

TANCRED:

OR,

THE NEW CRUSADE.

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BOOK III.

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CHAPTER I.

THE broad moon lingers on the summit of Mount Olivet, but its beam has long left the garden of Gethsemane and the tomb of Absalom, the waters of Kedron and the dark abyss of Jehoshaphat. Full falls its splendour however on the opposite city, vivid and defined in its silver blaze. A lofty wall, with turrets and towers and frequent gates, undulates with the unequal ground which it covers, as it encircles the lost capital of Jehovah. It is a city of hills, far more famous than those

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of Rome: for all Europe has heard of Sion and of Calvary, while the Arab and the Assyrian, and the tribes and nations beyond, are as ignorant of the Capitolian and Aventine Mounts as they are of the Malvern or the Chiltern Hills.

The broad steep of Sion, crowned with the tower of David; nearer still, Mount Moriah, with the gorgeous temple of the God of Abraham, but built, alas! by the child of Hagar, and not by Sarah's chosen one; close to its cedars and its cypresses, its lofty spires and airy arches, the moonlight falls upon Bethesda's pool; further on, entered by the gate of St. Stephen, the eye, though 'tis the noon of night, traces with ease the Street of Grief, a long winding ascent to a vast cupolaed pile that now covers Calvary, called the Street of Grief, because there the most illustrious of the human, as well as of the hebrew, race, the descendant of King David, and the divine Son of the most favoured of women, twice sank under that burden of suffering and shame which is now throughout all Christendom the emblem of triumph and of honour; passing

over groups and masses of houses built of stone, with terraced roofs or surmounted with small domes, we reach the hill of Salem, where Melchisedek built his mystic citadel; and still remains the hill of Scopas, where Titus gazed upon Jerusalem on the eve of his final assault. Titus destroyed the temple. The religion of Judæa has in turn subverted the fanes which were raised to his father and to himself in their imperial capital; and the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, is now worshipped before every altar in Rome.

Jerusalem by moonlight! 'Tis a fine spectacle, apart from all its indissoluble associations of awe and beauty. The mitigating hour softens the austerity of a mountain landscape magnificent in outline, however harsh and severe in detail; and, while it retains all its sublimity, removes much of the savage sternness of the strange and unrivalled scene. A fortified city, almost surrounded by ravines, and rising in the centre of chains of far-spreading hills, occasionally offering, through their rocky glens, the gleams of a distant and richer land!

The moon has sunk behind the Mount of Olives, and the stars in the darker sky shine doubly bright over the sacred city. The all-pervading stillness is broken by a breeze, that seems to have travelled over the plain of Sharon from the sea. It wails among the tombs and sighs among the cypress groves. The palm-tree trembles as it passes, as if it were a spirit of woe. Is it the breeze that has travelled over the plain of Sharon from the sea?

Or is it the haunting voice of prophets mourning over the city that they could not save? Their spirits surely would linger on the land where their Creator had deigned to dwell, and over whose impending fate Omnipotence had shed human tears. From this Mount! Who can but believe that, at the midnight hour, from the summit of the Ascension, the great departed of Israel assemble to gaze upon the battlements of their mystic city? There might be counted heroes and sages, who need shrink from no rivalry with the brightest and the wisest of other lands; but the lawgiver of the time of the Pharaohs, whose laws are still obeyed; the monarch, whose reign has ceased

for three thousand years, but whose wisdom is a proverb in all nations of the earth; the teacher, whose doctrines have modelled civilized Europe;—the greatest of legislators, the greatest of administrators, and the greatest of reformers—what race, extinct or living, can produce three such men as these!

The last light is extinguished in the village of Bethany. The wailing breeze has become a moaning wind; a white film spreads over the purple sky; the stars are veiled, the stars are hid; all becomes as dark as the waters of Kedron and the valley of Jehoshaphat. The tower of David merges into obscurity; no longer glitter the minarets of the mosque of Omar; Bethesda's angelic waters, the gate of Stephen, the street of sacred sorrow, the hill of Salem and the heights of Scopas, can no longer be discerned. Alone in the increasing darkness, while the very line of the walls gradually eludes the eye, the church of the Holy Sepulchre is a beacon light.

And why is the church of the Holy Sepulchre a beacon light? Why, when it is already past the noon of darkness, when every soul slumbers in Jerusalem, and not a sound dis-

turbs the deep repose, except the howl of the wild dog crying to the wilder wind—why is the cupola of the sanctuary illumined, though the hour has long since been numbered, when pilgrims there kneel and monks pray?

An armed Turkish guard are bivouacked in the court of the church; within the church itself, two brethren of the convent of Terra Santa keep holy watch and ward; while, at the tomb beneath, there kneels a solitary youth, who prostrated himself at sunset, and who will there pass unmoved the whole of the sacred night.

Yet the pilgrim is not in communion with the Latin Church; neither is he of the Church Armenian, or the Church Greek; Maronite, Coptic, or Abyssinian; these also are Christian churches which cannot call him child.

He comes from a distant and a northern isle to bow before the tomb of a descendant of the kings of Israel, because he, in common with all the people of that isle, recognises in that sublime Hebrew incarnation the presence of a Divine Redeemer. Then why does he come alone? It is not that he has availed himself of the inventions of modern science, to repair

first to a spot, which all his countrymen may equally desire to visit, and thus anticipate their hurrying arrival. Before the inventions of modern science, all his countrymen used to flock hither. Then why do they not now? Is the Holy Land no longer hallowed? Is it not the land of sacred and mysterious truths? The land of heavenly messages and earthly miracles? The land of prophets and apostles? Is it not the land upon whose mountains the Creator of the Universe parleyed with man, and the flesh of whose anointed race He mystically assumed, when He struck the last blow at the powers of evil? Is it to be believed, that there are no peculiar and eternal qualities in a land thus visited, which distinguish it from all others? That Palestine is like Normandy or Yorkshire, or even Attica or Rome?

There may be some who maintain this; there have been some, and those too among the wisest and the wittiest of the northern and western races, who, touched by a presumptuous jealousy of the long predominance of that oriental intellect to which they owed their civilization, would have persuaded themselves

and the world that the traditions of Sinai and Calvary were fables. Half a century ago, Europe made a violent and apparently successful effort to disembarrass itself of its Asian faith. The most powerful and the most civilized of its kingdoms, about to conquer the rest, shut up its churches, desecrated its altars, massacred and persecuted their sacred servants, and announced that the Hebrew creeds which Simon Peter brought from Palestine, and which his successors revealed to Clovis, were a mockery and a fiction. What has been the result? In every city, town, village, and hamlet, of that great kingdom, the divine image of the most illustrious of Hebrews has been again raised amid the homage of kneeling millions; while, in the heart of its bright and witty capital, the nation has erected the most gorgeous of modern temples, and consecrated its marble and golden walls to the name and memory and celestial efficacy of a Hebrew woman.

The country of which the solitary pilgrim, kneeling at this moment at the Holy Sepulchre, was a native, had not actively shared in

that insurrection against the first and second Testament, which distinguished the end of the eighteenth century. But more than six hundred years before, it had sent its king, and the flower of its peers and people, to rescue Jerusalem from those whom they considered infidels; and now, instead of the third crusade, they expend their superfluous energies in the construction of railroads.

The failure of the European kingdom of Jerusalem, on which such vast treasure, such prodigies of valour and such ardent belief had been wasted, has been one of those circumstances which have tended to disturb the faith of Europe, although it should have carried convictions of a very different character. The Crusaders looked upon the Saracens as infidels, whereas the children of the Desert bore a much nearer affinity to the sacred corpse that had, for a brief space, consecrated the holy sepulchre, than any of the invading host of Europe. The same blood flowed in their veins, and they recognised the divine missions both of Moses and of his greater successor. In an age so deficient in physiological learning as the twelfth

century the mysteries of race were unknown. Jerusalem, it cannot be doubted, will ever remain the appanage either of Israel or of Ishmael; and if, in the course of those great vicissitudes, which are no doubt impending for the East, there be any attempt to place upon the throne of David a prince of the House of Coburg or Deuxponts, the same fate will doubtless await him as, with all their brilliant qualities and all the sympathy of Europe, was the final doom of the Godfreys, the Baldwins, and the Lusignans.

Like them, the ancestor of the kneeling pilgrim had come to Jerusalem with his tall lance and his burnished armour; but his descendant, though not less daring and not less full of faith, could profit by the splendid but fruitless achievements of the first Tancred de Montacute. Our hero came on this new crusade with an humble and contrite spirit to pour forth his perplexities and sorrows on the tomb of his Redeemer, and to ask counsel of the sacred scenes which the presence of that Redeemer and his great predecessors had consecrated.

## CHAPTER II.

NEAR the gate of Sion, there is a small, still, hilly street, the houses of which, as is general in the East, present to the passenger, with the exception of an occasional portal, only blank walls, built, as they are at Jerusalem, of stone, and very lofty. These walls commonly enclose a court, and, though their exterior offers always a sombre and often squalid appearance, it by no means follows that within you may not be welcomed with cheerfulness and even luxury.

At this moment a man in the Syrian dress, turban and flowing robe, is passing through one of the gateways of this street, and entering

the large quadrangle to which it leads. It is surrounded by arcades; on one side indications of commerce, piles of chests, cases, and barrels; the other serving for such simple stables as are sufficient in the East. Crossing this quadrangle, the two companions passed by a corridor into a square garden of orange and lemon trees and fountains. This garden court was surrounded by inhabited chambers, and, at the end of it, passing through a low arch at the side, and then mounting a few steps, he was at once admitted into a spacious and stately chamber. Its lofty ceiling was vaulted and lightly painted in arabesque; its floor was of white marble varied with mosaics of fruit and flowers; it was panelled with cedar, and in six of the principal panels were Arabic inscriptions emblazoned in blue and gold. At the top of this hall, and ranging down its two sides, was a divan or seat raised about one foot from the ground, and covered with silken cushions; and the marble floor before this divan was spread at intervals with small bright Persian carpets.

