were drooping, and that consequently she must have given birth to young ones only a few days before. Other marks of a different character, showing that the surface of the sand had been constantly grazed on either side of the front paws, informed me that she had very long ears; and, as I observed that the sand was always less deeply indented by one paw than by the other three, I gathered that the bitch belonging to our august queen was a little lame, if I may venture to say so."
"With respect to the horse of the king of kings, you must know that as I was walking along the roads in that same wood, I perceived the marks of a horse's shoes, all at equal distances. 'There,' I said to myself, 'went a horse with a faultless gallop.' The dust upon the trees, where the width of the road was not more than seven feet, was here and there rubbed off on both sides, three feet and a half away from the middle of the road. 'This horse,' said I, 'has a tail three feet and a half long, which, by its movements to right and left, has whisked away the dust.' I saw, where the trees formed a canopy five feet above the ground, leaves lately fallen from the boughs; and I concluded that the horse had touched them, and was therefore five feet high. As to his bit, it must be of gold twenty-three carats fine, for he had rubbed its bosses against a touchstone, the properties of which I had ascertained. Lastly, I inferred from the marks that his shoes left upon stones of another kind, that he was shod with silver of eleven pennyweights in quality."

All the judges marvelled at Zadig's deep and subtle discernment, and a report of it even reached the king and queen. Nothing but Zadig was talked of in the ante-chambers, the presence chamber, and the private closet; and, though several of the magi were of opinion that he ought to be burned as a wizard, the king ordered that he should be released from the fine of four hundred ounces of gold to which he had been condemned. The registrar, the bailiffs, and the attorneys came to his house with great solemnity to restore him his four hundred ounces; they kept back only three hundred and ninety-eight of them for legal expenses, and their servants too claimed their fees.

Zadig saw how very dangerous it sometimes is to show oneself too knowing, and resolved on the next occasion of the kind to say nothing about what he had seen.
Such an opportunity soon occurred. A state prisoner made his escape, and passed under the windows of Zadig's house, who, on being questioned, answered nothing; but it was proved that he had looked out of the window. For this offence he was condemned to pay five hundred ounces of gold, and he thanked his judges for their leniency, according to the custom of Babylon.

"Good Heavens!" said Zadig to himself, "what a pity it is when one takes a walk in a wood through which the queen's bitch and the king's horse have passed! how dangerous it is to stand at a window! and how difficult it is to be happy in this life!"

CHAPTER IV.

THE ENIOUS MAN.

ZADIG sought consolation in philosophy and friendship for the unkindness with which fortune had treated him. In one of the suburbs of Babylon he had a house tastefully furnished, where he had gathered all the arts and pleasures that were worthy of a gentleman. In the morning his library was open to all men of learning; in the evening his table was surrounded by good company. But he soon discovered what danger there is in entertaining the learned. A hot dispute arose over a law of Zoroaster, which prohibited the eating of a griffin.

"How can a griffin be forbidden," said some, "if no such creature exists?"

"It must exist," said the others, "since Zoroaster forbids it to be eaten."

Zadig endeavoured to bring them to an agreement by saying:
"If there are griffins, let us refrain from eating them; and if there are none, there will be all the less danger of our doing so. Thus, in either case alike, Zoroaster will be obeyed."

A learned scholar who had composed thirteen volumes on the properties of the griffin, and who was moreover a great magician, lost no time in bringing an accusation against Zadig before an archimagian named Yebor, the most foolish of the Chaldeans, and consequently the most fanatical. This man would fain have impaled Zadig for the greater glory of the Sun, and would have recited the breviary of Zoroaster in a more complacent tone of voice for having done it; but his friend Cador (one friend is worth more than a hundred priests) sought out old Yebor, and addressed him thus:

"Long live the Sun and the griffins! Take good heed that you do no harm to Zadig; he is a saint; he keeps griffins in his back-yard, and abstains from eating them; and his accuser is a heretic, who dares to maintain that rabbits have cloven feet and are not unclean."

"In that case," said Yebor, shaking his bald head, "Zadig must be impaled for having thought wrongly about griffins, and the other for having spoken wrongly about rabbits."

Cador settled the matter by means of a maid of honour, who had borne Yebor a child, and who was held in high esteem in the college of the magi. No one was impaled, though a good many of the doctors murmured thereat, and prophesied the downfall of Babylon in consequence.

Zadig exclaimed: "Oh, what does happiness depend! Everybody in this world persecutes me, even beings that do not exist."

1 This is an anagram of Boyer, a bishop by whom Voltaire had been subjected to repeated persecution, or what he considered such.
He cursed all men of learning, and determined to live henceforth only in the best society. He invited to his house the most distinguished men and the most charming women in Babylon; he gave elegant suppers, often preceded by concerts, and enlivened by interesting conversation, from which he knew how to banish that straining after a display of wit, which is the surest way to have none and to mar the most brilliant company. Neither the choice of his friends, nor that of his dishes, was prompted by vanity; for in everything he preferred being to seeming, and thereby he attracted to himself the real respect to which he made no claim.

Opposite Zadig's house lived Arimaze, a person whose depraved soul was painted on his coarse countenance. He was consumed with malice, and puffed up with pride, and, to crown all, he set up for being a wit and was only a bore. Having never been able to succeed in the world, he took his revenge by railing at it. In spite of his riches, he had some trouble in getting flatterers to flock to his house. The noise of the carriages entering Zadig's gates of an evening annoyed him, the sound of his praises irritated him yet more. He sometimes went to Zadig's parties, and sat down at his table without being invited, where he spoiled all the enjoyment of the company, just as the harpies are said to infect whatever food they touch. One day a lady whom he was anxious to entertain, instead of accepting his invitation, went to sup with Zadig. Another day, when he was talking with him in the palace, they came across a minister who asked Zadig to supper without asking Arimaze. The most inveterate hatreds are often founded on causes quite as trivial. This person, who went by the name of "the Envious man" in Babylon, wished to ruin Zadig because people called him "the Happy man." Opportunities for doing harm

1 The Abbé Desfontaines.
are found a hundred times a day, and an opportunity for doing good occurs once a year, as Zoroaster has observed.

On one occasion the Envious man went to Zadig's house, and found him walking in his garden with two friends and a lady, to whom he was addressing frequent compliments, without any intention other than that of making himself agreeable. The conversation turned upon a war, which the king had just brought to a prosperous termination, against the prince of Hyrcania, his vassal. Zadig, who had displayed his valour during the short campaign, had much to say in praise of the king, and still more in praise of the lady. He took out his note-book, and wrote down four lines, which he made on the spur of the moment, and which he gave to his fair companion to read. His friends entreated him to be allowed a sight of them; but his modesty, or rather a natural regard for his reputation, made him refuse. He knew that such impromptu verses are never of any value except in the eyes of her in whose honour they have been composed, so he tore in two the leaf on which he had just written them, and threw the pieces into a thicket of roses, where his friends looked for them in vain. A shower came on, and they betook themselves indoors. The Envious man, who remained in the garden, searched so diligently that he found one fragment of the leaf, which had been torn in such a way that the halves of each line that were left made a continuous sense, and even a rhymed verse, in shorter metre than the original; but by an accident still more strange, these short lines were found to contain the most opprobrious libel against the king. They read thus:

"By heinous crimes
Set on the throne,
In peaceful times
One foe alone."
The Envious man was happy for the first time in his life, for he had in his hands the means of destroying a virtuous and amiable man. Full of such cruel joy, he caused this lampoon written by Zadig's own hand to be brought to the king's notice, who ordered him to be sent to prison, together with his two friends and the lady. His trial was soon over, nor did his judges deign to hear what he had to say for himself. When he was brought up to receive sentence, the Envious man crossed his path, and told him in a loud voice that his verses were good for nothing. Zadig did not pride himself on being a fine poet, but he was in despair at being condemned as guilty of high treason, and at seeing so fair a lady and his two friends kept in prison for a crime that he had never committed. He was not allowed to speak, because his notebook spoke for him. Such was the law of Babylon. He was then forced to go to his execution through a crowd of inquisitive spectators, not one of whom dared to commiserate him, but who rushed forward in order to scrutinise his countenance, and to see whether he was likely to die with a good grace. His relations alone were distressed; for they were not to be his heirs. Three quarters of his estate were confiscated for the king's benefit, and the Envious man profited by the other quarter.

Just as he was preparing for death, the king's parrot escaped from its perch, and alighted in Zadig's garden, on a thicket of roses. A peach had been carried thither by the wind from a tree hard by, and it had fallen on a piece of writing paper, to which it had stuck. The bird took up both the peach and the paper, and laid them on the monarch's knees. The king, whose curiosity was excited, read some words which made no sense, and which appeared to be the ends of four lines of verse. He loved poetry, and princes who love the muses never find time hang
heavy on their hands. His parrot's adventure set him thinking. The queen, who remembered what had been written on the fragment of the leaf from Zadig's notebook, had it brought to her.

Both pieces were put side by side, and were found to fit together exactly. The verses then read as Zadig had made them:

"By heinous crimes I saw the earth alarm'd,
Set on the throne one king all evil curbs;
In peaceful times now only Love is arm'd,
One foe alone the timid heart disturbs."

The king immediately commanded that Zadig should be brought before him, and that his two friends and the fair lady should be let out of prison. Zadig prostrated himself with his face to the ground at their majesties' feet, asked their pardon most humbly for having made such poor rhymes, and spoke with so much grace, wit, and good sense, that the king and queen desired to see him again. He came again accordingly, and won still greater favour. All the property of the Envious man who had accused him unjustly was given to Zadig, but he restored it all, and the Envious man was touched, but only with the joy of not losing his wealth after all. The king's esteem for Zadig increased every day. He made him share all his pleasures, and consulted him in all matters of business. The queen regarded him from that time with a tender complacency that might become dangerous to herself, to her royal consort, to Zadig, and to the whole State. Zadig began to think that it is not so difficult after all to be happy.
CHAPTER V.

THE PRIZE OF GENEROSITY.

The time was now arrived for celebrating a high festival, which recurred every five years. It was the custom at Babylon to announce in a public and solemn manner, at the end of such a period, the name of that citizen who had done the most generous act during the interval. The grandees and the magi were the arbitrators. The chief satrap, who had the city under his charge, made known the most noble deeds that had been performed under his government. The election was made by vote, and the king pronounced judgment. People came to this festival from the farthest corners of the earth, and the successful candidate received from the monarch’s hands a cup of gold decorated with precious stones, the king addressing him in these terms:

"Receive this reward of generosity, and may the gods grant me many subjects who resemble you."

The memorable day then was come, and the king appeared upon his throne, surrounded by grandees, magi, and deputies; sent by all nations to these games, where glory was to be gained, not by the swiftness of horses nor by strength of body, but by virtue. The chief satrap proclaimed with a loud voice the actions that might entitle their authors to this inestimable prize. He said nothing about the magnanimity with which Zadig had restored all his fortune to the Envious man; that was not considered an action worthy of disputing the prize.

First, he presented a judge who, after having given judgment against a citizen in an important law-suit, under a mistake for which he was in no way responsible, had
given him all his own property, which was equal in value to what the other had lost.

He next brought forward a young man, who; being over head and ears in love with a damsel to whom he was engaged to be married, had resigned her to a friend who was nearly dying for love of her, and had moreover resigned the dowry as well as the damsel.

Then he introduced a soldier, who in the Hyrcanian war had given a still nobler example of generosity. Some of the enemy's troops were laying hands on his mistress, and he was defending her from them, when he was told that another party of Hyrcanians, a few paces off, were carrying away his mother. With tears he left his mistress, and ran to rescue his mother; and when he returned to the object of his love, he found her dying. He was on the point of slaying himself, but when his mother pointed out that she had no one but him to whom she could look for succour, he was courageous enough to endure to live on.

The arbitrators were inclined to give the prize to this soldier; but the king interposed, and said:

"This man's conduct and that of the others is praiseworthy, but it does not astonish me; whereas yesterday Zadig did a thing that made me marvel. Some days before, my minister and favourite Coreb had incurred my displeasure and been disgraced. I uttered violent complaints against him, and all my courtiers assured me that I was not half severe enough; each vied with his neighbour in saying as much evil as he could of Coreb. I asked Zadig what he thought of him, and he dared to say a word in his favour. I am free to confess that I have heard of instances in our history of men atoning for a mistake by the sacrifice of their goods, giving up a mistress, or preferring a mother to a sweetheart, but I have never read of a courtier speaking a good word for a minister in dis-
grace, against whom his sovereign was bitterly incensed. I award twenty thousand pieces of gold to each of those whose generous acts have been recounted; but I award the cup to Zadig."

"Sire," said he, "it is Your Majesty alone who deserves the cup, for having done a deed of unprecedented magnanimity, in that, being a king, you were not angry with your slave when he ran counter to your passion."

The king and Zadig were regarded with equal admiration. The judge who had given away his fortune, the lover who allowed his friend to marry his mistress, and the soldier who had preferred his mother's safety to that of his sweetheart, received at the monarchs' hands the presents he had assigned, and saw their names written in the Book of the Generous, but Zadig had the cup. The king gained the reputation of a good prince, which he did not keep long. The day was celebrated with feasts that lasted longer than the law directed, and its memory is still preserved in Asia. Zadig said:

"At last, then, I am happy." But he was deceived.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MINISTER.

The king had lost his prime minister, and chose Zadig to fill his place. All the fair ladies in Babylon applauded the choice; for since the foundation of the empire there had never been known such a young minister. All the courtiers were offended; and the Envious man spat blood on hearing the news, while his nose swelled to an enormous size. Zadig, having thanked the king and queen, proceeded to thank the parrot also.
“Beautiful bird,” he said, “it is you who have saved my life, and made me prime minister: the bitch and the horse belonging to Their Majesties did me much harm, but you have done me good. On what slight threads do human destinies depend! But,” added he, “a happiness so strangely acquired will, perhaps, soon pass by.”

“Ay,” replied the parrot.

Zadig was startled at the response; but, being a good naturalist, and not believing that parrots were prophets, he soon recovered himself.

Applying all his energies to the duties of his office, he made everybody feel the sacred power of the laws, but made no one feel the weight of his dignity. He did not interfere with the free expression of opinion in the divan, and each vizier was welcome to hold his own without displeasing him. When he acted as judge in any matter, it was not he who pronounced sentence, it was the law; but when the law was too harsh, he tempered its severity; and when there were no laws to meet the case, his sense of equity supplied him with decisions that might have been taken for those of Zoroaster.

It is from Zadig that the nations of the world have received the grand maxim: “It is better that a guilty man should be acquitted than that an innocent one should be condemned.” He held that laws were made as much for the sake of helping as of intimidating the people. His chief skill lay in revealing the truth which all men try to darken. From the very beginning of his administration he put this great talent to good use. A famous merchant of Babylon had died in India, and made his two sons heirs to equal portions of his estate, after having given their sister in marriage; and he left a present of thirty thousand gold pieces to that one of his two sons who should be judged to have shown the greater love towards himself. The elder built him a tomb, the second increased his sister's dowry
with a part of his own inheritance. Everybody said: "It is the elder son who has the greater love for his father, the younger loves his sister better; the thirty thousand pieces belong to the elder."

Zadig sent for the two brothers, one after the other. He said to the elder:

"Your father is not dead; he has been cured of his last illness, and is returning to Babylon."

"God be praised!" answered the young man, "but his tomb has cost me a large sum of money."

Zadig then said the same thing to the younger brother.

"God be praised!" answered he; "I will restore to my father all that I have, but I hope that he will leave my sister what I have given her."

"You shall restore nothing," said Zadig, "and you shall have the thirty thousand pieces; it is you who love your father best."

A very rich young lady had promised her hand to two magi, and, after having received a course of instruction for some months from each of them, found herself likely to become a mother. Both still wishing to marry her, she said she would take for her husband the one who had put her in a position to present the empire with a citizen.

"It is I who have done that good work," said one of them.

"It is I who have had that privilege," said the other.

"Well," answered she, "I will recognise that one as the father of the child who can give him the best education."

She was brought to bed of a son. Each of the two magi wished to bring it up, and the case was referred to Zadig, who summoned the magi to his presence.

"What will you teach your pupil?" he asked of the first.

"I will instruct him," said the learned professor, "in the eight parts of speech, in logic, astrology, demonology, the
difference between substance and accident, abstract and concrete, the doctrine of the monads and the pre-established harmony." ¹

"For my part," said the other, "I will endeavour to render him just and worthy of having friends."

Zadig exclaimed: "Whether you are his father or not, you shall marry his mother."

Day after day complaints reached court of the governor of Media, whose name was Irax. He was a high and mighty personage, not a bad fellow at bottom, but spoiled by vanity and self-indulgence. He seldom suffered any one to speak to him, and never to contradict him. Peacocks are not more conceited than he was, nor doves more voluptuous, nor turtles more indolent; every breath he drew was devoted to vain glory and false pleasures. Zadig undertook to reform him.

He sent him, in the king's name, a skilful musician with a dozen singers and two dozen fiddlers, also a butler with half a dozen cooks and four chamberlains, who were never to leave him alone. By the king's orders the following ceremonies were strictly observed, and this is how matters were carried on.

The first day, as soon as the pleasure-loving Irax was awake, the musical conductor entered his chamber followed by the singers and fiddlers: a cantata was sung which lasted two hours, and every three minutes there was this refrain:

"Whose merits e'er attain'd such height?  
Who with such grace was e'er endow'd?  
Has not his Highness every right  
To feel self-satisfied and proud?"

¹ Allusion is here made to the philosophical system of Leibnitz (d. 1716), in which "monads" figure largely as the ultimate atoms of nature, and the intimate connection between the mind and body is explained by a "pre-established harmony" which admits of per-
After this cantata was performed, one of the chamberlains made him a speech, three quarters of an hour long, in which he praised him expressly for all those good qualities in which he was most deficient. The oration finished, he was escorted to the table to the sound of musical instruments. The dinner lasted three hours; whenever he opened his mouth to speak, the first chamberlain said: "Whatever he says will be right." Scarcely had he spoken four words, when the second chamberlain would exclaim: "He is right." The two other chamberlains burst into fits of laughter at all the witticisms which Irax uttered, or which they attributed to him. After dinner he was favoured with a repetition of the cantata.

This first day seemed to him delightful; he thought that the king of kings was honouring him according to his deserts. The second appeared a little less agreeable, the third palled upon him considerably, the fourth was intolerable, and the fifth absolute torture. At last, rather than hear the continual refrain:

"Has not his Highness every right
To feel self-satisfied and proud?"

rather than hear the perpetual assurance that whatever he said was right, rather than be harangued every day at the same hour, he wrote to the court entreating the king to be good enough to recall his chamberlains, his musicians, and his butler; and he promised to be less vain and more industrious in future. He was henceforth less tolerant of flattery, gave fewer entertainments, and was all the happier; for, as the Sadder has said:

"Continual pleasure is no pleasure."

fect independence. The optimism of Leibnitz is ridiculed by Voltaire in "Candide."

1 A summary of various parts of the Zendavesta.
CHAPTER VII.

SETTLING DISPUTES AND GIVING AUDIENCE.

Thus it was that Zadig daily showed the shrewdness of his intellect and the goodness of his heart. He was admired, yet he was also loved. He passed for the most fortunate of men; all the empire resounded with his name, all the women ogled him, and all the citizens extolled his justice; the men of science regarded him as their oracle, and even the priests confessed that he knew more than the old archimagian Yebor. Far from wishing to prosecute him for his opinions on the subject of griffins, they believed only what seemed credible to him.

Now there was a great controversy in Babylon, which had lasted fifteen hundred years, and had divided the empire into two bigoted sects; one maintained that the temple of Mithras should never be entered except with the left foot foremost; the other held this practice in abomination, and always entered with the right foot first. The rival sects waited impatiently for the day on which the solemn feast of the holy fire was to be held, to know which side would be favoured by Zadig. All had their eyes fixed on his two feet, and the whole city was in agitation and suspense. Zadig leaped into the temple with both his feet together, and afterwards proved in an eloquent discourse that the God of heaven and earth, who is no respecter of persons, cares no more for the left leg than for the right. The Envious man and his wife contended that there were not enough figures of speech in his discourse, that he had not made the mountains and hills skip about freely enough.

"He is dry and wants imagination," they said; "one
does not see the ocean fly before him, nor the stars fall, nor the sun melt like wax; he lacks the fine oriental style."

Zadig was content with having the style of a reasonable man. He was a favourite with all classes, not because he was in the right road, nor because he was reasonable, nor even because he was amiable, but because he was grand vizier.

He also happily put an end to the hot dispute between the white and the black magi. The white asserted that it was impious, when praying to God, to turn towards the east in winter; the black were confident that God abhorred the prayers of those who turned towards the west in summer. Zadig directed that men should turn to whatever quarter of the compass they pleased.

He likewise found out the secret of dispatching all his business, both public and private, in the morning, and he employed the rest of the day in providing Babylon with refined entertainments. He caused tragedies to be represented which moved the audience to tears, and comedies that made them laugh; a custom which had long passed out of fashion, and which he had the good taste to revive. He did not pretend to know more about their art than the actors themselves; he rewarded them with gifts and distinctions, and was not secretly jealous of their talents. In the evenings he diverted the king much, and the queen still more.

"A great minister!" said the king.
"A charming minister!" said the queen.

Both of them agreed that it would have been a thousand pities if Zadig had been hanged.

Never was statesman in office obliged to give so many audiences to the ladies. The greater number came to speak to him about no business in particular for the sake of having particular business with him. The wife of the
Envious man presented herself among the first; she swore by Mithras and the Zendavesta, and the holy fire, that she detested the conduct of her husband; then she told him in confidence that this husband of hers was jealous and treated her brutally, and gave him to understand that the gods punished him by refusing him the precious effects of that holy fire whereby alone man is made like the immortals. She ended by dropping her garter. Zadig picked it up with his customary politeness, but did not offer to fasten it again round the lady’s knee, and this little fault, if it can be considered such, was the cause of the most dreadful misfortunes. Zadig thought no more about the incident, but the Envious man’s wife thought about it a great deal.

Other ladies continued to present themselves every day. The secret annals of Babylon assert that he yielded to temptation on one occasion, but that he was astonished to find that he enjoyed his mistress without pleasure, and that his mind was distracted even in the midst of the tenderest embraces. The fair one to whom he gave, almost unconsciously, these tokens of his favour was a lady in waiting to Queen Astarte. This amorous daughter of Babylon consoled herself for his coldness by saying to herself:

“That man must have a prodigious amount of business in his head, since his thoughts are absorbed with it even when he is making love.”

Zadig happened at a moment when many people say nothing and others only utter terms of endearment, to suddenly exclaim: “The queen!” The fair Babylonian fancied that he had at last recovered his wits at a happy moment, and that he was addressing her as his queen. But Zadig, still absent-minded, proceeded to utter the name of Astarte. The lady, who in this agreeable situation interpreted everything in a flattering sense, imagined
that he meant to say: "You are more beautiful than Queen Astarte." She left the seraglio of Zadig with magnificent presents, and went to relate her adventure to the Envious woman, who was her intimate friend. The latter was cruelly piqued at the preference shown to the other.

"He did not even condescend," said she, "to replace this garter which I have here, and which I will never use again."

"Oh!" said her more fortunate friend, "you wear the same garters as the queen! Do you get them from the same maker?"

The Envious woman fell into a brown study, and made no reply, but went and consulted her husband, the Envious man.

Meanwhile Zadig became aware of his constant absence of mind whenever he gave an audience or administered justice; he did not know to what to attribute it; it was his only subject of annoyance.

He had a dream, in which he seemed to be lying at first on a heap of dry herbs, among which were some prickly ones which made him uncomfortable, and that afterwards he reposed luxuriously upon a bed of roses, out of which glided a snake that wounded him in the heart with its pointed and poisoned tongue.¹

"Alas!" said he, "I lay a long time on those dry and prickly herbs; I am now on the bed of roses; but who will be the serpent?"

¹ That venomous serpents sting with their tongues is of course a popular error.
CHAPTER VIII.

JEALOUSY.

ZADIG'S ill-luck arose out of his very happiness, and was mainly due to his merits. He had daily interviews with the king and with Astarte, his august consort. The charm of his conversation was doubled by that desire to please which is to the mind what ornaments are to personal beauty; his youth and graceful manners insensibly made an impression upon Astarte, of the strength of which she was not at first aware. Her passion grew up in the bosom of innocence. Astarte gave herself up without scruple and without fear to the pleasure of seeing and hearing a man who was so dear to her husband and to the State; she never ceased singing his praises to the king; she was perpetually speaking about him to her women, who even went beyond her in their commendations; everything served to fix more deeply in her heart the arrow of which she was unconscious. She bestowed presents upon Zadig, into which more love-making entered than she supposed; she meant to speak to him as a queen satisfied with his services, but the expressions she used were sometimes those of a woman of tender sensibility.

Astarte was much more beautiful than that Semira who had such a detestation of one-eyed men, or that other woman who had intended to cut off her husband's nose. Astarte's familiar manner, her soft speeches at which she began to blush, her eyes which, despite her efforts to turn them away, were ever fixed upon his own, kindled in Zadig's heart a fire which filled him with astonishment. He fought against his feelings; he called to his aid the philosophy which had never before failed him; he drew from it nothing
but a clearer perception of his folly, and received no relief. Duty, gratitude, and outraged majesty presented themselves to his view as so many avenging deities; he struggled, and he triumphed; but this victory, which had to be repeated every moment, cost him groans and tears. He no longer dared to address the queen with that delightful freedom which had had such charms for both of them; a cloud overshadowed his eyes; his conversation was constrained and abrupt; his eyes were downcast, and when, in spite of himself, they turned towards Astarte, they encountered those of the queen moistened with tears from which there shot forth arrows of flame. They seemed to say to each other:

“Our adoration is mutual, yet we are afraid to love; we are both consumed with a fire which we condemn.”

When Zadig left her side it was with bewilderment and despair, his heart oppressed with a burden which he was no longer able to support: in the violence of his agitation he let his friend Cador penetrate his secret, like a man who, after having endured the most excruciating pains, at last makes his malady known by a cry which a keener spasm than any before wrings from him, and by the cold sweat which pours over his forehead.

Cador addressed him as follows:

“I have already divined the feelings that you would fain hide from yourself; the passions have symptoms which cannot be misinterpreted. Judge, my dear Zadig, since I have been able to read your heart, whether the king is not likely to discover there a sentiment that may give him serious offence. He has no other fault but that of being the most jealous of men. You resist your passion with more vigour than the queen can contend against hers, because you are a philosopher, and because you are Zadig. Astarte is a woman; she lets her looks speak for her with all the more imprudence that she does not yet believe her-
self blameworthy. Assured of her innocence, she unfortunately neglects appearances which it is necessary to observe. I shall tremble for her so long as she has nothing wherein to reproach herself. If you came to a common understanding, you would be able to throw dust into all eyes; a growing passion, forcibly checked, gives evident tokens of its existence; but love when gratified can easily conceal itself."

Zadig shuddered at the suggestion of betraying the king, his benefactor; and he was never more faithful to his prince than when guilty of an involuntary crime against him. Meanwhile the queen pronounced the name of Zadig so often, she blushed so deeply as she uttered it, she was sometimes so animated, and at other times so confused when she addressed him in the king's presence, and she was seized with so profound a fit of abstraction whenever he went away, that the king began to be alarmed. He believed all that he saw, and imagined all that he did not see. He particularly remarked that his wife's slippers were blue, and that Zadig's slippers were blue; that his wife's ribbons were yellow, and that Zadig's cap was yellow. Terrible indications these to a prince of such delicate sensibility! Suspicion soon became certainty in his envenomed mind.