In this chamber some half dozen persons

were seated in the Eastern fashion, and smoking either the choice tobaccos of Syria through the cherry-wood or jasmine tube of a Turkish or Egyptian chibouque, or inhaling through rose-water the more artificial flavour of the nargilly, which is the hookah of the Levant. If a guest found his pipe exhausted, he clapped his hands, and immediately a negro page appeared, dressed in scarlet or in white, and, learning his pleasure, returned in a few moments, and bowing presented him with a fresh and illumined chibouque. At intervals these attendants appeared without a summons, and offered cups of Mocha coffee or vases of sherbet.

The lord of this divan, who was seated at the upper end of the room, reclining on embroidered cushions of various colours, and using a nargilly of fine workmanship, was a man much above the common height, being at least six feet two without his red cap of Fez, though so well proportioned, that you would not at the first glance give him credit for such a stature. He was extremely handsome, retaining ample remains of one of those countenances of blended regularity and lustre which are found

only in the cradle of the human race. Though he was fifty years of age, time had scarcely brought a wrinkle to his still brilliant complexion, while his large, soft, dark eyes, his arched brow, his well-proportioned nose, his small mouth and oval cheek presented altogether one of those faces which, in spite of long centuries of physical suffering and moral degradation, still haunt the cities of Asia Minor, the isles of Greece, and the Syrian coasts. It is the archetype of manly beauty, the tradition of those races who have wandered the least from Paradise, and who, notwithstanding many vicissitudes and much misery, are still acted upon by the same elemental agencies as influenced the Patriarchs; are warmed by the same sun, freshened by the same air, and nourished by the same earth as cheered, and invigorated and sustained the earlier generations. The costume of the East certainly does not exaggerate the fatal progress of time; if a figure becomes too portly, the flowing robe conceals the incumbrance which is aggravated by a western dress; he too who wears a turban has little dread of grey hairs;

a grizzly beard indeed has few charms, but whether it were the lenity of time or the skill of his barber in those arts in which Asia is as experienced as Europe, the beard of the master of the divan became the rest of his appearance, and flowed to his waist in rich dark curls, lending additional dignity to a countenance of which the expression was at the same time grand and benignant.

Upon the right of the master of the divan was, smoking a jasmine pipe, Scheriff Effendi an Egyptian merchant, of Arab race, a dark face in a white turban, mild and imperturbable, and seated as erect on his crossed legs as if he were administering justice, a remarkable contrast to the individual who was on the left of the host, who might have been mistaken for a mass of brilliant garments huddled together, had not the gurgling sound of the nargilly occasionally assured the spectator that it was animated by human breath. This person was apparently lying on his back, his face hid, his form not to be traced, a wild confusion of shawls and cushions, out of which, like some wily and dangerous reptile, glided the spiral

involutions of his pipe. Next to the Invisible sate a little wiry man with a red nose, sparkling eyes, and a white beard. His black turban intimated that he was a Hebrew, and indeed he was well known as Barizy of the Tower, a description which he had obtained from his residence near the Tower of David, and which distinguished him from his cousin who was called Barizy of the Gate. Further on an Armenian from Stamboul, in his dark robes and black protuberant head-dress, resembling a colossal truffle, solaced himself with a cherry-stick which reminded him of the Bosphorus, and he found a companion in this fashion in the young officer of a French brig of war anchored at Beiroot, and who had obtained leave to visit the Holy Land, as he was anxious to see the women of Bethlehem, of whose beauty he had heard much.

As the new comer entered the hall, he shuffled off his slippers at the threshold, and then advancing, and pressing a hand to his brow, his mouth and his heart, a salutation which signifies, that in thought, speech, and feeling, he was faithful to his host, and which

salutation was immediately returned, he took his seat upon the divan, and the master of the house letting the flexible tube of his nargilly fall on one of the cushions, and clapping his hands, a page immediately brought a pipe to the new guest. This was Signor Pasqualigo, one of those noble Venetian names that every now and then turn up in the Levant, and borne in the present case by a descendant of a family who for centuries had enjoyed a monopoly of some of the smaller consular offices of the Syrian coast. Signor Pasqualigo had installed his son as deputy in the ambiguous agency at Jaffa which he described as a vice-consulate, and himself principally resided at Jerusalem, of which he was the prime gossip, or second only to his rival, Barizy of the Tower. He had only taken a preliminary puff of his chibouque, to be convinced that there was no fear of its being extinguished, before he said—

“ So there was a fine pilgrimage last night; the church of the Holy Sepulchre lighted up from sunset to sunrise, an extra guard in the court, and only the Spanish prior and two brethren permitted to enter. It must be

10,000 piastres at least in the coffers of the Terra Santa. Well, they want something! It is a long time since we have had a Latin pilgrim in El Khuds."

"And they say, after all, that this was not a Latin pilgrim," said Barizy of the Tower.

"He could not have been one of my people," said the Armenian, "or he never would have gone to the Holy Sepulchre with the Spanish prior."

"Had he been one of your people," said Pasqualigo, "he could not have paid 10,000 piastres for a pilgrimage."

"I am sure a Greek never would," said Barizy, "unless he were a Russian prince."

"And a Russian does not care much for rosaries unless they are made of diamonds," said Pasqualigo.

"As far as I can make out this morning," said Barizy of the Tower, "it is a brother of the Queen of England."

"I was thinking it might be that," said Pasqualigo, nettled at his rival's early information, "the moment I heard he was an Englishman."

“The English do not believe in the Holy Sepulchre,” said the Armenian, calmly.

“They do not believe in our blessed Saviour,” said Pasqualigo, “but they do believe in the Holy Sepulchre.”

Pasqualigo’s strong point was theology, and there were few persons in Jerusalem who on this head ventured to maintain an argument with him.

“How do you know that the pilgrim is an Englishman?” asked their host.

“Because his servants told me so,” said Pasqualigo.

“He has got an English general for the principal officer of his household,” said Barizy, “which looks like blood royal—a very fine man, who passes the whole day at the English consulate.”

“They have taken a house in the Via Dolorosa,” said Pasqualigo.

“Of Hassan Nejed?” continued Barizy of the Tower, clutching the words out of his rival’s grasp; “Hassan asked five thousand piastres per month, and they gave it! What think you of that?”

“ He must indeed be an Englishman,” said Scheriff Effendi, taking his pipe slowly from his mouth. There was a dead silence when he spoke; he was much respected.

“ He is very young,” said Barizy of the Tower; “ younger than the queen, which is one reason why he is not on the throne, for in England the eldest always succeeds, except in moveables, and those always go to the youngest.”

Barizy of the Tower, though he gave up to Pasqualigo in theology, partly from delicacy, being a Jew, would yield to no man in Jerusalem in his knowledge of law.

“ If he goes on at this rate,” said the Armenian, “ he will soon spend all his money; this place is dearer than Stamboul.”

“ There is no fear of his spending all his money,” said their host, “ for the young man has brought me such a letter, that if he were to tell me to rebuild the temple, I must do it.”

“ And who is this young man, Besso?” exclaimed the Invisible, starting up, and himself exhibiting a youthful countenance; fair, almost effeminate, no beard, a slight moustache,

his features too delicate, but his brow finely arched, and his blue eye glittering with fire.

“He is an English lord,” said Besso, “and one of the greatest; that is all I know.”

“And why does he come here?” inquired the youth. “The English do not make pilgrimages.”

“Yet you have heard what he has done.”

“And why is this silent Frenchman smoking your Latakia,” he continued in a low voice. “He comes to Jerusalem at the same time as this Englishman. There is more in this than meets our eye. You do not know the northern nations. They exist only in political combinations. You are not a politician, my Besso. Depend upon it, we shall hear more of this Englishman, and of his doing something else than praying at the Holy Sepulchre.”

“It may be so, most noble Emir, but, as you say, I am no politician.”

“Would that you were, my Besso! It would be well for you and for all of us. See now,” he added in a whisper, “that apparently inanimate mass, Scheriff Effendi, that man has a political head, he understands a com-

ination, he is going to smuggle me five thousand English muskets into the Desert, he will deliver them to a Bedoueen tribe, who have engaged to convey them safely to the Mountain. There, what do you think of that, my Besso! Do you know now what are politics? Tell the Rose of Sharon of it. She will say it is beautiful. Ask the Rose what she thinks of it, my Besso."

"Well, I shall see her to-morrow."

"I have done well; have I not?"

"You are satisfied; that is well."

"Not quite, my Besso; but I can be satisfied, if you please. You see that Scheriff Effendi there, sitting like an Afrite—he will not give me the muskets unless I pay him for them—and the Bedoueen chief, he will not carry the arms unless I give him 10,000 piastres. Now, if you will pay these people for me, my Besso, and deduct the expenses from my Lebanon Loan when it is negotiated, that would be a great service. Now, now, my Besso, shall it be done?" he continued with the coaxing voice and with the wheedling manner of a girl. "You shall have

any terms you like, and I will always love you so, my Besso. Let it be done, let it be done! I will go down on my knees, and kiss your hand before the Frenchman, which will spread your fame throughout Europe, and make Louis Philippe take you for the first man in Syria, if you will do it for me. Dear, dear Besso, you will pay that old camel Scheriff Effendi for me—will you not?—and please the Rose of Sharon as much as me!”

“My prince,” said Besso, “have a fresh pipe; I never can transact business after sunset.”

The reader will remember that Sidonia had given Tancred a letter of credit on Besso. He is the same Besso who was the friend at Jerusalem of Contarini Fleming, and this is the same chamber in which Contarini, his host, and others who were present, inscribed one night, before their final separation, certain sentences in the panels of the walls. The original writing remains, but Besso, as we have already seen, has had the sentences emblazoned in a manner more permanent and more striking to the eye. They may however

be both seen by all those who visit Jerusalem, and who enjoy the flowing hospitality and experience the boundless benevolence of this prince of Hebrew merchants.

## CHAPTER III.

THE Christian convents form one of the most remarkable features of modern Jerusalem. There are three principal ones: the Latin Convent of Terra Santa, founded it is believed during the last crusade, and richly endowed by the kings of Christendom; the Armenian and the Greek convents, whose revenues are also considerable, but derived from the numerous pilgrims of their different churches, who annually visit the Holy Sepulchre, and generally during their sojourn reside within the walls of their respective religious houses. To be competent to supply such accommodation, it will easily be apprehended

that they are of considerable size. They are in truth monastic establishments of the first class: as large as citadels, and almost as strong. Lofty stone walls enclose an area of acres, in the centre of which rises an irregular mass of buildings and enclosures; courts of all shapes, galleries of cells, roofs, terraces, gardens, corridors, churches, houses, and even streets. Sometimes as many as five thousand pilgrims have been lodged, fed, and tended during Easter in one of these convents.