All the slaves of kings and queens are so many spies over their hearts. It was soon discovered that Astarte was tender and that Moabdar was jealous. The Envious man got his wife to send the king her garter, which was like the queen's; and, to make the matter worse, this garter was blue. The monarch thought of nothing now but how to take his revenge. One night he determined to poison the queen, and to have Zadig strangled as soon as it was light. The order was given to a merciless eunuch, the usual executioner of his vengeance. Now there happened to be at the time in the king's chamber a little dwarf, who
was dumb but not deaf. He was allowed to wander about when and where he pleased, and, like a domestic animal, was oftentimes a witness of what passed in the strictest privacy. This little mute was much attached to the queen and Zadig, and he heard with no less surprise than horror the order given for their death. But what could he do to prevent this frightful order, which was to be carried out within a few hours? He did not know how to write, but he had learned how to paint, and was particularly skilful in taking likenesses. He spent part of the night in portraying what he wished the queen to understand. His sketch represented in one corner of the picture the king in a furious rage, giving orders to his eunuch; a blue bowstring and a cup on a table, with garters and yellow ribbons; the queen in the middle of the picture, expiring in the arms of her women, and Zadig lying strangled at her feet. A rising sun was represented on the horizon to indicate that this horrible execution was to take place at the earliest glimpse of dawn. As soon as this task was finished he ran to one of Astarte's women, awoke her, and made her understand that she must take the picture that very instant to the queen.

In the middle of the night someone knocked at Zadig's door; he was roused from sleep, and a note from the queen was given him; he doubted whether or not it were a dream, and opened the letter with a trembling hand. What was his surprise, and who could express the consternation and despair with which he was overwhelmed, when he read these words: "Fly, this very moment, or you will be seized and put to death! Fly, Zadig; I command you in the name of our love and of my yellow ribbons. I have done nothing wrong, but I foresee that I am going to die like a criminal."

Zadig, who had scarcely strength enough to speak, sent for Cador, and then, without a word, gave him the letter.
Cador forced him to obey its injunction, and to set out immediately for Memphis.

"If you venture to go in search of the queen," said he, "you will only hasten her death; if you speak to the king, that step again will lead to her destruction. Her fate shall be my care; do you follow your own. I will spread the report that you have taken the road to India. I will soon come and find you out, when I will tell you all that shall have passed at Babylon."

Cador, without a moment's delay, had two of the swiftest dromedaries brought to a private postern of the palace, and made Zadig mount one of them; he had to be carried, for he was almost ready to expire. Only one servant accompanied him; and soon Cador, plunged in astonishment and grief, lost sight of his friend.

The illustrious fugitive, when he arrived at the brow of a hill which commanded a view of Babylon, turned his gaze towards the queen's palace, and fainted. He recovered his senses only to shed tears and to wish that he was dead. At last, after having occupied his thoughts awhile with the deplorable fate of the most amiable of women and the best of queens, he returned for a moment to himself, and exclaimed:

"What, then, is human life? O virtue! of what use hast thou been to me? Two women have basely deceived me, and the third, who is innocent and is more beautiful than the others, is about to die! All the good that I have done has always brought upon me a curse, and I have been raised to the height of grandeur only to fall down the most horrible precipice of misfortune. If I had been wicked, like so many others, I should be happy like them."

Overwhelmed with these gloomy reflections, his eyes shrouded with a veil of sorrow, the paleness of death on his countenance, and his soul sunk in the depths of a dark despair, he continued his journey towards Egypt.
CHAPTER IX.

THE BEATEN WOMAN.

ZADIG directed his course by the stars. The constellation of Orion, and the bright star of Sirius guided him towards the harbour of Canopus. He marvelled at those vast globes of light, which appear only like feeble sparks to our eyes, while the earth, which is in reality nothing more than an imperceptible point in nature, appears to our covetous eyes something grand and noble. He then pictured to himself men as they really are, insects devouring one another on a little atom of clay. This true image seemed to annihilate his misfortunes, by making him realize the insignificance of his own existence and that of Babylon itself. His soul launched forth into the infinitude of space, detached from the operation of the senses, and contemplated the unchangeable order of the universe. But when, afterwards returning to himself and once more looking into his own heart, he thought how Astarte was perhaps already dead for his sake, the universe vanished from his eyes, and he saw nothing in all nature save Astarte dying and Zadig miserable. As he gave himself up to this alternate flow of sublime philosophy and overwhelming grief, he approached the confines of Egypt; and his faithful servant was already in the first village, looking out for a lodging. Zadig was, meanwhile, walking towards the gardens which skirted the village, and saw, not far from the high road, a woman in great distress, who was calling out to heaven and earth for succour, and a man who was following her in a furious rage. He had already reached her before Zadig could do so, and the
woman was clasping his knees, while the man overwhelmed her with blows and reproaches. He judged from the Egyptian's violence, and from the repeated prayers for forgiveness which the lady uttered, that he was jealous and she unfaithful; but after he had closely regarded the woman, who was of enchanting beauty, and who, moreover, bore a little resemblance to the unhappy Astarte, he felt moved with compassion towards her, and with horror towards the Egyptian.

"Help me!"] she cried to Zadig in a voice choked with sobs; "deliver me out of the hands of this most barbarous man, and save my life!"

Hearing these cries, Zadig ran and threw himself between her and the barbarian; and having some knowledge of the Egyptian tongue, he addressed him in that language, and said:

"If you have any humanity, I entreat you to respect beauty and weakness. How can you ill-treat so cruelly such a masterpiece of nature as lies there at your feet, with no protection but her tears?"

"Ah, ha!" answered the man, more enraged than ever; "then you are another of her lovers! and on you too I must take revenge."

Saying these words, he left the lady, whom he had been holding by the hair with one hand, and, seizing his lance, made an attempt to run the stranger through with it. But he, being cool and composed, easily avoided the thrust of one who was beside himself with rage, and caught hold of the lance near the iron point with which it was armed. The one tried to draw it back, while the other tried to wrench it out of his hand, so that it was broken between the two. The Egyptian drew his sword, Zadig did the same, and they forthwith attacked each other; the former dealing a hundred blows in quick succession, the latter skilfully warding them off. The lady, seated on a piece of
turf, readjusted her head-dress, and looked calmly on. The Egyptian was stronger than his antagonist, Zadig was the more dexterous. The latter fought like a man whose arm was guided by his head, the former like a madman who in blind frenzy delivered random strokes. Zadig, attacking him in his turn, disarmed his adversary; and whilst the Egyptian, rendered still more furious, tried to throw himself upon him, the other seized him with a tight grip, and threw him on the ground; then, holding his sword to his breast, he offered to give him his life. The Egyptian, transported with rage, drew his dagger, and therewith wounded Zadig, at the very instant that the conqueror was granting him pardon. Provoked beyond endurance, Zadig plunged his sword into the other's heart. The Egyptian uttered a horrible yell, and died struggling violently. Then Zadig advanced towards the lady, and said in a respectful tone:

"He forced me to kill him; you I have avenged, and delivered out of the hands of the most outrageous man I ever saw. What will you have me do for you now, madam?"

"To die, scoundrel," she replied; "to die! You have killed my lover; I would that I were able to tear out your heart."

"Truly, madam, you had a strange sort of lover in him," returned Zadig; "he was beating you with all his might, and he wanted to have my life because you implored me to help you."

"I wish he was beating me still," answered the lady, giving vent to loud lamentation; "I well deserved it, and gave him good cause for jealousy. Would to heaven that he were beating me and that you were in his place!"

Zadig, more surprised and indignant than he had ever been before in his life, said to her:

"Madam, beautiful as you are, you deserve to have me
beat you in my turn for your unreasonable behaviour, but I shall not take the trouble.”

So saying, he remounted his camel, and advanced towards the village. He had hardly proceeded a few steps when he turned back at the clatter of four messengers riding post haste from Babylon. One of them, seeing the woman, exclaimed:

“That is the very person! She resembles the description that was given us.”

They did not encumber themselves with the dead body, but forthwith caught hold of the lady, who never ceased calling out to Zadig:

“Help me once more, generous stranger! I beg your pardon for having reproached you: help me, and I will be yours till death.”

Zadig no longer felt any desire to fight on her behalf.

“Apply to someone else,” he answered, “you will not entrap me again.”

Moreover he was wounded and bleeding; he had need of help himself; and the sight of the four Babylonians, probably sent by King Moabdar, filled him with uneasiness. So he hastened towards the village, unable to imagine why four messengers from Babylon should come to take this Egyptian woman, but still more astonished at the conduct of the lady.
CHAPTER X.

SLAVERY.

As he entered the Egyptian village, he found himself surrounded by the people. Everyone was crying out:

"This is the fellow who carried off the lovely Missouf, and who has just murdered Cletofs!"

"Gentlemen," said he, "may Heaven preserve me from carrying off your lovely Missouf! she is too capricious for me; and with regard to Cletofs, I have not murdered him, I only fought against him in self-defence. He wanted to kill me because I had asked him most humbly to pardon the lovely Missouf, whom he was beating unmercifully. I am a stranger come to seek a refuge in Egypt; and it is not likely that, in coming to claim your protection, I should begin by carrying off a woman and murdering a man."

The Egyptians were at that time just and humane. The people conducted Zadig to the court-house. They began by getting his wound dressed, and then they questioned him and his servant separately, in order to learn the truth. They came to the conclusion that Zadig was not a murderer; but he was found guilty of homicide, and the law condemned him to be a slave. His two camels were sold for the benefit of the village; all the gold that he carried was distributed among the inhabitants; his person was exposed for sale in the market-place, as well as that of his fellow-traveller. An Arab merchant, named Setoc, made the highest bid for him; but the serving-man, as more fit for hard work, was sold at a much higher price than the master. There was no comparison, it was thought, between the two men; so Zadig became a slave.
of inferior position to his own servant. They were fastened together with a chain, which was passed round their ankles, and in that state they followed the Arab merchant to his house. Zadig, on the way, tried to console his servant, and exhorted him to be patient; and, according to his custom, he made some general reflections on human life.

"I see," he said, "that my unhappy fate has spread its shadow over yours. Hitherto at every turn I have met with strange reverses. I have been condemned to pay a fine for having seen traces of a passing bitch; I thought I was going to be impaled on account of a griffin; I have been sent to execution because I made some complimentary verses on the king; I was on the point of being strangled because the queen had yellow ribbons; and here am I a slave along with you, because a brute of a man chose to beat his mistress. Come, let us not lose courage; all this perhaps will come to an end. It must needs be that Arab merchants should have slaves; and why should not I be one as well as another, since I also am a man? This merchant will not be unmerciful; he must treat his slaves well, if he wishes to make good use of them."

Thus he spoke, but in the depths of his heart he was thinking only of the fate of the queen of Babylon.

Setoc the merchant started, two days afterwards, for Arabia Deserta, with his slaves and his camels. His tribe dwelt near the desert of Horeb, the way to which was long and painful. Setoc, on the journey, took greater care of the servant than of the master, because the former could load the camels much better; and any little distinction that was made between them was in his favour.

A camel died two days before they expected to reach Horeb, and its load was distributed among the men, so that each back had its burden, Zadig's among the rest.
ZADIG, OR DESTINY.

Setoc laughed to see how all his slaves were bent almost double as they walked. Zadig took the liberty of explaining to him the reason, and gave him some instruction in the laws of equilibrium. The astonished merchant began to regard him with other eyes. Zadig seeing that he had excited his master's curiosity, increased it by teaching him many things that had a direct bearing on his business, such as the specific gravity of metals and commodities in equal bulk, the properties of several useful animals, and the way in which those might be rendered useful which were not naturally so, until Setoc thought him a sage. He now gave Zadig the preference over his comrade, whom he had before esteemed so highly. He treated him well, and had no reason to repent of it.

Having reached his tribe, the first thing Setoc did was to demand repayment of five hundred ounces of silver from a Jew to whom he had lent them in the presence of two witnesses; but these two witnesses were dead, and the Jew, assured that there was no proof of the debt, appropriated the merchant's money, and thanked God for having given him the opportunity of cheating an Arab. Setoc confided his trouble to Zadig, who was now his adviser in everything.

"In what place was it," asked Zadig, "that you lent these five hundred ounces to the infidel?"

"On a large stone near Mount Horeb," answered the merchant.

"What kind of man is your debtor?" said Zadig.

"A regular rogue," returned Setoc.

"But I mean, is he hasty or deliberate, cautious or imprudent?"

"Of all bad payers," said Setoc, "he is the hastiest man I ever knew."

"Well," pursued Zadig, "allow me to plead your cause before the judge."
In the end he summoned the Jew to take his trial, and thus addressed the judge:

"Pillar of the throne of equity, I come here to claim from this man, in my master's name, repayment of five hundred ounces of silver which he will not restore."

"Have you witnesses?" asked the judge.

"No, they are dead; but there still remains a large stone upon which the money was counted out; and, if it please your lordship to order someone to go and fetch the stone, I hope that it will bear witness to the truth. We will remain here, the Jew and I, until the stone arrives; I will send for it at my master Setoc's expense."

"I am quite willing that that should be done," answered the judge; and then he proceeded to dispatch other business.

At the end of the sitting he said to Zadig:

"Well, your stone is not arrived yet, is it?"

The Jew laughed, and answered:

"Your lordship would have to remain here till to-morrow before the stone could be brought; it is more than six miles away, and it would take fifteen men to move it."

"Now then," exclaimed Zadig, "did I not say well that the stone itself would bear witness? Since this man knows where it is, he acknowledges that upon it the money was counted." The Jew was abashed, and was soon obliged to confess the whole truth. The judge ordered him to be bound to the stone, without eating or drinking, until the five hundred ounces should be restored, and it was not long before they were paid.

After that Zadig the slave was held in high esteem throughout Arabia, and so was the stone.
CHAPTER XI.

THE FUNERAL PILE.

Setoc was so enchanted with his slave that he made him his intimate friend. He could no more dispense with him than the king of Babylon had done; and Zadig was glad that Setoc had no wife. He found in his master an excellent disposition, with much integrity and good sense; but he was sorry to see that he worshipped the host of heaven (that is to say, the sun, moon, and stars), according to the ancient custom of Arabia. He spoke to him sometimes on the subject with judicious caution. At last he told him that they were material bodies like other things, which were no more worthy of his adoration than a tree or a rock.

"But," said Setoc, "they are immortal beings, from whom we derive all the benefits we enjoy; they animate nature, and regulate the seasons; besides, they are so far from us that one cannot help worshipping them."

"You receive more advantages," answered Zadig, "from the waters of the Red Sea, which bear your merchandise to India. Why may it not be as ancient as the stars? And if you adore what is far away from you, you ought to adore the land of the Gargarides, which lies at the very end of the world."

"No," said Setoc; "the stars are so bright that I cannot refrain from worshipping them."

When the evening was come, Zadig lighted a great number of candles in the tent where he was to sup with Setoc; and, as soon as his patron appeared, he threw himself on his knees before those wax lights, saying:
"Eternal and brilliant luminaries, be ever propitious to me!"

Having offered this prayer, he sat down to table without paying any attention to Setoc.

"What is that you are doing?" asked Setoc in astonishment.

"I am doing what you do," answered Zadig; "I adore these candles, and neglect their master and mine."

Setoc understood the profound meaning of this parable. The wisdom of his slave entered into his soul; he no longer lavished his incense upon created things, but worshipped the Eternal Being who had made them.

There prevailed at that time in Arabia a frightful custom, which came originally from Scythia, and which, having established itself in India through the influence of the Brahmans, threatened to invade all the East. When a married man died, and his favourite wife wished to obtain a reputation for sanctity, she used to burn herself in public on her husband's corpse. A solemn festival was held on such occasions, called the Funeral Pile of Widowhood, and that tribe in which there had been the greatest number of women consumed in this way was held in the highest honour. An Arab of Setoc's tribe having died, his widow, named Almona, who was very devout, made known the day and hour when she would cast herself into the fire to the sound of drums and trumpets. Zadig showed Setoc how contrary this horrible custom was to the interests of the human race, for young widows were every day allowed to burn themselves who might have presented children to the State, or at least have brought up those they already had; and he made him agree that so barbarous an institution ought, if possible, to be abolished.

Setoc replied: "It is more than a thousand years since the women acquired the right of burning themselves. Which of us will dare to change a law which time has con-
secrated? Is there anything more venerable than an ancient abuse?"

"Reason is more ancient," rejoined Zadig. "Do you speak to the chiefs of the tribes, and I will go and find the young widow."

He obtained admission to her presence; and after having insinuated himself into her good graces by commending her beauty, and after having said what a pity it was to commit such charms to the flames, he praised her again on the score of her constancy and courage.

"You must have loved your husband wonderfully?" said he.

"I? Oh no, not at all," answered the Arab lady. "I could not bear him, he was so brutal and jealous; but I am firmly resolved to throw myself on his funeral pile."

"Apparently," said Zadig, "there must be some very delicious pleasure in being burned alive."

"Ah! it makes nature shudder to think of it," said the lady; "but I must e'en put up with it. I am a pious person, and I should lose my reputation and be mocked by everybody if I did not burn myself."

Zadig, having brought her to admit that she was burning herself for the sake of other people and out of vanity, spoke to her for a long time in a manner calculated to make her a little in love with life, and even managed to inspire her with some kindly feeling towards himself.

"What would you do now," said he, "if you were not moved by vanity to burn yourself?"

"Alas!" said the lady, "I think that I should ask you to marry me."

Zadig was too much engrossed with thoughts of Astarte to take any notice of this declaration; but he instantly went to the chiefs of the different tribes, told them what had passed, and advised them to make a law by which no widow should be allowed to burn herself until
after she had had a private interview with a young man for the space of a whole hour. Since that time no lady has burned herself in Arabia. To Zadig alone was the credit due for having abolished in one day so cruel a custom, and one that had lasted so many ages. Thus he became the benefactor of all Arabia.

CHAPTER XII.

THE SUPPER.

SETOC, who could not part from the man in whom wisdom dwelt, brought him to the great fair of Bassora, whither the wealthiest merchants of the habitable globe were wont to resort. It was no little consolation to Zadig to see so many men of different countries assembled in the same place. It seemed to him that the universe was one large family which gathered together at Bassora. The second day after their arrival Zadig found himself at table with an Egyptian, an Indian from the banks of the Ganges, an inhabitant of China, a Greek, a Celt, and several other foreigners, who, in their frequent voyages to the Persian Gulf, had learned enough Arabic to make themselves understood. The Egyptian appeared exceedingly angry. "What an abominable country Bassora is!" said he; "I cannot get a loan here of a thousand ounces of gold on the best security in the world."

"How is that?" said Setoc; "on what security was that sum refused you?"

"On the body of my aunt," answered the Egyptian; "she was the worthiest woman in Egypt. She always accompanied me on my journeys, and died on the way hither. I have turned her into one of the finest mummies
to be had; and in my own country I could get whatever I
wanted by giving her in pledge. It is very strange that
no one here will lend me even a thousand ounces of gold
on such sound security."

In spite of his indignation, he was just on the point of
devouring a capital boiled fowl, when the Indian, taking
him by the hand, exclaimed in a doleful voice, "Ah! what
are you about to do?"

"To eat this fowl," said the man with the mummy.

"Beware of what you are doing," said the man from
the Ganges; "it may be that the soul of the departed has
passed into the body of that fowl, and you would not wish
to run the risk of eating up your aunt. To cook fowls is
plainly an outrage upon nature."

"What do you mean with your nonsense about nature
and fowls?" returned the wrathful Egyptian. "We
worship an ox, and yet eat beef for all that."

"You worship an ox! Is it possible?" said the man
from the Ganges.

"There is nothing more certain," replied the other;
"we have done so for a hundred and thirty-five thousand
years, and no one among us has any fault to find
with it."

"Ah! A hundred and thirty-five thousand years!" said the Indian. "There must be a little exaggeration
there; India has only been inhabited eighty thousand
years, and we are undoubtedly more ancient than you are;
and Brahma had forbidden us to eat oxen before you ever
thought of putting them on your altars and on your spits."

"An odd kind of animal, this Brahma of yours, to be
compared with Aapis!" said the Egyptian. "What fine
things now has your Brahma ever done?"

"It was he," the Brahman answered, "who taught men
to read and write; and to whom all the world owes the
game of chess."
"You are wrong," said a Chaldean who was sitting near him; "it is to the fish Oannes that we owe such great benefits; and it is right to render our homage to him alone. Anybody will tell you that he was a divine being, that he had a golden tail and a handsome human head, and that he used to leave the water to come and preach on land for three hours every day. He had sundry children who were all kings, as everyone knows. I have his likeness at home, to which I pay all due reverence. We may eat as much beef as we please; but there is no doubt that it is a very great sin to cook fish. Moreover, you are, both of you, of too mean and too modern an origin to argue with me about anything. The Egyptian nation counts only one hundred and thirty-five thousand years, and the Indians can boast of no more than eighty thousand, while we have almanacs that go back four thousand centuries. Believe me, renounce your follies, and I will give each of you a beautiful likeness of Oannes."

The Chinaman here put in his word, and said:

"I have a strong respect for the Egyptians, the Chaldeans, the Greeks, the Celts, Brahma, the ox Apis, and the fine fish Oannes, but it may be that Li or Tien, by whichever name one may choose to call him, is well worth any number of oxen and fishes. I will say nothing about my country; it is as large as the land of Egypt, Chaldea, and India all put together. I will enter into no dispute touching antiquity, because it is enough to be happy, and it is a very little matter to be ancient; but if there were any need to speak about almanacs, I could tell you that all Asia consults ours, and that we had very good ones before anything at all was known of arithmetic in Chaldea."

"You are a set of ignoramuses, all of you!" cried the Chinese words signifying respectively reason and heaven.
Greek; "is it possible that you do not know that Chaos is the father of all things, and that form and matter have brought the world into the state in which it is?"

This Greek spoke for a long time; but he was at last interrupted by the Celt, who, having drunk deeply whilst the others were disputing, now thought himself wiser than any of them, and affirmed with an oath that there was nothing worth the trouble of talking about except Teutates and the mistletoe that grows on an oak; that, as for himself, he always had some mistletoe in his pocket; that the Scythians, his forefathers, were the only honest people that had ever been in the world; that they had indeed sometimes eaten men, but that no one ought to be prevented by that from having a profound respect for his nation; and finally, that if anyone spoke evil of Teutates, he would teach him how to behave.

Thereupon the quarrel waxed hot, and Setoc saw that in another moment there would be bloodshed at the table, when Zadig, who had kept silence during the whole dispute, at last rose. He addressed himself first to the Celt as the most violent of them all; he told him that he was in the right, and asked him for a piece of mistletoe; he commended the Greek for his eloquence, and soothed the general irritation. He said very little to the Chinaman, because he had been the most reasonable of them all. Then he said to the whole party:

"My friends, you were going to quarrel for nothing, for you are all of the same opinion."

When they heard him say that, they all loudly protested.

"Is it not true," he said to the Celt, "that you do not worship this mistletoe, but Him who made the mistletoe and the oak?"

"Assuredly," answered the Celt.

"And you, my Egyptian friend, revere, as it would seem.
in a certain ox Him who has given you oxen, is it not so?"

"Yes," said the Egyptian.

"The fish Oannes," continued Zadig, "must give place to Him who made the sea and the fishes."

"Granted," said the Chaldean.

"The Indian," added Zadig, "and the Chinaman recognise, like you, a first principle; I did not understand very well the admirable remarks made by the Greek, but I am sure that he also admits the existence of a Supreme Being, upon whom form and matter depend."

The Greek who was so much admired said that Zadig had seized his meaning very well.

"You are all then of the same opinion," replied Zadig, "and there is nothing left to quarrel over;" at which all the company embraced him.

Setoc, after having sold his merchandise at a high price, brought his friend Zadig back with him to his tribe. On their arrival Zadig learned that he had been tried in his absence, and that he was going to be burned at a slow fire.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE ASSIGNATION.

DURING his journey to Bassora, the priests of the stars had determined to punish Zadig. The precious stones and ornaments of the young widows whom they sent to the funeral pile were their acknowledged perquisite; it was in truth the least they could do to burn Zadig for the ill turn he had done them. Accordingly they accused him of holding erroneous views about the host of heaven; they
gave testimony against him on oath that they had heard him say that the stars did not set in the sea. This frightful blasphemy made the judges shudder; they were ready to rend their garments when they heard those impious words; and they would have done so, without a doubt, if Zadig had had the means wherewith to pay them compensation; but dreadfully shocked as they were, they contented themselves with condemning him to be burned at a slow fire.

Setoc, in despair, exerted his influence in vain to save his friend; he was soon obliged to hold his peace. The young widow Almona, who had acquired a strong appetite for life, thanks to Zadig, resolved to rescue him from the stake, the misuse of which he had taught her to recognise. She turned her scheme over and over in her head, without speaking of it to anyone. Zadig was to be executed the next day, she had only that night to save him in. This is how she set about the business, like a charitable and discreet woman. She anointed herself with perfumes; she enhanced her charms by the richest and most seductive attire, and went to ask the chief priest of the stars for a private audience. When she was ushered into the presence of that venerable old man, she addressed him in these terms:

"Eldest son of the Great Bear, brother of the Bull, and cousin of the Great Dog" (such were the pontiff's titles), "I come to confide to you my scruples. I greatly fear that I have committed an enormous sin in not burning myself on my dear husband's funeral pyre. In truth, what had I worth preserving? A body liable to decay, and which is already quite withered." Saying these words, she drew up her long silk sleeves, and displayed her bare arms, of admirable form and dazzling whiteness. "You see," said she, "how little it is worth."

The pontiff thought in his heart that it was worth a great deal. His eyes said so, and his mouth confirmed it;
he swore that he had never in his life seen such beautiful arms.

"Alas!" said the widow, "my arms may be a little less deformed than the rest; but you will admit that my neck was unworthy of any consideration," and she let him see the most charming bosom that nature had ever formed. A rosebud on an apple of ivory would have appeared beside it nothing better than madder upon box-wood, and lambs just come up from the washing would have seemed brown and sallow. This neck; her large black eyes, in which a tender fire glowed softly with languishing lustre; her cheeks, enlivened with the loveliest crimson mingled with the whiteness of the purest milk; her nose, which was not at all like the tower of Mount Lebanon; her lips, which were like two settings of coral enclosing the most beautiful pearls in the Arabian sea; all these charms conspired to make the old man fancy himself a youth of twenty summers. With stammering tongue he made a tender declaration; and Almona, seeing how he was smitten, craved pardon for Zadig.

"Alas!" said he, "my lovely lady, though I might grant you his pardon, my indulgence would be of no use, as the order would have to be signed by three others of my colleagues."

"Sign it all the same," said Almona.

"Willingly," said the priest, "on condition that your favours shall be the price of my compliance."

"You do me too much honour," said Almona; "only be pleased to come to my chamber after sunset, when the bright star Sheat shall rise above the horizon; you will find me on a rose-coloured sofa, and you shall deal with your servant as you may be able."

Then she went away, carrying with her the signature, and left the old man full of amorous passion and of diffi-

lence as to his powers. He employed the rest of the day
in bathing; he drank a liquid compounded of the cinna-
mon of Ceylon, and the precious spices of Tidor and
Ternat, and waited with impatience for the star Sheat to
appear.

Meanwhile the fair Almona went in search of the
second pontiff, who assured her that the sun, the moon,
and all the lights of heaven were nothing but faint marsh
fires in comparison with her charms. She asked of him
the same favour, and he offered to grant it on the same
terms. She allowed her scruples to be overcome, and
made an appointment with the second pontiff for the
rising of the star Algenib. Thence she proceeded to the
houses of the third and fourth priests, getting from each
his signature, and making one star after another the signal
for a secret assignation. Then she sent letters to the
judges, requesting them to come and see her on a matter
of importance. When they appeared, she showed them
the four names, and told them at what price the priests
had sold Zadig's pardon. Each of the latter arrived at his
appointed hour, and was greatly astonished to find his
colleagues there, and still more at seeing the judges, be-
fore whom they were exposed to open shame. Thus Zadig
was saved, and Setoc was so delighted with Almona's
cleverness, that he made her his wife.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE DANCE.

SETOC was engaged to go on matters of business to the
island of Serendib; ¹ but the first month of marriage,

¹ The island of Ceylon is called by this name in the "Arabian
Nights."
which is, as every one knows, the moon of honey, permitted him neither to quit his wife, nor even to imagine that he could ever quit her; so he requested his friend Zadig to make the voyage on his behalf.

"Alas!" said Zadig, "must I put a yet wider distance between the beautiful Astarte and myself? But I must oblige my benefactors." He spoke, he wept, and he set forth on his journey.

He was not long in the island of Serendib before he began to be regarded as an extraordinary man. He became umpire in all disputes between the merchants, the friend of the wise, and the trusted counsellor of that small number of persons who are willing to take advice. The king wished to see and hear him. He soon recognised all Zadig's worth, placed reliance on his wisdom, and made him his friend. The king's intimacy and esteem made Zadig tremble. Night and day he was pierced with anguish at the misfortune which Moabdor's kindness had brought upon him.