Not in that of Terra Santa, of which a Protestant traveller, passing for a pilgrim, is often the only annual guest; as Tancred at present. In a white-washed cell, clean, and sufficiently airy and spacious, Tancred was lying on an iron bedstead, the only permanent furniture of the chamber, with the exception of a crucifix, but well suited to the fervent and procreative clime. He was smoking a Turkish pipe, which stretched nearly across the apartment, and his Italian attendant, Baroni, on one knee, was arranging the bowl.

“ I begin rather to like it,” said Tancred.

“ I am sure you would, my lord. In this country it is like mother’s milk, nor is it possible to make way without it. ’Tis the finest tobacco of Latakia, the choicest in the world, and I have smoked all. I begged it myself from Signor Besso, whose divan is renowned, the day I called on him with your lordship’s letter.”

Saying this, Baroni quickly rose—a man from thirty-two to thirty-five—rather under the middle height, slender, lithe, and pliant; a long black beard, cleared off his chin when in Europe, and concealed under his cravat, but always ready for the Orient, whiskers closely shaved but strongly marked, sallow, an aquiline nose, white teeth, a sparkling black eye. His costume entirely white, fashion Mamlouk—that is to say, trowsers of a prodigious width and a light jacket; a white shawl wound round his waist, enclosing his dagger; another forming his spreading turban. Temperament, remarkable vivacity modified by extraordinary experience.

Availing himself of the previous permission

of his master, Baroni, having arranged the pipe, seated himself cross-legged on the floor.

“And what are they doing about the house?” inquired Tancred.

“They will be all stowed to-day,” replied Baroni.

“I shall not quit this place,” said Tancred; “I wish to be quite undisturbed.”

“Be not alarmed, my lord; they are amused. The colonel never quits the consulate; dines there every day, and tells stories about the Peninsular war and the Bellamont cavalry, just as he did on board; Mr. Bernard is always with the English bishop, who is delighted to have an addition to his congregation, which is not too much, consisting of his own family, the English and Prussian consuls, and five Jews, whom they have converted at twenty piastres a-week; but I know they are going to strike for wages. As for the doctor, he has not a minute to himself. The governor’s wife has already sent for him; he has been admitted to the harem; has felt all their pulses without seeing any of their faces, and his medicine chest is in danger of being exhausted before your lordship requires its aid.”

“ Take care that they are comfortable,” said Tancred.

“ And what does your lordship wish to do to-day ?”

“ I must go to Gethsemane.”

“ 'Tis the shot of an arrow ; go out by the gate of Sion, pass through the Turkish cemetery, cross the Kedron, which is so dry this weather that you may do so in your slippers, and you will find the remnant of an olive grove at the base of the mount.”

“ You talk as if you were giving a direction in London.”

“ I wish I knew London as well as I know Jerusalem ! This is not a very great place, and I think I have been here twenty times. Why, I made eight visits here in '40 and '41 ; twice from England, and six times from Egypt.”

“ Active work !”

“ Ah ! those were times ! If the Pacha had taken M. de Sidonia's advice, in '41, something would have happened in this city——” And here Baroni pulled up : “ Your lordship's pipe draws easy ?”

“Very well. And when was your first visit here, Baroni?”

“When M. de Sidonia travelled. I came in his suite from Naples, eighteen years ago, the next Annunciation of our blessed Lady,” and he crossed himself.

“You must have been very young then?”

“Young enough; but it was thought, I suppose, that I could light a pipe. We were seven when we left Naples, all picked men; but I was the only one who was in Paraguay with M. de Sidonia, and that was nearly the end of our travels, which lasted five years.”

“And what became of the rest?”

“Got ill or got stupid; no mercy in either case with M. de Sidonia, packed off instantly, wherever you may be; whatever money you like, but go you must. If you were in the middle of the desert and the least grumbling, you would be spliced on a camel and a Bedouen tribe would be hired to take you to the nearest city, Damascus or Jerusalem, or anywhere, with an order on Signor Besso, or some other signor to pay them.”

“And you were never invalided?”

“Never; I was young and used to tumble about as long as I can remember day; but it was sharp practice sometimes; five years of such work as few men have been through. It educated me and opened my mind amazingly.”

“It seems to have done so,” said Tancred, quietly.

Shortly after this, Tancred, attended by Baroni, passed the gate of Sion. Not a human being was visible, except the Turkish sentries. It was midsummer, but no words and no experience of other places, can convey an idea of the canicular heat of Jerusalem. Bengal, Egypt, even Nubia, are nothing to it; in these countries there are rivers, trees, shade, and breezes; but Jerusalem at mid-day in midsummer is a city of stone in a land of iron with a sky of brass. The wild glare and savage lustre of the landscape are themselves awful. We have all read of the man who had lost his shadow—this is a shadowless world. Everything is so flaming and so clear, that it would remind one of a Chinese painting, but that the scene is one too bold and wild for the imagination of the Mongol race.

“ There,” said Baroni, pointing to a group of most ancient olive trees at the base of the opposite hill, and speaking as if he were showing the way to Kensington—“ there is Gethsemane; the path to the right leads to Bethany.”

“ Leave me now,” said Tancred.

There are moments when we must be alone, and Tancred had fixed upon this hour for visiting Gethsemane, because he felt assured that no one would be stirring. Descending Mount Sion, and crossing Kedron, he entered the sacred grove.

## CHAPTER IV.

THE sun had been declining for some hours, the glare of the earth had subsided, the fervour of the air was allayed. A caravan came winding round the hills, with many camels and persons in rich, bright Syrian dresses; a congregation that had assembled at the church of the Ascension on Mount Olivet had broken up, and the side of the hill was studded with brilliant and picturesque groups; the standard of the Crescent floated on the tower of David; there was the clang of Turkish music, and the governor of the city, with a numerous cavalcade, might be discerned on Mount Moriah, caracoling without the walls; a procession of

women bearing classic vases on their heads, who had been fetching the waters of Siloah from the well of Job, came up the valley of Jehoshaphat, to wind their way to the gate of Stephen and enter Jerusalem by the street of Calvary.

Tancred came forth from the garden of Gethsemane, his face was flushed with the rapt stillness of pious ecstasy; hours had vanished during his passionate reverie, and he stared upon the declining sun.

“The path to the right leads to Bethany.” The force of association brought back the last words that he had heard from a human voice. And can he sleep without seeing Bethany? He mounts the path. What a landscape surrounds him as he moves! What need for nature to be fair in a scene like this, where not a spot is visible that is not heroic or sacred, consecrated or memorable; not a rock that is not the cave of prophets; not a valley that is not the valley of heaven-anointed kings; not a mountain that is not the mountain of God!

Before him is a living, a yet breathing and existing city, which Assyrian monarchs came down to besiege, which the chariots of Pharaohs

encompassed, which Roman Emperors have personally assailed, for which Saladin and Cœur de Lion, the Desert and Christendom, Asia and Europe, struggled in rival chivalry—a city which Mahomet sighed to rule, and over which the Creator alike of Assyrian kings and Egyptian Pharaohs and Roman Cæsars, the framer alike of the Desert and of Christendom, poured forth the full effusion of his divinely human sorrow.

What need of cascade and of cataract, the deep green turf, the foliage of the fairest trees, the impenetrable forest, the abounding river, mountains of glaciated crest, the voice of birds, the bounding forms of beauteous animals,—all sights and sounds of material loveliness that might become the delicate ruins of some archaic theatre, or the lingering fanes of some forgotten faith! They would not be observed as the eye seized on Sion and Calvary; the gates of Bethlehem and Damascus; the hill of Titus; the mosque of Mahomet and the tomb of Christ. The view of Jerusalem is the history of the world; it is more, it is the history of earth and of heaven.

The path winding round the southern side of the Mount of Olives at length brought Tancred in sight of a secluded village, situate among the hills on a sunny slope, and shut out from all objects excepting the wide landscape which immediately faced it; the first glimpse of Arabia through the ravines of the Judæan hills; the rapid Jordan quitting its green and happy valley for the bitter waters of Asphaltites, and, in the extreme distance, the blue mountains of Moab.

Ere he turned his reluctant steps towards the city, he was attracted by a garden, which issued as it were from a gorge in the hills, so that its limit was not perceptible, and then spread over a considerable space, comparatively with the inclosures in its vicinity, until it reached the village. It was surrounded by high stone walls, which every now and then the dark spiral forms of a cypress or a cedar would overtop, and in the more distant and elevated part rose a tall palm tree, bending its graceful and languid head on which the sunbeam glittered. It was the first palm that

Tancred had ever seen, and his heart throbbed as he beheld that fair and sacred tree.

As he approached the garden, Tancred observed that its portal was open: he stopped before it, and gazed upon its walks of lemon trees with delight and curiosity. Tancred had inherited from his mother a passion for gardens; and an eastern garden, a garden in the Holy Land, such as Gethsemane might have been in those days of political justice when Jerusalem belonged to the Jews,—the occasion was irresistible; he could not withstand the temptation of beholding more nearly a palm tree; and he entered.

Like a prince in a fairy tale, who has broken the mystic boundary of some enchanted pleasure, Tancred traversed the alleys which were formed by the lemon and pomegranate tree, and sometimes by the myrtle and the rose. His ear caught the sound of falling water, bubbling with a gentle noise; more distinct and more forcible every step that he advanced. The walk in which he now found himself ended in an open space covered with roses; beyond

them a gentle acclivity, clothed so thickly with a small bright blue flower that it seemed a bank of turquoise, and on its top was a kiosk of white marble, gilt and painted; by its side, rising from a group of rich shrubs, was the palm, whose distant crest had charmed Tancred without the gate.

In the centre of the kiosk was the fountain, whose alluring voice had tempted Tancred to proceed further than he had at first dared to project. He must not retire without visiting the waters which had been speaking to him so long. Following the path round the area of roses, he was conducted to the height of the acclivity, and entered the kiosk; some small beautiful mats were spread upon its floor, and, reposing upon one of them, Tancred watched the bright clear water as it danced and sparkled in its marble basin.

The reader has perhaps experienced the effect of falling water. Its lulling influence is proverbial. In the present instance, we must remember, that Tancred had been exposed to the meridian fervour of a Syrian sun, that he had been the whole day under the influence of

that excitement which necessarily ends in exhaustion; and that, in addition to this, he had recently walked some distance; it will not, therefore, be looked upon as an incident improbable or astonishing, that Lord Montacute, after pursuing for sometime that train of meditation which was his custom, should have fallen asleep.

His hat had dropped from his head; his rich curls fell on his outstretched arm that served as a pillow for a countenance which in the sweet dignity of its blended beauty and stillness might have become an archangel; and, lying on one of the mats, in an attitude of unconscious gracefulness which a painter might have transferred to his portfolio, Tancred sank into a deep and dreamless repose.

He woke refreshed and renovated, but quite insensible of all that had recently occurred. He stretched his limbs; something seemed to embarrass him; he found himself covered with a rich robe. He was about to rise, resting on his arm, when turning his head he beheld—the form of a woman.

She was young, even for the East; her sta-

ture rather above the ordinary height, and clothed in the rich dress usual among the Syrian ladies. She wore an amber vest of gold-embroidered silk, fitting closely to her shape and fastening with buttons of precious stones from the bosom to the waist, there opening like a tunic, so that her limbs were free to range in her huge Mamlouk trowsers, made of that white Cashmere, a shawl of which can be drawn through a ring. These, fastened round her ancles with clasps of rubies, fell again over her small slippered feet. Over her amber vest she had an embroidered pelisse of violet silk, with long hanging sleeves, which showed occasionally an arm rarer than the costly jewels which embraced it; a many-coloured Turkish scarf inclosed her waist; and then, worn loosely over all, was an outer pelisse of amber Cashmere, lined with the fur of the white fox. At the back of her head was a cap, quite unlike the Greek and Turkish caps which we are accustomed to see in England, but somewhat resembling the head-dress of a Mandarin; round, not flexible, almost flat; and

so thickly incrustated with pearls, that it was impossible to detect the colour of the velvet which covered it. Beneath it descended two broad braids of dark brown hair, which would have swept the ground had they not been turned half-way up, and there fastened with bunches of precious stones; these too restrained the hair which fell, in rich braids, on each side of her face.

That face presented the perfection of oriental beauty; such as it existed in Eden, such as it may yet occasionally be found among the favoured races in the favoured climes, and such as it might have been found abundantly and for ever, had not the folly and malignity of man been equal to the wisdom and beneficence of Jehovah. The countenance was oval, yet the head was small. The complexion was neither fair nor dark, yet it possessed the brilliancy of the north without its dryness, and the softness peculiar to the children of the sun without its moisture. A rich subdued and equable tint overspread this visage, though the skin was so transparent that you occa-

sionally caught the streaky splendour of some vein like the dappled shades in the fine peel of beautiful fruit.

But it was in the eye and its overspreading arch that all the Orient spake, and you read at once of the starry vaults of Araby and the splendour of Chaldean skies. Dark, brilliant, with pupil of great size and prominent from its socket, its expression and effect, notwithstanding the long eyelid of the Desert, would have been those of a terrible fascination, had not the depth of the curve in which it reposed softened the spell and modified irresistible power by ineffable tenderness. This supreme organization is always accompanied, as in the present instance, by a noble forehead, and by an eyebrow of perfect form, spanning its space with undeviating beauty; very narrow, though its roots are invisible.

The nose was small, slightly elevated, with long oval nostrils fully developed. The small mouth, the short upper lip, the teeth like the neighbouring pearls of Ormuz, the round chin, polished as a statue, were in perfect harmony

with the delicate ears, and the hands with nails shaped like almonds.

Such was the form that caught the eye of Tancred. She was on the opposite side of the fountain, and stood gazing on him with calmness, and with a kind of benignant curiosity. The garden, the kiosk, the falling waters, recalled the past, which flashed over his mind almost at the moment that he beheld the beautiful apparition. Half risen, yet not willing to remain until he was on his legs to apologize for his presence, Tancred, still leaning on his arm and looking up at his unknown companion, said, "Lady, I am an intruder."

The lady, seating herself on the brink of the fountain, and motioning at the same time with her hand to Tancred not to rise, replied, "We are so near the desert that you must not doubt our hospitality."

"I was tempted by the first sight of a palm-tree to a step too bold; and then sitting by this fountain, I know not how it was——"

"You yielded to our Syrian sun," said the lady. "It has been the doom of many; but

you, I trust, will not find it fatal. Walking in the garden with my maidens, we observed you, and one of us covered your head. If you remain in this land you should wear the turban."

"This garden seems a Paradise," said Tancred. "I had not thought that anything so fair could be found among these awful mountains. It is a spot that quite becomes Bethany."

"You Franks love Bethany?"

"Naturally; a place to us most dear and interesting."

"Pray, are you of those Franks who worship a Jewess; or of those other who revile her, break her images, and blaspheme her pictures?"

"I venerate, though I do not adore, the mother of God," said Tancred, with emotion.

"Ah! the mother of Jesus!" said his companion, "He is your God. He lived much in this village. He was a great man, but he was a Jew; and you worship him."

"And you do not worship him?" said

Tancred, looking up to her with an inquiring glance, and with a reddening cheek.

“It sometimes seems to me that I ought,” said the lady; “for I am of his race, and you should sympathize with your race.”

“You are, then, a Hebrew?”

“I am of the same blood as Mary whom you venerate, but will not adore.”

“You just now observed,” said Tancred, after a momentary pause, “that it sometimes almost seems to you, that you ought to acknowledge my Lord and Master. He made many converts at Bethany, and found here some of his gentlest disciples. I wish that you had read the history of his life.”

“I have read it. The English Bishop here has given me the book. It is a good one, written, I observe, entirely by Jews. I find in it many things with which I agree; and if there be some from which I dissent, it may be that I do not comprehend them.”

“You are already half a Christian!” said Tancred, with animation.

“But the Christianity which I draw from your book does not agree with the Christianity

which you practise," said the lady, "and I fear, therefore, it may be heretical."

"The Christian Church would be your guide."

"Which?" inquired the lady; "there are so many in Jerusalem. There is the good bishop who presented me with this volume, and who is himself a Hebrew—he is a Church; there is the Latin Church, which was founded by a Hebrew; there is the Armenian Church, which belongs to an eastern nation who, like the Hebrews, have lost their country and are scattered in every clime; there is the Abyssinian Church, who hold us in great honour, and practise many of our rites and ceremonies; and there are the Greek, the Maronite, and the Coptic churches, who do not favour us, but who do not treat us as grossly as they treat each other. In this perplexity it may be wise to remain within the pale of a church older than all of them, the church in which Jesus was born and which he never quitted, for he was born a Jew, lived a Jew, and died a Jew; as became a Prince of

the house of David, which you do and must acknowledge him to have been. Your sacred genealogies prove the fact; and if you could not establish it, the whole fabric of your faith falls to the ground."

"If I had no confidence in any Church," said Tancred, with agitation, "I would fall down before God and beseech him to enlighten me; and, in this land," he added, in a tone of excitement, "I cannot believe that the appeal to the Mercy-seat would be made in vain."

"But human wit ought to be exhausted, before we presume to invoke divine interposition," said the lady. "I observe that Jesus was as fond of asking questions as of performing miracles; an inquiring spirit will solve mysteries. Let me ask you—you think that the present state of my race is penal and miraculous?"

Tancred gently bowed assent.

"Why do you?" asked the lady.

"It is the punishment ordained for their rejection and crucifixion of the Messiah."

"Where is it ordained?"

“ Upon our heads and upon our children be his blood.”

“ The criminals said that, not the judge. Is it a principle of your jurisprudence to permit the guilty to assign their own punishment? They might deserve a severer one. Why should they transfer any of the infliction to their posterity? What evidence have you that Omnipotence accepted the offer? It is not so announced in your histories. Your evidence is the reverse. He, whom you acknowledge as omnipotent, prayed to Jehovah to forgive them on account of their ignorance. But, admit that the offer was accepted, which in my opinion is blasphemy, is the cry of a rabble at a public execution to bind a nation? There was a great party in the country not disinclined to Jesus at the time, especially in the provinces where he had laboured for three years and on the whole with success; are they and their children to suffer? But you will say, they became Christians. Admit it. We were originally a nation of twelve tribes; ten, long before the advent of Jesus, had been carried into captivity and scattered over the

East and the Mediterranean world; they are probably the source of the greater portion of the existing Hebrews; for we know that, even in the time of Jesus, Hebrews came up to Jerusalem at the Passover from every province of the Roman empire. What had they to do with the crucifixion or the rejection?"

"The fate of the Ten Tribes is a deeply interesting question," said Tancred; "but involved in, I fear, inexplicable obscurity. In England, there are many who hold them to be represented by the Affghans, who state that their ancestors followed the laws of Moses. But perhaps they ceased to exist and were blended with their conquerors."

"The Hebrews have never blended with their conquerors," said the lady, proudly. "They were conquered frequently, like all small states situate amid rival empires. Syria was the battle-field of the great monarchies. Jerusalem has not been conquered oftener than Athens, or treated worse; but its people, unhappily, fought too bravely and rebelled too often, so at last they were expatriated. I hold that, to believe that the Hebrew communities

are in a principal measure the descendants of the Ten Tribes, and of the other captivities preceding Christ, is a just and fair and sensible inference, which explains circumstances that otherwise could not be explicable. But let that pass. We will suppose all the Jews in all the cities of the world to be the lineal descendants of the mob who shouted at the crucifixion. Yet another question! My grandfather is a Bedouen sheikh, chief of one of the most powerful tribes of the desert. My mother was his daughter. He is a Jew — his whole tribe are Jews—they read, and obey the five books, live in tents, have thousands of camels, ride horses of the Nedjed breed, and care for nothing except Jehovah, Moses, and their mares. Were they at Jerusalem at the crucifixion, and does the shout of the rabble touch them? Yet my mother marries a Hebrew of the cities, and a man, too, fit to sit on the throne of King Solomon; and a little Christian Yahooor with a round hat, who sells figs at Smyrna, will cross the street if he see her, lest he should be contaminated by the blood of one who crucified his Saviour; his

Saviour being, by his own statement, one of the princes of our royal house. No; I will never become a Christian, if I am to eat such sand! It is not to be found in your books. They were written by Jews, men far too well acquainted with their subject to indite such tales of the Philistines as these!"