"The king is pleased with me," said he; "how shall I escape ruin?"

He could not however decline his majesty's attentions; for it must be confessed that Nabussan, King of Serendib, the son of Nussanab, the son of Nabassan, the son of Sanbusna, was one of the best princes in Asia; when anyone spoke to him, it was difficult not to love him.

This good monarch was continually praised, deceived, and robbed; officials vied with each other in plundering his treasury. The receiver-general of the island of Serendib always set the example, and was faithfully followed by the others. The king knew it, and had time after time changed his treasurer; but he had not been able to change the time-honoured fashion of dividing the royal revenue into two unequal parts, the smaller of which always fell to His Majesty, and the larger to the administrative staff.
King Nabussan confided his difficulty to the wise Zadig:
“You who know so many fine things,” said he, “can you think of no method of enabling me to find a treasurer who will not rob me?”

“Assuredly,” answered Zadig; “I know an infallible way of giving you a man who has clean hands.”

The king was charmed, and, embracing him, asked how he was to proceed.

“All you will have to do,” said Zadig, “is to cause all who shall present themselves for the dignity of treasurer to dance, and he who dances most lightly will be infallibly the most honest man.”

“You are joking,” said the king; “truly a droll way of choosing a receiver of my revenues! What! Do you mean to say that the one who cuts the highest capers will prove the most honest and capable financier?”

“I will not answer for his capability,” returned Zadig; “but I assure you that he will undoubtedly be the most honest.”

Zadig spoke with so much confidence that the king thought he had some supernatural secret for recognising financiers.

“I am not fond of the supernatural,” said Zadig; “people and books that deal in prodigies have always been distasteful to me; if Your Majesty will allow me to make the trial I propose, you will be well enough convinced that my secret is the easiest and most simple thing in the world.”

Nabussan, King of Serendib, was far more astonished at hearing that this secret was a simple matter, than if it had been presented to him as a miracle.

“Well then,” said the king, “do as you shall think proper.”

“Give me a free hand,” said Zadig, “and you will gain by this experiment more than you think.”

The same day he issued a public notice that all who
aspired to the post of receiver-in-chief of the revenues of His gracious Majesty Nabussan, son of Nussanab, were to present themselves in garments of light silk, on the first day of the month of the Crocodile, in the king's antechamber. They duly put in an appearance to the number of sixty-four. Fiddlers were posted in an adjoining hall; all was ready for dancing; but the door of the hall was fastened, and it was necessary, in order to enter it, to pass along a little gallery which was pretty dark. An usher was sent to conduct each candidate, one after another, along this passage, in which he was left alone for a few minutes. The king, prompted by Zadig, had spread out all his treasures in this gallery. When all the competitors had reached the hall, his majesty gave orders that they should begin to dance. Never did men dance more heavily and with less grace; they all kept their heads down, their backs bent, and their hands glued to their sides.

"What rogues!" said Zadig, under his breath.

There was only one among them who stepped out freely, with head erect, a steady eye, and outstretched arms, body straight, and legs firm.

"Ah! the honest fellow! the worthy man!" said Zadig.

The king embraced this good dancer, and declared him treasurer; whereas all the others were punished with a fine, and that most justly, for each one of them, during the time that he was in the gallery, had filled his pockets so that he could hardly walk. The king was grieved for the honour of human nature that out of those sixty-four dancers there should have been sixty-three thieves. The dark gallery was henceforth called the Corridor of Temptation. In Persia those sixty-three gentlemen would have been impaled; in other countries a court of justice would have been held which would have consumed in legal expenses three times as much as had been stolen; while in yet
another kingdom they would have procured a complete acquittal for themselves, and brought the nimble dancer to disgrace; at Serendib they were only condemned to increase the public funds, for Nabussan was very indulgent.

He was also very grateful; he gave to Zadig a sum of money greater than any treasurer had stolen from the king his master. Zadig availed himself of it to send expresses to Babylon, who were to bring him information of Astarte's fate. His voice trembled while giving this order, his blood flowed back towards his heart, a mist covered his eyes, and his soul was ready to take its flight. The messenger departed: Zadig saw him embark. He returned to the king, seeing no one, fancying himself in his own chamber, and pronouncing the name of "love."

"Ah! love," said the king; "that is precisely what is the matter with me; you have rightly divined where my trouble lies. What a great man you are! I hope you will teach me how to recognise a faithful and devoted wife, as you have enabled me to find a disinterested treasurer."

Zadig, having recovered his wits, promised to serve him in love as well as in finance, although the undertaking seemed still more difficult.

CHAPTER XV.

BLUE EYES.

"My body and my heart——" said the king to Zadig.

At these words the Babylonian could not refrain from interrupting His Majesty.

"How glad I am," said he, "that you did not say my heart and soul! For one hears nothing else but those words in every conversation at Babylon, and one sees
nothing but books devoted to discussions on the heart and soul, written by people who have neither one nor the other. But please, sire, proceed."

Nabussan then continued:

"My body and my heart are predisposed by destiny to love; the former of these two powers has every reason to be satisfied. I have here a hundred women at my disposal, all beautiful, buxom, and obliging, even voluptuously inclined, or pretending to be so when with me. My heart is not nearly so well off. I have found only too often that they lavish all their caresses on the King of Serendib, and care very little for Nabussan. It is not that I think my women unfaithful; but I would fain find a soul to be my own; I would resign for such a treasure the hundred beauties of whose charms I am master. See if, out of these hundred ladies of my harem, you can find me a single one by whom I may feel sure that I am loved?"

Zadig answered him as he had done on the subject of the financiers:

"Sire, leave the matter to me; but allow me first to dispose of what you displayed in the Corridor of Temptation; I will render you a good account of all, and you shall lose nothing by it."

The king gave him unfettered discretion. He chose in Serendib thirty-three little hunchbacks, the ugliest he could find, thirty-three of the most handsome pages, and thirty-three of the most eloquent and most robust bonzes. He left them all at liberty to enter the ladies' private chambers. Each little hunchback had four thousand gold pieces to give them, and the very first day all the hunchbacks were happy. The pages, who had nothing to give away but themselves, failed to achieve a triumph till the end of two or three days. The bonzes had a little more difficulty; but at last thirty-three fair devotees surrendered to them. The king, through the shutter-blinds which admitted a
view into each chamber, witnessed all these experiments, and was not a little astonished. Of his hundred women, ninety-nine had succumbed before his eyes. There yet remained one who was quite young and freshly imported, whom His Majesty had never admitted to his arms. One, two, three hunchbacks were successively told off to make her offers which rose to the sum of twenty thousand pieces; she was incorruptible, and could not help laughing at the idea which had entered into these hunchbacks' heads that money could render them less deformed. The two handsomest of the pages were presented to her; she said that she thought the king still more handsome. The most eloquent and afterwards the most intrepid of the bonzes were let loose upon her; she found the first an idle babbler, and would not deign even to form an opinion on the merits of the second.

"The heart is everything," said she; "I will never yield either to the gold of a hunchback, or the personal attractions of a young man, or the cunning enticements of a bonze. I will love no one but Nabussan, son of Nussanab, and will wait till he condescends to love me."

The king was transported with joy, astonishment, and tenderness. He took back all the money that had won the hunchbacks their success, and made a present of it to the fair Falide (for such was the young lady's name). He gave her his heart, and she well deserved it. Never was the flower of youth so brilliant, never were the charms of beauty so enchanting. Historical veracity will not allow me to conceal the fact that she curtsied awkwardly, but she danced like a fairy, sang like a siren, and spoke like one of the graces; she was full of accomplishments and virtues.

Nabussan, loved as he was by her, adored her in his turn. But she had blue eyes, and this was the source of the greatest misfortunes. There was an ancient law which
forbade the kings to love one of those women whom the Greeks in later days called βοῦτις. The chief of the bonzes had established this law more than five thousand years before that time, with a view to appropriating the mistress of the first king of the island of Serendib, whom the chief bonze had induced to pass an anathema upon blue eyes as a fundamental article of the constitution. All orders of society came to remonstrate with Nabussan. They publicly declared that the last days of the kingdom had arrived, that iniquity had reached its height, and that all nature was threatened with some untoward accident; that, in a word, Nabussan, son of Nussanab, was in love with two big blue eyes. The hunchbacks, financiers, bonzes, and brunettes, filled the palace with complaints.

The wild tribes that inhabit the north of Serendib took advantage of the general discontent to make an incursion into the territory of the good Nabussan. He demanded subsidies from his subjects; the bonzes, who owned half the revenues of the state, contented themselves with raising their hands to heaven, and refused to put them into their coffers to help the king. They offered up grand prayers to fine music, and left the State a prey to the barbarians.

"O my dear Zadig! Will you rescue me again from this horrible embarrassment?" dolefully exclaimed Nabussan.

"Very willingly," answered Zadig. "You shall have as much money from the bonzes as you wish. Abandon to the enemy the lands on which their mansions are built, and only defend your own."

Nabussan did not fail to follow this advice. The bonzes thereupon came and threw themselves at the king's feet, imploring his assistance. The king answered them in

1 Our author evidently meant γλαυκώτις, "blue-eyed," not βοῦτις, "ox-eyed."
beautiful strains of music, the words to which they were an accompaniment being prayers to Heaven for the preservation of their lands. The bonzes, at last, gave some money, and the king brought the war to a prosperous conclusion. Thus Zadig, by his wise and successful counsel, and by his important services, drew upon himself the irreconcilable hatred of the most powerful men in the State; the bonzes and the brunettes took an oath to ruin him; the financiers and the hunchbacks did not spare him, but did all they could to make him suspected by the excellent Nabussan. "Good offices remain in the antechamber when suspicions enter the closet," as Zoroaster has wisely observed. Everyday there were fresh accusations; if the first was repelled, the second might graze the skin, the third wound, and the fourth be fatal.

Zadig, after having advantageously transacted the business of his friend Setoc and sent him his money, thought of nothing now in his alarm but of leaving the island, and resolved to go himself in search of tidings of Astarte.

"For," said he, "if I stay in Serendib, the bonzes will cause me to be impaled. . . . But where can I go? In Egypt I shall be a slave; burnt, in all likelihood, in Arabia; strangled at Babylon. Still I must know what has become of Astarte. . . . Let us be gone, and see for what my sad destiny reserves me."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE BRIGAND.

On arriving at the frontier which separates Arabia Petraea from Syria, as he was passing near a pretty strong castle, a party of armed Arabs sallied forth. He
saw himself surrounded, and the men cried out: "All that you have belongs to us, and your body belongs to our master."

Zadig, by way of answer, drew his sword; his servant, who had plenty of courage, did the same. They routed and slew the Arabs who first laid hands on them; their assailants now numbered twice as many as before, but they were not daunted, and resolved to die fighting. Then were seen two men defending themselves against a multitude. Such a conflict could not last long. The master of the castle, whose name was Arbogad, having seen from a window the prodigies of valour performed by Zadig, conceived such an admiration for him that he hastily descended, and came in person to disperse his men and deliver the two travellers.

"All that passes over my lands is my property," said he, "as well as whatever I find on the lands of other people; but you seem to me such a brave man, that I except you from the general rule."

He made Zadig enter his castle, and bade his people treat him well. In the evening Arbogad desired Zadig to sup with him.

Now the lord of the castle was one of those Arabs who are known as robbers; but he sometimes did a good action among a multitude of bad ones. He robbed with fierce rapacity, and gave away freely; he was intrepid in battle, though gentle enough in society; intemperate at table, merry in his cups, and above all, full of frankness. Zadig pleased him greatly, and his animated conversation prolonged the repast. At length Arbogad said to him:

"I advise you to enrol yourself under me; you cannot do better; this calling of mine is not a bad one, and you may one day become what I now am."

"May I ask you," said Zadig, "how long you have practised this noble profession?"
"From my tenderest youth," replied the lord of the castle. "I was the servant of an Arab who was a pretty sharp fellow; I felt my position intolerable; it drove me to despair to see that in all the earth, which belongs equally to all mankind, fortune had reserved no portion for me. I confided my trouble to an old Arab, who said to me: 'My son, do not despair; there was once upon a time a grain of sand which bewailed its fate in being a mere unheeded atom in the desert; but at the end of a few years it became a diamond, and it is now the most beautiful ornament in the King of India's crown.' This story made a great impression on me. I was the grain of sand, and I determined to become a diamond. I began by stealing two horses; I then formed a gang, and put myself in a position to rob small caravans. Thus by degrees I abolished the disproportion which existed at first between myself and other men; I had my share in the good things of this world, and was even recompensed with usury. I was held in high esteem, became a brigand chief, and obtained this castle by violence. The satrap of Syria wished to dispossess me, but I was already too rich to have anything to dread; I gave some money to the satrap, and by this means retained the castle and increased my domains. He even named me treasurer of the tribute which Arabia Petraea paid to the king of kings. I fulfilled my duty well, so far as receiving went, but utterly ignored that of payment. The Grand Exeterham of Babylon sent hither in the name of King Moabdar a petty satrap, intending to have me strangled. This man arrived with his orders; I was informed of all, and caused to be strangled in his presence the four persons he had brought with him to apply the bowstring to my neck; after which I asked him what his commission to strangle me might be worth to him. He answered me that his fees might amount to three hundred pieces of gold. I made it clear to him that
there was more to be gained with me. I gave him a subordinate post among my brigands, and now he is one of my smartest and wealthiest officers. Take my word for it, you will succeed as well as he. Never has there been a better season for pillage, since Moabdar is slain and all is in confusion at Babylon."

"Moabdar slain!" said Zadig; "and what has become of Queen Astarte?"

"I know nothing about her," replied Arbogad; "all I know is that Moabdar became mad and was killed, that Babylon is one vast slaughter-house, that all the empire is laid waste, that there are fine blows to be struck yet, and that I myself have done wonders in that way."

"But the queen?" said Zadig; "pray tell me, know you nothing of the fate of the queen?"