Tancred looked at her with deep interest as her eye flashed fire, and her beautiful cheek was for a moment suffused with the crimson cloud of indignant passion; and then he said, "You speak of things that deeply interest me, or I should not be in this land. But tell me—it cannot be denied that, whatever the cause, the miracle exists; and that the Hebrews, alone of the ancient races, remain, and are found in every country—a memorial of the mysterious and mighty past."

"Their state may be miraculous without being penal. But why miraculous? Is it a miracle that Jehovah should guard his people? And can he guard them better than by endowing them with faculties superior to those of the nations among whom they dwell?"

"I cannot believe that merely human agen-

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cies could have sustained a career of such duration and such vicissitudes.”

“As for human agencies, we have a proverb: ‘The will of man is the servant of God.’ But if you wish to make a race endure, rely upon it, you should expatriate them. Conquer them, and they may blend with their conquerors; exile them, and they will live apart and for ever. To expatriate is purely oriental—quite unknown to the modern world. We were speaking of the Armenians—they are Christians, and good ones, I believe.”

“I have understood very orthodox.”

“Go to Armenia, and you will not find an Armenian. They too are an expatriated nation, like the Hebrews. The Persians conquered their land, and drove out the people. The Armenian has a proverb—‘In every city of the East I find a home.’ They are everywhere; the rivals of my people, for they are one of the great races, and little degenerated: with all our industry, and much of our energy; I would say, with all our human virtues, though it cannot be expected that they should possess our divine qualities; they have not

produced Gods and prophets, and are proud that they can trace up their faith to one of the obscurest of the Hebrew apostles, and who never knew his great master."

"But the Armenians are found only in the East," said Tancred.

"Ah!" said the lady, with a sarcastic smile; "it is exile to Europe, then, that is the curse: well, I think you have some reason. I do not know much of your quarter of the globe: Europe is to Asia what America is to Europe. But I have felt the winds of the Euxine blowing up the Bosphorus; and, when the Sultan was once going to cut off our heads for helping the Egyptians, I passed some months at Vienna. Oh! how I sighed for my beautiful Damascus!"

"And for your garden at Bethany?" said Tancred.

"It did not exist then. This is a recent creation," said the lady. "I have built a nest in the chink of the hills, that I might look upon Arabia; and the palm-tree that invited you to honour my domain was the contribution of my Arab grandfather to the only

garden near Jerusalem. But I want to ask you another question—what, on the whole, is the thing most valued in Europe?”

Tancred pondered; and after a slight pause, said, “I think I know what ought to be most valued in Europe; it is something very different from what, I fear, I must confess is most valued there. My cheek burns while I say it; but I think, in Europe, what is most valued is—money.”

“On the whole,” said the lady, “he that has most money there is most honoured?”

“Practically, I apprehend so.”

“Which is the greatest city in Europe?”

“Without doubt, the capital of my country, London.”

“Greater I know it is than Vienna; but is it greater than Paris?”

“Perhaps double the size of Paris.”

“And four times that of Stamboul! What a city! Why ’tis Babylon! How rich the most honoured man must be there! Tell me, is he a Christian?”

“I believe he is one of your race and faith.”

“ And in Paris—who is the richest man in Paris?”

“ The brother, I believe, of the richest man in London.”

“ I know all about Vienna,” said the lady, smiling. “ Cæsar makes my countrymen barons of the empire, and rightly, for it would fall to pieces in a week without their support. Well, you must admit that the European part of the curse has not worked very fatally.”

“ I do not see,” said Tancred thoughtfully, after a short pause, “ that the penal dispersion of the Hebrew nation is at all essential to the great object of the Christian scheme. If a Jew did not exist, that would equally have been obtained.”

“ And what do you hold to be the essential object of the Christian scheme?”

“ The Expiation.”

“ Ah!” said the lady, in a tone of much solemnity, “ that is a great idea: in harmony with our instincts, with our traditions, our customs. It is deeply impressed upon the convictions of this land. Shaped as you Christians offer the doctrine, it loses none of its

sublimity; or its associations full at the same time of mystery, power, and solace. A sacrificial Mediator with Jehovah, that expiatory intercessor born from the chosen house of the chosen people, yet blending in his inexplicable nature the divine essence with the human elements, appointed before all time, and purifying, by his atoning blood, the myriads that preceded and the myriads that will follow us, without distinction of creed or clime—this is what you believe. I acknowledge the vast conception, dimly as my brain can partially embrace it. I understand thus much: the human race is saved; and, without the apparent agency of a Hebrew prince, it could not have been saved. Now tell me: suppose the Jews had not prevailed upon the Romans to crucify Jesus, what would have become of the Atonement?

“I cannot permit myself to contemplate such contingencies,” said Tancred. “The subject is too high for me to touch with speculation. I must not even consider an event that had been pre-ordained by the Creator of the world for countless ages.”

“ Ah !” said the lady ; “ pre-ordained by the Creator of the world for countless sages ! Where then was the inexpiable crime of those who fulfilled the beneficent intention ? The holy race supplied the victim and the immolators. What other race could have been entrusted with such a consummation ? Was not Abraham prepared to sacrifice even his son ? And with such a doctrine, that embraces all space and time ; nay more, chaos and eternity ; with divine persons for the agents, and the redemption of the whole family of man for the subject—you can mix up the miserable persecution of a single race ! And this is practical, not doctrinal Christianity. It is not found in your Christian books, which were all written by Jews ; it must have been made by some of those Churches to which you have referred me. Persecute us ! Why, if you believed what you profess, you should kneel to us ! You raise statues to the hero who saves a country. We have saved the human race, and you persecute us—for doing it.”

“ I am no persecutor,” said Tancred, with emotion ; “ and, had I been so, my visit to

Bethany would have cleansed my heart of such dark thoughts."

"We have some conclusions in common," said his companion, rising. "We agree that half Christendom worships a Jewess, and the other half a Jew. Now let me ask you one more question. Which do you think should be the superior race; the worshipped or the worshippers?"

Tancred looked up to reply, but the lady had disappeared.

## CHAPTER V.

BEFORE Tancred could recover from his surprise, the kiosk was invaded by a crowd of little grinning negro pages, dressed in white tunics, with red caps and slippers. They bore a number of diminutive trays of ebony inlaid with tortoiseshell and the mother of pearl of Joppa, and covered with a great variety of dishes. It was in vain that he would have signified to them, that he had no wish to partake of the banquet, and that he attempted to rise from his mat. They understood nothing that he said, but, always grinning and moving about him with wonderful quickness, they fastened a napkin of the finest linen, fringed

with gold, round his neck, covered the mats and the border of the fountain with their dishes and vases of differently coloured sherbets, and proceeded, notwithstanding all his attempts at refusal, to hand him their dainties in due order. Notwithstanding his present tone of mind, which was ill-adapted to any carnal gratification, Tancred had nevertheless been an unusual number of hours without food. He had made during the period no inconsiderable exertion, and was still some distance from the city. Though he resigned himself perforce to the care of his little attendants, their solicitude therefore was not inappropriate. He partook of some of their dishes, and when he had at length succeeded in conveying to them his resolution to taste no more, they cleared the kiosk with as marvellous a celerity as they had stored it, and then two of them advanced with a nargilly and a chibouque, to offer their choice to their guest. Tancred placed the latter for a moment to his mouth, and then rising, and making signs to the pages that he would now return, they danced before him in the path till he had

reached the other side of the area of roses, and then, with a hundred bows bending, they took their leave of him.

The sun had just sunk as Tancred quitted the garden: a crimson glow, shifting, as he proceeded, into rich tints of purple and of gold, suffused the stern Judæan hills, and lent an almost supernatural lustre to the landscape; lighting up the wild gorges, gilding the distant glens, and still kindling the superior elevations with its living blaze. The air, yet fervid, was freshened by a slight breeze that came over the wilderness from the Jordan, and the big round stars that were already floating in the skies were the brilliant heralds of the splendour of a Syrian night. The beauteous hour and the sacred scene were alike in unison with the heart of Tancred, softened and serious. He mused in fascinated reverie over the dazzling incident of the day. Who was this lady of Bethany, who seemed not unworthy to have followed Him who had made her abiding place so memorable? Her beauty might have baffled the most ideal painter of the fair Hebrew saints. Raffaele himself

could not have designed a brow of more delicate supremacy. Her lofty but gracious bearing, the vigour of her clear, frank mind, her earnestness, free from all ecstasy and flimsy enthusiasm, but founded in knowledge and deep thought, and ever sustained by exact expression and ready argument, her sweet witty voice, the great and all-engaging theme on which she was so content to discourse, and which seemed by right to belong to her—all these were circumstances which wonderfully affected the imagination of Tancred.

He was lost in the empyrean of high abstraction, his gaze apparently fixed on the purple mountains and the golden skies and the glittering orbs of coming night, which yet in truth he never saw, when a repeated shout at length roused him. It bade him stand aside on the narrow path that winds round the Mount of Olives from Jerusalem to Bethany, and let a coming horseman pass. The horseman was the young Emir who was a guest the night before in the divan of Besso. Though habited in the Mamlouk dress, as if only the attendant of some great man, huge trowsers and jacket

of crimson cloth, a white turban, a shawl round his waist holding his pistols and sabre, the horse he rode was a Kochlani of the highest breed. By him was a running footman, holding his nargilly, to which the Emir frequently applied his mouth as he rode along. He shot a keen glance at Tancred as he passed by, and then throwing his tube to his attendant, he bounded on.

In the mean time, we must not forget the lady of Bethany after she so suddenly disappeared from the kiosk. Proceeding up her mountain garden, which narrowed as she advanced, and attended by two female slaves, who had been in waiting without the kiosk, she was soon in that hilly chink in which she had built her nest; a long, low pavilion, with a shelving roof, and surrounded by a Saracenic arcade; the whole painted in fresco; a golden pattern of flowing fancy on a white ground. If there were door or window, they were entirely concealed by the blinds which appeared to cover the whole surface of the building. Stepping into the arcade, the lady entered the pavilion by a side portal, which

opened by a secret spring, and which conducted her into a small corridor, and this again through two chambers, in both of which were many females who mutely saluted her as she passed, without rising from their employments. Then she entered a more capacious and ornate apartment. Its ceiling, which described the horseshoe arch of the Saracens, was encrusted with that honeycomb work which is peculiar to them, and which, in the present instance, was of rose colour and silver. Mirrors were inserted in the cedar panels of the walls; a divan of rose-coloured silk surrounded the chamber, and on the thick soft carpet of many colours, which nearly covered the floor, were several cushions surrounding an antique marble tripod of wreathed serpents. The lady, disembarassing herself of her slippers, seated herself on the divan in the fashion of her country; one of her attendants brought a large silver lamp, which diffused a delicious odour as well as a brilliant light, and placed it on the tripod; while the other clapping her hands, a band of beautiful girls entered the room, bearing dishes of

confectionary, plates of choice fruits, and vases of delicious sherbets. The lady, partaking of some of these, directed, after a short time, that they should be offered to her immediate attendants, who thereupon kissed their hands with a grave face, and pressed them to their hearts. Then one of the girls leaving the apartment for a moment, returned with a nargilly of crystal, set by the most cunning artists of Damascus in a frame-work of golden filagree crusted with precious stones. She presented the flexible silver tube, tipped with amber, to the lady, who, waving her hand that the room should be cleared, smoked a confection of roses and rare nuts, while she listened to a volume read by one of her maidens, who was seated by the silver lamp.

While they were thus employed, an opposite curtain to that by which they had entered was drawn aside, and a woman advanced, and whispered some words to the lady, who seemed to signify her assent. Immediately, a tall negro of Dongola, richly habited in a flowing crimson vest, and with a large silver collar round his neck, entered the hall, and, after the

usual salutations of reverence to the lady, spoke earnestly in a low voice. The lady listened with great attention, and then, taking out her tablets from her girdle, she wrote a few words and gave a leaf to the tall negro, who bowed and retired. Then she waved her hand, and the maiden who was reading closed her book, rose, and, pressing her hand to her heart, retired.

It seemed that the young Emir had arrived at the pavilion, and prayed that, without a moment's delay, he might speak with the Lady of Bethany.

The curtain was again withdrawn, a light step was heard, the young man who had recently passed Tancred on the road to Jerusalem bounded into the room.

“How is the Rose of Sharon?” he exclaimed. He threw himself at her feet, and pressed the hem of her garment to his lips with an ecstasy which it would have been difficult for a bystander to decide whether it were mockery or enthusiasm, or genuine feeling which took a sportive air to veil a devotion which it could

not conceal, and which it cared not too gravely to intimate.

“ Ah, Fakredeen!” said the lady, “ and when did you leave the Mountain?”

“ I arrived at Jerusalem yesterday by sunset; never did I want to see you so much. The foreign consuls have stopped my civil war, which cost me a hundred thousand piastres. We went down to Beirout and signed articles of peace; I thought it best to attend to escape suspicion. However, there is more stirring than you can conceive: never had I such combinations! First let me shortly tell you what I have done, then what I wish you to do. I have made immense hits, but I am also in a scrape.”

“ That I think you always are,” said the lady.

“ But you will get me out of it, Rose of Sharon! You always do, brightest and sweetest of friends! What an alliance is ours! My invention, your judgment—my combinations, your criticism. It must carry everything before it.”

“I do not see that it has effected much hitherto,” said the lady. “However, give me your mountain news. What have you done?”

“In the first place,” said Fakredeem, “until this accursed peace intrigue of the foreign consuls, which will not last as long as the carnival, the Mountain was more troubled than ever, and the Porte, backed up by Sir Canning, is obstinate against any prince of our house exercising the rule.”

“Do you call that good news?”

“It serves. In the first place it keeps my good uncle, the Emir Bescheer and his sons prisoners at the Seven Towers. Now, I will tell you what I have done. I have sent to my uncle and offered him two hundred thousand piastres a year for his life and that of his sons, if they will represent to the Porte that none but a prince of the House of Shehaab can possibly pacify and administer Lebanon, and that, to obtain this necessary end, they are ready to resign their rights in favour of any other member of the family.”

“What then?” said the Lady of Bethany, taking her nargilly from her mouth.

“Why then,” said Fakredeen, “I am by another agent working upon Riza Pacha to this effect—that of all the princes of the great house of Shehaab, there is none so well adapted to support the interests of the Porte as the Emir Fakredeen, and for these three principal reasons: in the first place, because he is a prince of great qualities—”

“Your proof of them to the vizir would be better than your assertion.”

“Exactly,” said Fakredeen, “I prove them by my second reason, which is a guarantee to his excellency of the whole revenue of the first year of my principedom, provided I receive the berat.”

“I can tell you something,” said the lady, “Riza shakes a little. He is too fond of first fruits. His nomination will not be popular.”

“Yes it will, when the divan takes into consideration the third reason for my appointment,” said the prince. “Namely, that the Emir Fakredeen is the only prince of the

great house of Shehaab who is a good Mussulman."

"You a good Mussulman! Why, I thought you had sent two months ago Archbishop Murad to Paris, urging King Louis to support you, because, amongst other reasons, being a Christian prince, you would defend the faith and privileges of the Maronites."

"And devote myself to France," said Fakredeem. "It is very true, and an excellent combination it is, if we could only bring it to bear, which I do not despair of, though affairs, which looked promising at Paris, have taken an unfortunate turn of late."

"I am very sorry for that," said the lady, "for really, Fakredeem, of all your innumerable combinations, that did seem to me to be the most practical. I think it might have been worked. The Maronites are very powerful; the French nation is interested in them; they are the link between France and Syria; and you, being a Christian prince as well as an emir of the most illustrious house, with your intelligence and such aid as we might give

you, I think your prospects were, to say the least, fair."

"Why, as to being a Christian prince, Eva, you must remember I aspire to a dominion where I have to govern the Maronites who are Christians, the Metoualis who are Mahometans, the Anzareys who are Pagans, and the Druses who are nothing. As for myself, my house, as you well know, is more ancient even than that of Othman. We are literally descended from the standard-bearer of the Prophet, and my own estates, as well as of those of the Emir Bescheer, have been in our registered possession for nearly eight hundred years. Our ancestors became Christians to conciliate the Maronites. Now tell me: in Europe, an English or French prince who wants a throne, never hesitates to change his religion—why should I be more nice? I am of that religion which gives me a sceptre; and if a Frank prince adopts a new creed when he quits London or Paris, I cannot understand why mine may not change according to the part of the mountain through which I am passing.

What is the use of belonging to an old family unless to have the authority of an ancestor ready for any prejudice, religious or political, which your combinations may require?"

"Ah! Fakredeen," said the lady, shaking her head, "you have no self-respect."

"No Syrian has; it won't do for us. You are an Arabian; it will do for the desert. Self-respect too is a superstition of past centuries, an affair of the crusades. It is not suited to these times; it is much too arrogant, too self-conceited, too egotistical. No one is important enough to have self-respect. Don't you see?"

"You boast of being a prince inferior to none in the antiquity of your lineage, and, as far as the mere fact is concerned, you are justified in your boast. I cannot comprehend how one who feels this pride should deign to do anything that is not princely."

"A prince!" exclaimed Fakredeen, "Princes go for nothing now—without a loan. Get me a loan, and then you turn the prince into a government. That's the thing."

"You will never get a loan till you are Emir of Lebanon," said the lady. "And you have

shown me to day that the only chance you have is failing you, for, after all, Paris was your hope. What has crossed you?"

"In the first place," said Fakredeen, "what can the French do? After having let the Egyptians be driven out, fortunately for me, for their expulsion ruined my uncle, the French will never take the initiative in Syria. All that I wanted of them was, that they should not oppose Riza Pacha in his nomination of me. But to secure his success a finer move was necessary. So I instructed Archbishop Murad, whom they received very well at Paris, to open secret communications over the water with the English. He did so, and offered to cross and explain in detail to their ministers. I wished to assure them in London that I was devoted to their interests; and I meant to offer to let the Protestant missionaries establish themselves in the mountain, so that Sir Canning should have received instructions to support my nomination by Riza. Then you see, I should have had the Porte, England, and France. The game was won. Can you believe it? Lord Aberdeen

enclosed my agent's letter to Guizot. I was crushed."

"And disgraced. You deserved it. You never will succeed. Intrigue will be your ruin, Fakredeem."

"Intrigue!" exclaimed the prince, starting from the cushion near the tripod, on which he sate, speaking with great animation, and using, as was his custom, a superfluity of expression, both of voice and hands and eyes—"intrigue! It is life! It is the only thing. How do you think Guizot and Aberdeen got to be ministers without intrigue? Or Riza Pacha himself? How do you think Mehemet Ali got on? Do you believe Sir Canning never intrigues? He would be recalled in a week if he did not. Why, I have got one of his spies in my castle at this moment, and I make him write home for the English all that I wish them not to believe. Intrigue! Why, England won India by intrigue. Do you think they are not intriguing in the Punjaub at this moment? Intrigue has gained half the thrones of Europe: Greece, France, Belgium, Portugal, Spain, Russia. If you wish to produce a result, you

must make combinations; and you call combinations, Eva, intrigue!"

"And this is the scrape that you are in," said the lady. "I do not see how I can help you out of it."

"Pardon; this is not the scrape: and here comes the point on which I need your aid, daughter of a thousand sheikhs! I can extricate myself from the Paris disaster, even turn it to account. I have made an alliance with the Patriarch of the Lebanon, who manages affairs for the Emir Bescheer. The patriarch hates Murad, whom you see I was to have made patriarch. I am to declare the Archbishop an unauthorized agent, an adventurer, and my letter to be a forgery. The patriarch is to go to Stamboul, with his long white beard, and put me right with France, through De Bourqueney, with whom he has relations in favour of the Emir Bescheer; my uncle is to be thrown over; all the Maronite chiefs are to sign a declaration supplicating the Porte to institute me; nay, the declaration is signed—"

"And the Druses? Will not this Maro-

nite manifestation put you wrong with the Druses?"