"I heard something about a prince of Hyrcania," replied he; "she is probably among his concubines, if she has not been killed in the insurrection; but I have more curiosity in the matter of plunder than of news. I have taken a good many women in my raids, but I keep none of them; I sell them at a high price if they are handsome, without inquiring who or what they are, for my customers pay nothing for rank; a queen who was ugly would find no purchaser. Maybe I have sold Queen Astarte, maybe she is dead; it matters very little to me, and I do not think you need be more concerned about her than I am."

As he spoke thus he went on drinking lustily, and mixed up all his ideas so confusedly, that Zadig could extract no information out of him.

He remained confounded, overwhelmed, unable to stir. Arbogad continued to drink, told stories, constantly repeated that he was the happiest of all men, and exhorted Zadig to render himself as happy as he was. At last, becoming more and more drowsy with the fumes of wine, he
ZADIG, OR DESTINY. Zadig passed the
had supplied their houses with agitation.
went one day into town to be beg become mad! the king
Babylon, I learned that lamenting him! The empire is
peared. I hastened to a brigand is happy! Alas for fate
had never seen; thereof is happy, and the most amiable
Desterham, who, for ever created has perhaps perished in a
ing his house in, or is living in a condition worse than
manner. I flew! what has become of you?"
of the dresser today he questioned all whom he met in the
she was in prieverybody was busy, and no one answered him:
had taken flights had been made during the night, and they
nothing for ing the spoils. All that he could obtain in the
of the lord that prevailed was permission to depart, of which
asked himself without delay, plunged deeper than ever
in painful thoughts.

Zadig walked on restless and agitated, his mind engrossed
with the hapless Astarte, with the king of Babylon, with
his faithful Cador, with the happy brigand Arbojad, and
that capricious woman whom the Babylonians had carried
off on the confines of Egypt, in short, with all the dis-
appointments and misfortunes that he had experienced.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE FISHERMAN.

A t a distance of several leagues from Arbojad's castle,
he found himself on the brink of a little river, still
deploving his destiny, and regarding himself as the very
type of misery. There he saw a fisherman lying on the
bank, hardly holding in his feeble hand the net which he
seemed ready to regained with me. And lifting his eyes towards heaven.

"I am certainly the most officers. Talk wretched of all men," said the fisherman. "I was, as every famous seller of cream cheeses in Babylon, and I have to a man could be ruin. I had the prettiest wife, and she has betrayed me. What has all that was left me, and I have seen destroyed. Having taken refuge in a hut, I have no more resource but fishing, and I cannot catch a single fish yet! I will cast you no more into the water but that I must cast therein."

Saying these words, he rose and advanced in of a man about to throw himself headlong and to his life.

"What is this?" said Zadig to himself; "there are men then as miserable as I!"

Eagerness to save the fisherman's life rose as promptly as this reflection. He ran towards him, stopped, and questioned him with an air of concern and encouragement. It is said that we are less miserable when we are not alone in our misery. According to Zoroaster this is due, not to malice, but to necessity; we then feel ourselves drawn towards a victim of misfortune as a fellow-sufferer. The joy of a prosperous man would seem to us an insult; but two wretched men are like two weak trees, which, leaning together, mutually strengthen each other against the tempest.

"Why do you give way to your misfortunes?" said Zadig to the fisherman.

"Because," answered he, "I see no way out of them. I was held in the highest estimation in the village of Derlback, near Babylon, and I made, with my wife's help, the best cream cheeses in the empire. Queen Astarte and the famous minister Zadig were passionately fond of them. I
had supplied their houses with six hundred cheeses, and went one day into town to be paid, when, on my arrival at Babylon, I learned that the queen and Zadig had disappeared. I hastened to the house of the lord Zadig, whom I had never seen; there I found the police officers of the Grand Desterham, who, furnished with a royal warrant, were sacking his house in a perfectly straightforward and orderly manner. I flew to the queen’s kitchens; some of the lords of the dresser told me that she was dead; others said that she was in prison; while others again declared that she had taken flight; but all assured me that I should be paid nothing for my cheeses. I went with my wife to the house of the lord Orcan, who was one of my customers, and we asked him to protect us in our distress. He granted his protection to my wife, and refused it to me. She was whiter than those cream cheeses with which my troubles began, and the gleam of Tyrian purple was not more brilliant than the carnation which animated that whiteness. It was this which made the lord Orcan keep her and drive me away from his house. I wrote to my dear wife the letter of a desperate man. She said to the messenger who brought it:

"Oh! ah! yes! I know something of the man who writes me this letter. I have heard people speak of him; let him say he makes capital cream cheeses; let him send me the price, and see that he is paid for them."

In my unhappy state I determined to have recourse to justice. I had six ounces of gold left; I had to give two ounces to the lawyer whom I consulted; two to the attorney who undertook my case, and two to the secretary of the first judge. When all this was done, my suit was not commenced, and I had already spent more money than my cheeses and my wife were worth. I returned to my age, with the intention of selling my house in order to cover my wife.
"My house was well worth sixty ounces of gold, but people saw that I was poor and forced to sell. The first man to whom I applied offered me thirty ounces for it, the second twenty, and the third ten. I was ready at last to take anything, so blinded was I, when a prince of Hyrcania came to Babylon, and ravaged all the country on his way. My house was first sacked and then burned.

"Having thus lost my money, my wife, and my house, I retired to this part of the country where you see me. I tried to support myself by fishing, but the fishes mock me as much as men do; I take nothing, I am dying of hunger, and had it not been for you, my illustrious consoler, I should have perished in the river."

The fisherman did not tell his story all at once; for every moment Zadig in his agitation would break in with: "What! do you know nothing of what has befallen the queen?" "No, my lord," the fisherman would make reply; "but I know that the queen and Zadig have not paid me for my cream cheeses, that my wife has been taken from me, and that I am in despair."

"I feel confident," said Zadig, "that you will not lose all your money. I have heard people speak of this Zadig; he is an honest man; and if he returns to Babylon, as he hopes to do, he will give you more than he owes you. But as to your wife, who is not so honest, I recommend you not to try to recover her. Take my advice, go to Babylon; I shall be there before you, because I am on horseback, and you are on foot. Apply to the most noble Cador; tell him you have met his friend, and wait for me at his house. Go; perhaps you will not always be unhappy."

"O mighty Ormuzd," continued he, "thou dost make use of me to console this man; of whom wilt thou make use to console me?"

So saying, he gave the fisherman half of all the money
he had brought from Arabia, and the fisherman, astonished and delighted, kissed the feet of Cador’s friend, and said:

“You are an angel sent to save me.”

Meanwhile Zadig continued to ask for news, shedding tears as he did so.

“What! my lord,” cried the fisherman, “can you then be unhappy, you who bestow bounty?”

“A hundred times more unhappy than you,” answered Zadig.

“But how can it be,” said the simple fellow, “that he who gives is more to be pitied than him who receives?”

“Because,” replied Zadig, “your greatest misfortune was a hungry belly, and because my misery has its seat in the heart.”

“Has Orcan taken away your wife?” said the fisherman.

This question recalled all his adventures to Zadig’s mind; he repeated the catalogue of his misfortunes, beginning with the queen’s bitch, up to the time of his arrival at the castle of the brigand Arbogad.

“Ah!” said he to the fisherman, “Orcan deserves to be punished. But it is generally such people as he who are the favourites of fortune. Be that as it may, go to the house of the lord Cador, and wait for me.”

They parted; the fisherman walked on thanking his stars, and Zadig pressed forward still accusing his own.
CHAPTER XVIII.

THE COCKATRICE.

HAVING arrived at a beautiful meadow, he saw there several women searching for something with great diligence. He took the liberty of approaching one of them, and of asking her if he might have the honour of helping them in their search.

"Take good heed not to do that," answered the Syrian damsel; "what we are looking for can only be touched with impunity by women."

"That is very strange," said Zadig; "may I venture to ask you to tell me what it is that only women are allowed to touch?"

"A cockatrice," said she.

"A cockatrice, madam! and for what reason, if you please, are you looking for a cockatrice?"

"It is for our lord and master, Ogul, whose castle you see on the bank of that river, at the end of the meadow. We are his most humble slaves; the lord Ogul is ill, his physician has ordered him to eat a cockatrice stewed in rose-water, and, as it is a very rare animal, and never allows itself to be taken except by women, the lord Ogul has promised to choose for his well-beloved wife, whichever of us shall bring him a cockatrice. Let me prosecute the search, if you please; for you see what it would cost me, if I were anticipated by my companions."

Zadig left this Syrian girl and the others to look for their cockatrice, and continued to walk through the meadow. When he reached the brink of a little stream, he found there another lady lying on the turf, but not in search of anything. Her figure appeared majestic, but
her countenance was covered with a veil. She was leaning over the stream; deep sighs escaped from her mouth. She held in her hand a little rod, with which she was tracing characters on the fine sand which lay between the grass and the stream. Zadig had the curiosity to look and see what this woman was writing; he drew near, and saw the letter Z, then an A; he was astonished; then appeared a D; he started. Never was there surprise to equal his, when he saw the two last letters of his name. He remained some time without moving; then, breaking the silence, he exclaimed in an agitated voice:

"O noble lady! pardon a stranger who is in distress if he ventures to ask you by what astonishing chance I find here the name of Zadig traced by your adorable hand."

At that voice, at those words, the lady raised her veil with a trembling hand, turned her eyes on Zadig, uttered a cry of tenderness, surprise, and joy, and, overcome by all the varied emotions which simultaneously assailed her soul, she fell fainting into his arms. It was Astarte herself, it was the queen of Babylon, it was she whom Zadig adored, and whom he reproached himself for adoring; it was she for whom he had wept so much, and for whom he had so often dreaded the worst stroke of fate. For a moment he was deprived of the use of his senses; then, fixing his gaze on Astarte’s eyes, which languidly opened once more with an expression in which confusion was mingled with tenderness, he cried:

"O immortal powers, who preside over the destinies of feeble mortals! Do ye indeed restore to me Astarte? At what a time, in what a place, and in what a condition do I see her again!"

He threw himself on his knees before Astarte, and applied his forehead to the dust of her feet. The queen of Babylon lifted him up, and made him sit beside her on the bank of the stream, while she repeatedly dried her eyes
from which tears would soon begin again to flow. Twenty times at least did she take up the thread of the discourse which her sighs interrupted; she questioned him as to what strange chance brought them once more together, and she anticipated his answers by suddenly asking fresh questions. She began to relate her own misfortunes, and then wished to know those of Zadig. At last, both of them having somewhat appeased the tumult of their souls, Zadig told her in a few words how it came to pass that he found himself in that meadow.

"But, O unhappy and honoured queen! how is it that I find you in this remote spot, clad as a slave, and accompanied by other women slaves who are searching for a cockatrice to be stewed in rose-water by a physician's order?"

"Whilst they are looking for their cockatrice" said the fair Astarte, "I will inform you of all that I have suffered, and for how much I have ceased to blame heaven now that I see you again. You know that the king, my husband, took it ill that you were the most amiable of all men; and it was for this reason that he one night took the resolution to have you strangled and me poisoned. You know how heaven permitted my little mute to give me warning of His Sublime Majesty's orders. Hardly had the faithful Cador forced you to obey me and to go away, when he ventured to enter my chamber in the middle of the night by a secret passage. He carried me off, and brought me to the temple of Ormuzd, where his brother, the magian, shut me up in a gigantic statue, the base of which touches the foundations of the temple, while its head reaches to the roof. I was as it were buried there, but waited on by the magian, and in want of none of the necessaries of life. Meanwhile at daybreak His Majesty's apothecary entered my chamber with a draught compounded of henbane, opium, black hellebore, and aconite; and another official went to your apartment
with a bowstring of blue silk. Both places were found empty. Cador, the better to deceive him, went to the king, and pretended to accuse us both. He said that you had taken the road to India, and that I had gone towards Memphis; so officers were sent after each of us.

The messengers who went in search of me did not know me by sight, for I had hardly ever shown my face to any man but yourself, and that in my husband's presence and by his command. They hastened off in pursuit of me, guided by the description that had been given them of my person. A woman of much the same height as myself, and who had, it may be, superior charms, presented herself to their eyes on the borders of Egypt. She was evidently a fugitive and in distress; they had no doubt that this woman was the queen of Babylon, and they brought her to Moabdar. Their mistake at first threw the king into a violent rage; but ere long, taking a nearer look at the woman, he perceived that she was very beautiful, which gave him some consolation. She was called Missouf. I have been told since that the name signifies in the Egyptian tongue the capricious beauty. Such in truth she was, but she had as much artfulness as caprice. She pleased Moabdar, and brought him into subjection to such a degree that she made him declare her his wife. Thereupon her character developed itself in all its extravagance; she fearlessly gave herself up to every foolish freak of her imagination. She wished to compel the chief of the magi, who was old and gouty, to dance before her; and when he refused she persecuted him most bitterly. She ordered her master of the horse to make her a jam tart. In vain did the master of the horse represent to her that he was not a pastry cook, he must make the tart; and he was driven from office because it was too much burned. She gave the post of master of the horse to her dwarf, and the place of chancellor to a page. It was thus that she governed
Babylon, while all regretted that they had lost me. The king, who had been a tolerably just and reasonable man until the moment when he had determined to poison me and to have you strangled, seemed now to have drowned his virtues in the exorbitant love that he had for the capricious beauty. He came to the temple on the great day of the sacred fire, and I saw him implore the gods on behalf of Missouf, at the feet of the image in which I was confined. I lifted up my voice, and cried aloud to him:

"The gods reject the prayers of a king who is become a tyrant, who has been minded to put to death a sensible wife to marry a woman of the most extravagant whims."

"Moabdar was so confounded at these words, that his head became disordered. The oracle that I had delivered, and Missouf's domineering temper, sufficed to deprive him of his senses, and in a few days he became quite mad.