"I live among the Druses, you see," said Fakredeen, shaking his head, and looking with his glittering eye a thousand meanings. "The Druses love me. They know that I am one of themselves. They will only think that I have made the Maronites eat sand."

"And what have you really done for the Maronites to gain all this?" asked the lady, quietly.

"There it is," said Fakredeen, speaking in an affected whisper, "the greatest stroke of state that ever entered the mind of a king without a kingdom, for I am resolved that the Mountain shall be a royalty! You remember when Ibrahim Pacha laid his plans for disarming the Lebanon, the Maronites, urged by their priests, fell into the snare, while the Druses wisely went with their muskets and scimitars, and lived awhile with the eagle and the antelope. This has been sand to the Maronites ever since. The Druses put their tongues in their cheek whenever they meet, and treat them as so many women. The Porte

of course will do nothing for the Maronites; they even take back the muskets which they lent them for the insurrection. Well, as the Porte will not arm them, I have agreed to do it."

"You!"

"'Tis done; at least the caravan is laden; we only want a guide. And that is why I am at Jerusalem. Scheriff Effendi, who met me here yesterday, has got me five thousand English muskets, and I have arranged with the Bedoueen of Zoalia to carry them to the Mountain."

"You have indeed Solomon's signet, my dear Fakredeem."

"Would that I had; for then I could pay two hundred thousand piastres to that Egyptian camel, Scheriff Effendi, and he would give me up my muskets, which now, like a true son of Eblis, he obstinately retains."

"And this is your scrape, Fakredeem. And how much have you towards the sum?"

"Not a piastre; nor do I suppose I shall ever see, until I make a great financial stroke, so much of the sultan's gold as is on one of

the gilt balls of roses in your nargilly. My crops are sold for next year, my jewels are gone, my studs are to be broken up. There is not a cur in the streets of Beiroot of whom I have not borrowed money. Riza Pacha is a sponge that would dry the sea of Galilee."

"It is a great thing to have gained the Patriarch of Labanon," said the lady; "I always felt that, as long as that man was against you, the Maronites never could be depended on. And yet these arms—after all, they are of no use, for you would not think of insurrection!"

"No; but they can quarrel with the Druses, and cut each others' throats, and this will make the mountain more unmanageable than ever, and the English will have no customers for their calicoes—don't you see! Lord Palmerston will arraign the minister in the council—I shall pay off Aberdeen for enclosing the Archbishop's letter to Guizot. Combination upon combination! The calico merchants will call out for a prince of the house of Shehaab! Riza will propose me; Bourqueney will not

murmur, and Sir Canning, finding he is in a mess, will sign a fine note of words about the peace of Europe and the prosperity of Lebanon, and 'tis finished."

"And my father—you have seen him?"

"I have seen him," said the young Emir, and he cast his eyes on the ground.

"He has done so much," said Eva.

"Ask him to do more, Rose of Sharon," said Fakredeem, like a child about to cry for a toy, and he threw himself on his knees before Eva, and kept kissing her robe. "Ask him to do more," he repeated, in a suppressed tone of heart-rending cajolery, "he can refuse you nothing. Ask him, ask him, Eva! I have no friend in the world but you; I am so desolate. You have always been my friend, my counsellor, my darling, my ruby, my pearl, my rose of Rocnabad! Ask him, Eva; never mind my faults—you know me by heart—only ask him!"

She shook her head.

"Tell him that you are my sister, that I am his son, that I love you so, that I love him so; tell him anything. Say that he ought to do it because I am a Hebrew."

“A what!” said Eva.

“A Hebrew; yes, a Hebrew. I am a Hebrew by blood, and we all are by faith.”

“Thou son of a slave!” exclaimed the lady, “thou masquerade of humanity! Christian or Mussulman, Pagan or Druse, thou mayest figure as; but spare my race, Fakredeem—they are fallen——”

“But not so base as I am. It may be true, but I love you, Eva, and you love me, and if I had as many virtues as yourself, you could not love me more;—perhaps less. Women like to feel their superiority; you are as clever as I am, and have more judgment; you are generous and I am selfish; honourable, and I am a villain; brave, and I am a coward; rich, and I am poor. Let that satisfy you, and do not trample on the fallen,” and Fakredeem took her hand and bedewed it with his tears.

“Dear Fakredeem,” said Eva, “I thought you spoke in jest, as I did.”

“How can a man jest, who has to go through what I endure!” said the young Emir, in a desponding tone, and still lying at her feet. “O, my more than sister, 'tis hell! The object I

propose to myself would, with the greatest resources, be difficult; and now I have none."

"Relinquish it."

"When I am young and ruined! When I have the two greatest stimulants in the world to action—Youth and Debt! No; such a combination is never to be thrown away. Any young prince ought to win the Lebanon, but a young prince in debt ought to conquer the world!" and the Emir sprang from the floor, and began walking about the apartment.

"I think, Eva," he said, after a moment's pause, and speaking in his usual tone, "I think you really might do something with your father; I look upon myself as his son; he saved my life. And I am a Hebrew; I was nourished by your mother's breast—her being flows in my veins; and independent of all that, my ancestor was the standard-bearer of the Prophet, and the Prophet was the descendant of Ishmael, and Ishmael and Israel were brothers. I really think, between my undoubted Arabian origin and being your foster-brother, that I may be looked upon as a Jew, and that your father might do something for me."

“ Whatever my father will do, you and he must decide together,” said Eva; “ after the result of my last interference, I promised my father that I never would speak to him on your affairs again; and you know therefore that I cannot. You ought not to urge me, Fakredeen.”

“ Ah! you are angry with me,” he exclaimed, and again seated himself at her feet. “ You were saying in your heart he is the most selfish of beings. It is true, I am. But I have glorious aspirations at least. I am not content to live like my fathers in a beautiful palace, amid my woods and mountains, with Cochlani steeds, falcons that would pull down an eagle, and nargillies of rubies and emeralds. I want something more than troops of beautiful slaves, music and dances. I want Europe to talk of me. I am wearied of hearing of nothing but Ibrahim Pasha, Louis Philippe, and Palmerston. I, too, can make combinations; and I am of a better family than all three, for Ibrahim is a child of mud, a Bourbon is not equal to a Shehaab, and Lord Palmerston only sits in the queen’s second

chamber of council, as I well know from an Englishman who was at Beiroot, and with whom I have formed some political relations, of which perhaps some day you will hear."

"Well, we have arrived at a stage of your career, Fakredeem, in which no combination presents itself; I am powerless to assist you; my resources, never very great, are quite exhausted."

"No," said the Emir, "the game is yet to be won. Listen, Rose of Sharon, for this is really the point on which I came to hold counsel. A young English lord has arrived at Jerusalem this week or ten days past; he is of the highest dignity, and rich enough to buy the grand bazaar of Damascus; he has letters of credit on your father's house without any limit. No one can discover the object of his mission. I have some suspicions; there is also a French officer here who never speaks; I watch them both. The Englishman, I learnt this morning, is going to Mount Sinai. It is not a pilgrimage, because the English are really neither Jews nor Christians, but follow a sort of religion of their own, which is made every

year by their bishops, one of whom they have sent to Jerusalem, in what they call a parliament, a college of muftis—you understand. Now lend me that ear that is like an almond of Aleppo! I propose that one of the tribes that obey your grandfather shall make this Englishman prisoner as he traverses the desert. You see? Ah! Rose of Sharon, I am not yet beat; your Fakredeen is not the baffled boy that, a few minutes ago, you looked as if you thought him. I defy Ibrahim, or the King of France, or Palmerston himself, to make a combination superior to this. What a ransom! The English lord will pay Scheriff Effendi for his ten thousand muskets, and for their conveyance to the mountain besides.”

## CHAPTER VI.

IN one of those civil broils at Damascus which preceded the fall of the Janissaries, an Emir of the house of Shehaab, who lost his life in the fray, had, in the midst of the convulsion, placed his infant son in the charge of the merchant Besso, a child most dear to him, not only because the babe was his heir, but because his wife, whom he passionately loved,—a beautiful lady of Antioch and of one of the old families of the country,—had just sacrificed her life in giving birth to their son.

The wife of Besso placed the orphan infant at her own breast, and the young Fakredeem was brought up in every respect as a child of

the house ; so that, for some time, he looked upon the little Eva, who was three years younger than himself, as his sister. When Fakredeen had attained an age of sufficient intelligence for the occasion and the circumstances, his real position was explained to him ; but he was still too young for the communication to effect any change in his feelings, and the idea that Eva was not his sister only occasioned him sorrow, until his grief was forgotten when he found that the change made no difference in their lives or their love.

Soon after the violent death of the father of Fakredeen, affairs had become more tranquil, and Besso had not neglected the interests of his charge. The infant was heir to a large estate in the Lebanon ; a fine castle, an illimitable forest, and cultivated lands, whose produce, chiefly silk, afforded a revenue sufficient to maintain the not inconsiderable state of a mountain prince.

When Fakredeen was about ten years of age, his relative the Emir Bescheer, who then exercised a sovereign and acknowledged sway

over all the tribes of the Lebanon, whatever their religion or race, signified his pleasure that his kinsman should be educated at his court, in the company of his sons. So Fakredeen, with many tears, quitted his happy home at Damascus, and proceeded to Beteddeen, the beautiful palace of his uncle, situate among the mountains in the neighbourhood of Beirout. This was about the time that the Egyptians were effecting the conquest of Syria, and both the Emir Bescheer, the head of the house of Shehaab as well as Prince of the Mountain, and the great commercial confederation of the brothers Besso, had declared in favour of the invader, and were mainly instrumental to the success of Mehemet Ali. Political sympathy, and the feelings of mutual dependence which united the Emir Bescheer and the merchant of Damascus, rendered the communications between the families so frequent that it was not difficult for the family of Besso to cherish those sentiments of affection which were strong and lively in the heart of the young Fakredeen, but which, under any circumstances, depend so much

on sustained personal intercourse. Eva saw a great deal of her former brother, and there subsisted between them a romantic friendship. He was their frequent guest at Damascus, and was proud to show her how he excelled in his martial exercises, how skilful he was with his falcon, and what horses of pure race he proudly rode.