"His madness, which seemed a punishment from heaven, was the signal for revolt. There was a general insurrection, and all men ran to take up arms. Babylon, so long plunged in effeminate idleness, became the scene of a frightful civil war. I was drawn forth from the cavity of my statue, and placed at the head of one party. Cador hastened to Memphis, to bring you back to Babylon. The prince of Hyrcania, hearing of these fatal dissensions, came back with his army to form a third party in Chaldea. He attacked the king, who fled before him with his wayward Egyptian. Moabdar died pierced with wounds, and Missouf fell into the hands of the conqueror. It was my misfortune to be myself taken prisoner by a party of Hyrcanians, and I was brought before the prince at precisely the same time as they were bringing in Missouf. You will be pleased, no doubt, to hear that the prince thought me more beautiful than the Egyptian; but you will be sorry to learn that he destined me for his harem. He told me very decidedly that as soon as he should have finished a military
expedition which he was about to undertake, he would come and keep me company. You may fancy my distress! The tie that bound me to Moabdar was broken, and I might have been Zadig's, if this barbarian had not cast his chains around me. I answered him with all the pride that my rank and my resentment gave me. I had always heard it said that heaven has connected with persons of my condition a greatness of character, which, with a word or a look, can reduce the presumptuous to a humble sense of that deep respect which they have dared to disregard. I spoke like a queen, but found myself treated like a domestic. The Hyrcanian, without deigning to address to me even a single word, told his black eunuch that I was a saucy minx, but that he thought me pretty; so he bade him take care of me, and subject me to the diet of his favourites, that I might recover my complexion, and be rendered more worthy of his favours by the time that he might find it convenient to honour me with them. I told him that I would sooner kill myself; he answered, laughing, that there was no fear of that, and that he was used to such displays of affection; whereupon he left me like a man who has just put a parrot into his aviary. What a state of things for the first queen in all the world,—I will say more, for a heart which was devoted to Zadig!"

At these words he threw himself at her knees, and bathed them with tears. Astarte raised him tenderly, and continued thus:

"I saw myself in the power of a barbarian, and a rival of the crazy woman who was my fellow-prisoner. She told me what had befallen her in Egypt. I conjectured from the description she gave of your person, from the time of the occurrence, from the dromedary on which you were mounted, and from all the circumstances of the case, that it was Zadig who had fought on her behalf. I had no
doubt that you were at Memphis, and resolved to betake myself thither.

"‘Beautiful Missouf,’ said I, ‘you are much more pleasing than I am, and will entertain the prince of Hyrcania far better than I can do. Help me to effect my escape; you will then reign alone, and render me happy in ridding yourself of a rival.’

"Missouf arranged with me the means of my flight, and I departed secretly with an Egyptian woman slave.

"I had nearly reached Arabia, when a notorious robber, named Arbogad, carried me off, and sold me to some merchants, who brought me to this castle where the lord Ogul resides. He bought me without knowing who I was. He is a man of pleasure whose only object in life is good cheer, and who is convinced that God has sent him into the world to sit at table. He is excessively fat, and is constantly on the point of suffocation. His physician, in whom he believes little enough when his digestion is all right, exerts a despotic sway over him whenever he has eaten too much. He has persuaded him that he can cure him with a cockatrice stewed in rose-water. The lord Ogul has promised his hand to whichever of his female slaves shall bring him a cockatrice. You see how I leave them to vie with one another in their eagerness to win this honour, for, since heaven has permitted me to see you again, I have less desire than ever to find this cockatrice."

Then Astarte and Zadig gave expression to all that tender feelings long repressed,—all that their love and misfortunes could inspire in hearts most generous and ardent; and the genii who preside over love carried their vows to the orb of Venus.

The women returned to Ogul’s castle without having found anything. Zadig, having obtained an introduction, addressed him to this effect:

"May immortal health descend from heaven to guard
and keep you all your days! I am a physician, and am come to you in haste on hearing the report of your sickness, and I have brought you a cockatrice stewed in rose-water. I have no matrimonial intentions with regard to you; I only ask for the release of a young female slave from Babylon, who has been several days in your possession, and I consent to remain in bondage in her place, if I have not the happiness of curing the magnificent lord Ogul."

The proposal was accepted. Astarte set out for Babylon with Zadig’s servant, having promised to send him a messenger immediately to inform him of all that might have happened. Their parting was as tender as their unexpected recognition. The moment of separation and the moment of meeting again are the two most important epochs of life, as is written in the great book of Zendavesta. Zadig loved the queen as much as he swore he did, and the queen loved Zadig more than she professed to do.

Meanwhile Zadig spoke thus to Ogul:

“My lord, my cockatrice is not to be eaten, all its virtue must enter into you through the pores. I have put it into a little leathern case, well blown out, and covered with a fine skin; you must strike this case of leather as hard as you can, and I must send it back each time; a few days of this treatment will show you what my art can do.”

The first day Ogul was quite out of breath, and thought that he should die of fatigue. The second day he was less exhausted, and slept better. In a week’s time he had gained all the strength, health, lightness, and good spirits of his most robust years.

“You have played at ball, and you have been temperate,” said Zadig; “believe me, there is no such creature in nature as a cockatrice, but with temperance and exercise

---

1 Compare the story of the Grecian king and the sage Durban in the "Arabian Nights’ Entertainment."
one is always well, and the art of combining intemperance and health is as chimerical as the philosopher's stone, judicial astrology, and the theology of the magi.”

Ogul's former physician, perceiving how dangerous this man was to the cause of medicine, conspired with his private apothecary to despatch Zadig to hunt for cockatrices in the other world. Thus, after having already been punished so often for having done good, he was again nearly perishing for having healed a gluttonous nobleman. He was invited to a grand dinner, and was to have been poisoned during the second course; but whilst they were at the first he received a message from the fair Astarte, at which he left the table, and took his departure. “When one is loved by a beautiful woman,” says the great Zoroaster, “one is always extricated out of every scrape.”

CHAPTER XIX.

THE TOURNAMENT.

The queen had been received at Babylon with the enthusiasm which is always shown for a beautiful princess who has been unfortunate. Babylon at that time seemed more peaceful. The prince of Hyclicia had been killed in a battle; and the victorious Babylonians declared that Astarte should marry the man whom they might elect for monarch. They did not desire that the first position in the world, namely, that of being husband of Astarte and king of Babylon, should depend upon intrigues and cabals. They took an oath to acknowledge as their king the man whom they should find bravest and wisest. Spacious lists, surrounded by an amphitheatre splendidly decorated, were formed at a distance of several leagues from the city. The
combatants were to repair thither armed at all points. Each of them had separate quarters behind the amphitheatre, where he was to be neither seen nor visited by anyone. It was necessary to enter the lists four times, and those who should be successful enough to defeat four cavaliers were thereupon to fight against each other, and the one who should finally remain master of the field should be proclaimed victor of the tournament. He was to return four days afterwards with the same arms, and try to solve the riddles which the magi would propound. If he could not solve the riddles, he was not to be king, and it would be necessary to begin the jousts over again, until a knight should be found victorious in both sorts of contest; for they wished to have a king braver and wiser than any other man. The queen, during all this time, was to be strictly guarded; she was only allowed to be present at the games covered with a veil, and she was not permitted to speak to any of the competitors, in order to avoid either favouritism or injustice.

This was the intelligence that Astarte sent her lover, hoping that for her sake he would display greater valour and wisdom than anyone else. So he took his departure, entreat ing Venus to fortify his courage and enlighten his mind. He arrived on the banks of the Euphrates the evening before the great day, and caused his device to be inscribed among those of the combatants, concealing his countenance and his name, as the law required. Then he went to take repose in the lodging that was assigned him by lot. His friend Cador, who had returned to Babylon, after having vainly searched for him in Egypt, despatched to his quarters a complete suit of armour which was the queen’s present. He also sent him, on her behalf, the finest steed in Persia. Zadig recognised the hand of Astarte in these gifts; his courage and his love gained thereby new energy and new hopes.
On the morrow, the queen having taken her place under a jewelled canopy, and the amphitheatre being filled with ladies and persons of every rank in Babylon, the combatants appeared in the arena. Each of them came and laid his device at the feet of the grand magian. The devices were drawn by lot, and Zadig's happened to be the last. The first who advanced was a very rich lord named Itobad, exceedingly vain; but with little courage, skill, or judgment. His servants had persuaded him that such a man as he ought to be king; and he had answered them: "Such a man as I ought to reign." So they had armed him from head to foot. He had golden armour enamelled with green, a green plume, and a lance decked with green ribbons. It was evident at once, from the manner in which Itobad managed his horse, that it was not for such a man as he that heaven reserved the sceptre of Babylon. The first knight who tilted against him unhorsed him; the second upset him so that he lay on his horse's crupper with both his legs in the air and arms extended. Itobad recovered his seat, but in such an ungainly fashion that all the spectators began to laugh. The third did not condescend to use his lance, but after making a pass at him, took him by the right leg, turned him half round, and let him drop on the sand. The squires of the tourney ran up to him laughing, and replaced him on his saddle. The fourth combatant seized him by the left leg, and made him fall on the other side. He was accompanied with loud jeers to his quarters, where he was to pass the night according to the law of the games; and he said as he limped along with difficulty: "What an experience for such a man as I!"

The other knights acquitted themselves better. There were some who defeated two antagonists one after the other, a few went as far as three, but the prince Otame was the only one who conquered four. At last Zadig tilted
in his turn; he unseated four cavaliers in succession in the most graceful manner possible. It then remained to be seen whether Otame or Zadig would be the victor. The arms of the former were blue and gold, with a plume of the same colour, while those of Zadig were white. The sympathies of all were divided between the knight in blue and the knight in white. The queen, whose heart was throbbing violently, put up prayers to heaven that the white might be the winning colour.

The two champions made passes and wheeled round with such agility, they delivered such dexterous thrusts, and sat so firmly on their saddles, that all the spectators, except the queen, wished that there might be two kings in Babylon. At last, their chargers being exhausted, and their lances broken, Zadig had recourse to this stratagem: he steps behind the blue prince, leaps upon the crupper of his horse, seizes him by the waist, hurls him down, takes his place in the saddle, and prances round Otame, as he lies stretched upon the ground. All the amphitheatre shouts: "Victory to the white cavalier!" Otame rises, indignant at his disgrace, and draws his sword; Zadig springs off the horse's back, sabre in hand. Then, lo and behold! both of them on foot in the arena begin a new conflict, in which strength and agility by turns prevail. The plumes of their helmets, the rivets of their arm-pieces, the links of their armour, fly far afield under a thousand rapid blows. With point and edge they thrust and cut, to right and left, now on the head, and now on the chest; they retreat, they advance, they measure swords, they come to close quarters, they wrestle, they twine like serpents, they attack each other like lions; sparks are sent forth every moment from their clashing swords. At last Zadig, recovering his coolness for an instant, stops, makes a feint, and then rushes upon Otame, brings him to the ground, and disarms him, when the vanquished prince exclaims:
"O white cavalier! you it is who should reign over Babylon."

The queen's joy was at its climax. The cavalier in blue and the cavalier in white were conducted each to his own lodging, as well as all the others, in due accordance with the law. Mutes came to attend them and to bring them food. It may be easily guessed that the queen's little mute was the one who waited on Zadig. Then they were left to sleep alone until the morning of the next day, when the conqueror was to bring his device to the grand magian to be compared with the roll, and to make himself known.

In spite of his love Zadig slept soundly enough, so tired was he. Itobad, who lay near him, did not sleep a wink. He rose in the night, entered Zadig's quarters, took away his white arms and his device, and left his own green armour in their place. As soon as it was daylight, he went up boldly to the grand magian, and announced that such a man as he was victor. This was unexpected, but his success was proclaimed while Zadig was still asleep. Astarte, surprised, and with despair at her heart, returned to Babylon. The whole amphitheatre was already almost empty when Zadig awoke; he looked for his arms, and found only the green armour. He was obliged to put it on, having nothing else near him. Astonished and indignant, he armed himself in a rage, and stepped forth in that guise.

All the people who were left in the amphitheatre and arena greeted him with jeers. They pressed round him, and insulted him to his face. Never did man endure such bitter mortification. He lost patience, and with his drawn sword dispersed the mob which dared to molest him; but he knew not what course to adopt. He could not see the queen, nor could he lay claim to the white armour which she had sent him, without compromising her; so that,
while she was plunged in grief, he was tortured with rage and perplexity. He walked along the banks of the Euphrates, convinced that his star had marked him out for inevitable misery, reviewing in his mind all the misfortunes he had suffered, since his experience of the woman who hated one-eyed men up to this present loss of his armour.

"See what comes," said he, "of awaking too late; if I had slept less, I should now be king of Babylon and husband of Astarte. Knowledge, conduct, and courage have never served to bring me anything but trouble."

At last, murmurs against Providence escaped him, and he was tempted to believe that the world was governed by a cruel destiny, which oppressed the good, and brought prosperity to cavaliers in green. One of his worst grievances was to be obliged to wear that green armour which drew such ridicule upon him; and he sold it to a passing merchant at a low price, taking in exchange from the merchant a gown and a nightcap. In this garb he paced beside the Euphrates, filled with despair, and secretly accusing Providence for always persecuting him.

CHAPTER XX.

THE HERMIT.¹

WHILE walking thus, Zadig met a hermit, whose white and venerable beard descended to his girdle. He held in his hand a book which he was reading attentively. Zadig stopped, and made him a profound obeisance. The

¹ This version of a moral tale, familiar to the English reader from Parnell’s “Hermit,” has a source at least as ancient as the mediæval “Gesta Romanorum.”
hermit returned his salutation with an air so noble and attractive, that Zadig had the curiosity to enter into conversation with him. He asked him what book he was reading.

"It is the book of destiny," said the hermit; "do you desire to read aught therein?"

He placed the book in Zadig's hands, but he, learned as he was in several languages, could not decipher a single character in the book. This increased his curiosity yet more.

"You seem to me much vexed," said the good father.

"Alas! and with only too much reason!" answered Zadig.

"If you will allow me to accompany you," rejoined the old man, "perhaps I may be of service to you; I have sometimes poured consolation into the souls of the unhappy."

The hermit's aspect, his beard, and his book, inspired Zadig with respect. He found in conversing with him the light of a superior mind. The hermit spoke of destiny, of justice, of morality, of the chief good, of human frailty, of virtue, and of vice, with an eloquence so lively and touching, that Zadig felt himself drawn towards him by an irresistible charm. He earnestly besought him not to leave him, until they should return to Babylon.

"I myself ask the same favour of you," said the old man; "swear to me by Ormuzd that you will not part from me for some days to come, whatever I may do."

Zadig swore not to do so, and they set out together.

The two travellers arrived that evening at a magnificent castle, where the hermit craved hospitality for himself and for the young man who accompanied him. The porter, who might have been taken for a distinguished nobleman, introduced them with a sort of disdainful politeness. They were presented to one of the principal domestics, who showed them the master's splendid apartments. They
were admitted to the lower end of his table, without being honoured even with a look from the lord of the castle; but they were served like the others, with elegance and profusion. A golden bowl studded with emeralds and rubies was afterwards brought them, wherein to wash their hands. For the night they were consigned to fine sleeping apartments, and in the morning a servant brought each of them a piece of gold, after which they were courteously dismissed.

"The master of the house," said Zadig, when they were again on their way, "seems to me to be a generous man, but a little too proud; he practises a noble hospitality."

As he said these words, he perceived that a very wide sort of pocket which the hermit was wearing appeared stretched and stuffed out, and he caught sight of the golden bowl adorned with precious stones, which the hermit had stolen. He did not at first venture to take any notice of it, but he experienced a strange surprise.

Towards midday, the hermit presented himself at the door of a very small house, inhabited by a very rich miser, of whom he begged hospitable entertainment for a few hours. An old servant, meanly clad, received them roughly, and conducted the hermit and Zadig to the stable, where some rotten olives, mouldy bread, and sour beer were given them. The hermit ate and drank with as contented an air as on the evening before; then, turning to the old servant who was watching them both to see that they stole nothing, and who kept urging them to go, he gave him the two pieces of gold which he had received that morning, and thanked him for all his attentions.

"Pray," added he, "let me speak a word to your master."

The astonished servant introduced the two strangers.

"Magnificent lord," said the hermit, "I cannot refrain from offering you my most humble thanks for the noble
manner in which you have treated us; deign to accept this golden bowl as a slight token of my gratitude."

The miser almost fell backward from his seat, but the hermit, not giving him time to recover from his sudden surprise, departed with his young companion as quickly as possible.

"Father," said Zadig, "what is all this that I see? You do not seem to me to resemble other men in anything that you do; you steal a bowl adorned with precious stones from a nobleman who entertained you sumptuously, and you give it to a miser who treats you with indignity."

"My son," replied the old man, "that pompous person, who entertains strangers only out of vanity, and to excite admiration of his riches, will learn a needful lesson, while the miser will be taught to practise hospitality; be astonished at nothing, and follow me."

Zadig was still uncertain whether he had to do with a man more foolish or more wise than all other men; but the hermit spoke with a tone of such superiority, that Zadig, bound besides by his oath, felt constrained to follow him.

In the evening they arrived at a house built in a pleasing but simple style, where nothing betokened either prodigality or avarice. The master was a philosopher who, retired from the world, pursued in peace the study of wisdom and virtue, and who, nevertheless, felt life no tedious burden. It had pleased him to build this retreat, into which he welcomed strangers with a generosity which was free from ostentation. He went himself to meet the travellers, and ushered them into a comfortable apartment, where he first left them to repose awhile. Some time afterwards he came in person to invite them to a clean and well-cooked meal, during which he spoke with great good sense about the latest revolutions in Babylon. He seemed sincerely attached to the queen, and expressed a
wish that Zadig had appeared in the lists as a competitor for the crown.

"But mankind," added he, "do not deserve to have a king like Zadig."

The latter blushed, and felt his disappointment return with double force. In the course of conversation it was generally agreed that matters in this world do not always fall out as the wisest men would wish. The hermit maintained throughout that we are ignorant of the ways of Providence, and that men are wrong in judging of the whole by the very small part which alone they are able to perceive.

They spoke of the passions. "Ah! how fatal they are!" said Zadig.

"They are the winds that swell the sails of the vessel," replied the hermit; "they sometimes sink the vessel, but it could not make way without them. The bile makes men choleric and sick, but without the bile they could not live. Everything here below has its danger, and yet everything is necessary."

Then they spoke of pleasure, and the hermit proved that it is a gift of the Deity.

"For," said he, "man can give himself neither sensation nor idea, he receives them all; pain and pleasure come to him from without like his very existence."

Zadig marvelled how a man who had acted so extravagantly could argue so well. At length, after a discourse as profitable as it was agreeable, their host conducted the two travellers back to their apartment, blessing heaven for having sent him two men so virtuous and so wise; and he offered them money in a frank and easy manner that could give no offence. The hermit, however, refused it, and told him that he must now take leave of him, as he purposed departing for Babylon before morning. Their parting was affectionate, Zadig especially felt full of esteem and love for so amiable a man.
When the hermit and he were alone in their chamber, they passed a long time in praising their host. The old man at daybreak awoke his comrade.

"We must start," said he, "while all the household is asleep. I wish to leave this man a token of my regard and affection."

Saying these words, he seized a light, and set fire to the house. Zadig uttered a cry of horror, and would fain have prevented him from committing so dreadful a deed, but the hermit dragged him away by superior force, and the house was soon in flames. The hermit, who was now at a safe distance with his companion, calmly watched it burning.

"Thank God!" said he; "there goes the house of my dear host, destroyed from basement to roof! Happy man!"

At these words Zadig was tempted at once to burst out laughing, to overwhelm the reverend father with reproaches, to beat him, and to fly from him; but he did none of these things; still overawed by the hermit's dominating influence, he followed him in spite of himself to their last quarters for the night.

It was at the house of a charitable and virtuous widow, who had a nephew fourteen years of age, full of engaging qualities, and her only hope. She did the honours of her house as well as she could, and on the morrow she bade her nephew conduct the travellers as far as a bridge which, having broken down a short time before, was now dangerous to cross. The lad walked before them with alacrity. When they were on the bridge, the hermit said to the youth:

"Come, I must prove my gratitude to your aunt."

Then he seized him by the hair, and threw him into the river. The boy sank, rose for a moment above the water, and was then swallowed up by the torrent.
"O monster! Most wicked of all mankind!" exclaimed Zadig.

"You promised to be more patient," said the hermit, interrupting him. "Know that under the ruins of that house to which Providence set fire, the master has found an immense treasure; and that this youth, whose neck Providence has twisted, would have murdered his aunt within a year, and yourself within two."

"Savage, who told you so?" cried Zadig; "and though you may have read this event in your book of destiny, are you allowed to drown a child who has done you no harm?"

While the Babylonian was speaking, he perceived that the old man had no longer a beard, and that his countenance assumed the features of youth. The habit of a hermit disappeared; four beautiful wings covered a form majestic and glittering with light.

"O messenger from heaven! Divine angel!" cried Zadig, falling on his knees; "art thou then descended from the empyrean to teach a feeble mortal to submit to the eternal decrees?"

"Mankind," said the angel Jesrad, "judge of everything when knowing nothing; of all men you were the one who most deserved to be enlightened."

Zadig asked if he might have permission to speak.

"I distrust myself," said he, "but may I venture to ask thee to resolve my doubt? Would it not have been better to have corrected this youth, and to have rendered him virtuous, than to drown him?"

The phrase would have been more appropriate if Voltaire had followed Parnell's version of this incident.

"Before the pilgrims part, the younger crept
Near the closed cradle where an infant slept,
And writhed his neck," etc.

("The Hermit," ll. 150-153.)
Jesrad answered: "If he had been virtuous, and had continued to live, it would have been his destiny to be murdered himself, together with the wife he was to marry, and the son whom she was to bear."

"What!" said Zadig, "is it inevitable then that there should be crimes and misfortunes? The misfortunes too, fall upon the good!"

"The wicked," answered Jesrad, "are always unhappy; they serve to try a small number of righteous men scattered over the earth, and there is no evil from which some good does not spring."

"But," said Zadig, "what if there were only good, and no evil at all?"

"Then," answered Jesrad, "this earth would be another world, the chain of events would be ordered by wisdom of another kind; and this order, which would be perfect, can only exist in the eternal abode of the Supreme Being, which evil cannot approach. He has created millions of worlds, not one of which can resemble another. This boundless variety is an attribute of His boundless power. There are not two leaves of a tree upon this earth, nor two globes in the infinite fields of heaven, which are alike, and everything that you see on this little atom where you have been born must fill its own place, and exist in its own fixed time, according to the immutable decrees of Him who embraces all. Men think that this child who has just perished fell into the water by accident, that it was by accident likewise that that house was burned; but there is no such thing as accident; all that takes place is either a trial, or a punishment, or a reward, or a providential dispensation. Remember that fisherman who deemed himself the most miserable of men. Ormuzd sent you to change his destiny. Feeble mortal, cease to dispute against that which it is your duty to adore."

"But," said Zadig:——
As the word was on his lips, the angel was already winging his way towards the tenth sphere. Zadig on his knees adored Providence, and was resigned. The angel cried to him from on high:

"Take your way towards Babylon."

CHAPTER XXI.

THE RIDDLES.

ZADIG, in a state of bewilderment, and like a man at whose side the lightning has fallen, walked on at random. He entered Babylon on the day when those who had contended in the lists were already assembled in the grand vestibule of the palace to solve the riddles, and to answer the questions of the grand magian. All the knights were there, except him of the green armour. As soon as Zadig appeared in the city, the people gathered round him; they could not satisfy their eyes with the sight of him, their mouths with blessing him, or their hearts with wishing him to be king. The Envious man saw him pass, trembled, and turned aside, while the people escorted him to the place of assembly. The queen, to whom his arrival was announced, became a prey to the agitation of fear and hope; she was devoured with uneasiness, and could not comprehend why Zadig was unarmed, and how it came to pass that Ito bad wore the white armour. A confused murmur arose at the sight of Zadig. All were surprised and delighted to see him again; but only the knights who had taken part in the tournament were permitted to appear in the assembly.

"I have fought like the others," said he; "but another here wears my armour, and, while I must wait to have the
honour of proving it, I ask leave to present myself in order to explain the riddles."

The question was put to the vote; his reputation for integrity was still so deeply impressed on the minds of all, that there was no hesitation about admitting him.

The grand magian first proposed this question:
"What, of all things in the world, is alike the longest and the shortest, the quickest and the slowest, the most minutely divided and the most widely extended, the most neglected and the most regretted, without which nothing can be done, which devours everything that is little, and confers life on everything that is great?"

Itobad was to speak first; he answered that such a man as he understood nothing about riddles, that it was enough for him to have conquered by the might of his arm. Some said that the answer to the riddle was fortune; according to others it was the earth, and according to others again light. Zadig said that it was time:

"Nothing is longer," added he, "since it is the measure of eternity; nothing is shorter, since it fails to accomplish our projects. There is nothing slower to one who waits, nothing quicker to one who enjoys. It extends to infinity in greatness, it is infinitely divisible in minuteness. All men neglect it, all regret its loss. Nothing is done without it. It buries in oblivion all that is unworthy of being handed down to posterity; and it confers immortality upon all things that are great."

The assembly agreed that Zadig's answer was the right one.

The next question was:
"What is it which we receive without acknowledgment, which we enjoy without knowing how, which we bestow on others when we know nothing about it, and which we lose without perceiving the loss?"

Everybody had his own explanation. Zadig alone guessed
that it was life, and explained all the other riddles with the same readiness. Itobad said on each occasion that nothing was easier, and that he would have come to the same conclusion with equal facility, if he had cared to give himself the trouble. Questions were afterwards propounded on justice, the chief good, and the art of government. Zadig's replies were pronounced the soundest.

"What a pity," it was said, "that one whose judgment is so good should be so bad a knight!"

"Illustrious lords," said Zadig, "I have had the honour of conquering in the lists. It is to me that the white armour belongs. The lord Itobad possessed himself of it while I slept; he thought, apparently, that it would become him better than the green. I am ready to prove upon his person forthwith before you all, in this garb and armed only with my sword, against all this fine white armour which he has stolen from me, that it was I who had the honour of vanquishing brave Otame."

Itobad accepted the challenge with the greatest confidence. He felt no doubt that, armed as he was with helmet, breastplate, and brassarts, he would soon see the last of a champion arrayed in a nightcap and a dressing gown. Zadig drew his sword, and saluted the queen, who gazed on him with the deepest emotion of mingled joy and alarm. Itobad unsheathed his weapon without saluting anyone. He advanced upon Zadig like a man who had nothing to fear, and made ready to cleave his head open. Zadig adroitly parried the stroke, opposing the strongest part of his sword to the weakest part of that of his adversary, in such a way that Itobad's blade was broken. Then Zadig, seizing his enemy round the waist, hurled him to the ground, and, holding the point of his sword where the breastplate ended, said:

"Submit to be disarmed, or I take your life."

Itobad, who was always surprised at any disgrace which
befell such a man as he, suffered Zadig to do what he pleased, who peaceably relieved him of his splendid helmet, his superb breastplate, his fine brassarts, and his glittering thigh-pieces, put them on himself again, and ran in this array to throw himself at Astarte's knees.

Cador had no difficulty in proving that the armour belonged to Zadig. He was acknowledged king by unanimous consent, and most of all by Astarte, who tasted, after so many adversities, the delight of seeing her lover regarded by all the world as worthy of being her husband. Itobad went away to hear himself called his lordship in his own house. Zadig was made king, and he was happy. What the angel Jesrad had said to him was present to his mind, and he even remembered the grain of sand which became a diamond. The queen and he together adored Providence. Zadig left the beautiful and capricious Missouf to range the world at will. He sent in search of the brigand Arbogad, gave him an honourable post in his army, and promised to promote him to the highest rank, if he behaved himself like a true warrior, but threatened to have him hanged, if he followed the trade of a robber.

Setoc was summoned from the heart of Arabia, together with the fair Almona, and set at the head of the commerce of Babylon. Cador was loved and honoured, receiving an appointment such as his services deserved; he was the king's friend, and Zadig was then the only monarch upon earth who had one. The little mute was not forgotten. A fine house was given to the fisherman, while Orcan was condemned to pay him a large sum, and to give him back his wife; but the fisherman, now grown wise, took the money only.

The fair Semira was inconsolable for having believed that Zadig would be blind of an eye; and Azora never ceased lamenting that she had wished to cut off his nose. He soothed their sorrow with presents. The Envious man
died of rage and shame. The empire enjoyed peace, glory, and abundance; that age was the best which the earth had known, for it was ruled by justice and by love. All men blessed Zadig, and Zadig blessed heaven.

[The manuscript containing Zadig's history ends here. We know that he experienced many other adventures which have been faithfully recorded. Interpreters of oriental tongues are requested, if they should meet with any such records, to make them public.]