In the year '39, Fakredeem being then fifteen years of age, the country entirely tranquil, even if discontented, occupied by a disciplined army of 80,000 men, commanded by captains equal it was supposed to any conjuncture, the Egyptians openly encouraged by the greatest military nation of Europe, the Turks powerless, and only secretly sustained by the countenance of the ambassador of the weakest government that ever tottered in England—a government that had publicly acknowledged that it had forfeited the confidence of the parliament which yet it did not dissolve; every thing being thus in a state of flush and affluent prosperity, and both the house of Shehaab and the house of Besso feeling, each day more strongly, how discreet and how lucky they

had been in the course which they had adopted—came the great Syrian crash!

Whatever difference of opinion may exist as to the policy pursued by the foreign minister of England, with respect to the settlement of the Turkish empire in 1840-41, none can be permitted, by those at least competent to decide upon such questions, as to the ability with which that policy was accomplished. When we consider the position of the minister at home, not only deserted by parliament, but abandoned by his party and even forsaken by his colleagues; the military occupation of Syria by the Egyptians; the rabid demonstration of France; that an accident of time or space, the delay of a month or the gathering of a storm, might alone have baffled all his combinations; it is difficult to fix upon a page in the history of this country which records a superior instance of moral intrepidity. The bold conception and the brilliant performance were worthy of Chatham; but the domestic difficulties with which Lord Palmerston had to struggle place the exploit beyond the happiest achievement of the elder Pitt. Throughout the memorable conjuncture, Lord Palmerston

however had one great advantage which was invisible to the millions; he was served by a most vigilant and able diplomacy. The superiority of his information concerning the state of Syria to that furnished to the French minister was the real means by which he baffled the menaced legions of our neighbours. A timid secretary of state in the position of Lord Palmerston, even with such advantages, might have faltered; but the weapon was placed in the hands of one who did not shrink from its exercise, and the expulsion of the Egyptians from Turkey remains a great historic monument alike of diplomatic skill and administrative energy.

The rout of the Egyptians was fatal to the Emir Bescheer, and it seemed also, for a time, to the Damascus branch of the family of Besso. But in these days a great capitalist has deeper roots than a sovereign prince, unless he is very legitimate. The Prince of the Mountain and his sons were summoned from their luxurious and splendid Beteddeen to Constantinople, where they have ever since remained prisoners. Young Fakredeem, the moment he

heard of the fall of Acre, rode out with his falcon, as if for the pastime of a morning, and the moment he was out of sight made for the Desert, and never rested until he reached the tents of the children of Rechab, where he placed himself under the protection of the grandfather of Eva. As for the worthy merchant himself, having ships at his command, he contrived to escape with his wife and his young daughter to Trieste, and he remained in the Austrian dominions between three and four years. At length the influence of Prince Metternich, animated by Sidonia, propitiated the Porte. Adam Besso, after making his submission at Stamboul, and satisfactorily explaining his conduct to Riza Pacha, returned to his country, not substantially injured in fortune, though the northern clime had robbed him of his Arabian wife; for his brothers, who, as far as politics were concerned, had ever kept in the shade, had managed affairs in the absence of the more prominent member of their house—and, in truth, the family of Besso were too rich to be long under a cloud. The Pacha of Damascus found his revenue fall very short without their inter-

ference; and as for the Divan, the Bessoes could always find a friend there if they chose. The awkwardness of the Syrian catastrophe was, that it was so sudden and so unexpected, that there was then no time for those satisfactory explanations which afterwards took place between Adam Besso and Riza.

Though the situation of Besso remained therefore unchanged after the subsidence of the Syrian agitation, the same circumstance could not be predicated of the position of his foster-child. Fakredeen possessed all the qualities of the genuine Syrian character in excess; vain, susceptible, endowed with a brilliant though frothy imagination, and a love of action so unrestrained that restlessness deprived it of energy, with so fine a taste that he was always capricious, and so ingenious that he seemed ever inconsistent. His ambition was as high as his apprehension was quick. He saw everything and understood everybody in a flash; and believed that everything that was said or done ought to be made to contribute to his fortunes. Educated in the sweet order and amid the decorous virtues of the roof

of Besso, Fakredeem, who, from his susceptibility, took the colour of his companions, even when he thought they were his tools, had figured for ten years as a soft-hearted and somewhat timid child, dependent on kind words, and returning kindness with a passionate affection.

His change to the palace of his uncle developed his native qualities, which, under any accidents, could not perhaps have been long restrained, but which the circumstances of the times brought to light and matured with a celerity peculiar to the East. The character of Fakredeem was formed amid the excitement of the Syrian invasion and its stirring consequences. At ten years of age, he was initiated in all the mysteries of political intrigue. His startling vivacity and the keen relish of his infant intelligence for all the passionate interests of men amused and sometimes delighted his uncle. Everything was spoken before him; he lived in the centre of intrigues which were to shake thrones, and perhaps to form them. He became habituated to the idea that everything could be achieved by dexterity, and that there was no test of conduct except success. To

dissemble and to simulate; to conduct confidential negotiations with contending powers and parties at the same time; to be ready to adopt any opinion and to possess none; to fall into the public humour of the moment and to evade the impending catastrophe; to look upon every man as a tool, and never to do anything which had not a definite though circuitous purpose;—these were his political accomplishments; and, while he recognized them as the best means of success, he found in their exercise excitement and delight. To be the centre of a maze of manœuvres was his empyrean. He was never without a resource.

Stratagems came to him as naturally as fruit comes to a tree. He lived in a labyrinth of plans, and he rejoiced to involve some one in the perplexities which his magic touch could alone unravel. Fakredeen had no principle of any kind; he had not a prejudice; a little superstition, perhaps, like his postponing his journey because a hare crossed his path. But, as for life and conduct in general, forming his opinions from the great men of whom he had experience, princes, pachas, and some others, and from the great transactions with which

he was connected,—he was convinced that all was a matter of force or fraud. Fakredeen preferred the latter, because it was more ingenious, and because he was of a kind and passionate temperament, loving beauty and the beautiful, apt to idealize everything, and of too exquisite a taste not to shrink with horror from an unnecessary massacre.

Though it was his profession and his pride to simulate and to dissemble, he had a native ingenuousness which was extremely awkward and very surprising, for, the moment he was intimate with you, he told you everything. Though he intended to make a person his tool and often succeeded, such was his susceptibility, and so strong were his sympathetic qualities, that he was perpetually, without being unaware of it, showing his cards. The victim thought himself safe, but the teeming resources of Fakredeen were never wanting, and some fresh and brilliant combination, as he styled it, often secured the prey which so heedlessly he had nearly forfeited. Recklessness with him was a principle of action. He trusted always to his fertile expedients if he failed, and ran the risk

in the mean while of paramount success—the fortune of those who are entitled to be rash. With all his audacity, which was nearly equal to his craft, he had no moral courage; and, if affairs went wrong, and, from some accident, exhaustion of the nervous system, the weather, or some of those slight causes which occasionally paralyze the creative mind, he felt without a combination, he would begin to cry like a child, and was capable of any action however base and humiliating to extricate himself from the impending disaster.

Fakredeem had been too young to have fatally committed himself during the Egyptian occupation. The moment he found that the Emir Bescheer and his sons were prisoners at Constantinople, he returned to Syria, lived quietly at his own castle, affected popularity among the neighbouring chieftains, who were pleased to see a Shehaab among them, and showed himself on every occasion a most loyal subject of the Porte. At seventeen years of age, Fakredeem was at the head of a powerful party, and had opened relations with the Divan. The Porte looked upon him with confidence,

and although they intended, if possible, to govern Lebanon in future themselves, a young prince of a great house, and a young prince so perfectly free from all disagreeable antecedents was not to be treated lightly. All the leaders of all the parties of the Mountain frequented the castle of Fakredeem, and each secretly believed that the prince was his pupil and his tool. There was not one of these men, grey though some of them were in years and craft, whom the innocent and ingenuous Fakredeem did not bend as a nose of wax, and, when Adam Besso returned to Syria in '43, he found his foster-child by far the most considerable person in the country, and all parties amid their doubts and distractions looking up to him with hope and confidence. He was then nineteen years of age, and Eva was sixteen. Fakredeem came instantly to Damascus to welcome them, hugged Besso, wept like a child over his sister, sat up the whole night on the terrace of their house smoking his nargilly, and telling them all his secrets without the slightest reserve—the most shameful actions of his career as well as the most brilliant; and finally pro-

posed to Besso to raise a loan for the Lebanon, ostensibly to promote the cultivation of mulberries, really to supply arms to the discontented population who were to make Fakredeem and Eva sovereigns of the Mountain.

It will have been observed, that to supply the partially disarmed tribes of the mountain with weapons was still, though at intervals, the great project of Fakredeem, and to obtain the result in his present destitution of resources involved him in endless stratagems. His success would at the same time bind the tribes, already well affected to him, with unalterable devotion to a chief capable of such an undeniable act of sovereignty, and of course render them proportionately more efficient instruments in accomplishing his purpose. It was the interest of Fakredeem that the Lebanon should be powerful and disturbed. Besso, who had often befriended him, and who had frequently rescued him from the usurers of Beiroot and Sidon, lent a cold ear to these suggestions. The great merchant was not inclined again to embark in a political career, or pass another three or four years

away from his Syrian palaces and gardens. He had seen the most powerful head that the East had produced for a century, backed by vast means, and after having apparently accomplished his purpose, ultimately recoil before the superstitious fears of Christendom, lest any change in Syria should precipitate the solution of the great Eastern problem. He could not believe that it was reserved for Fakredeen to succeed in that which had baffled Mehemet Ali.

Eva took the more sanguine view that becomes youth and woman. She had faith in Fakredeen. Though his position was not as powerful as that of the great viceroy, it was, in her opinion, more legitimate. He seemed indicated as the natural ruler of the Mountain. She had faith too in his Arabian origin. With Eva, what is called society assumed the character of a continual struggle between Asia and the North. She dreaded the idea that, after having escaped the crusaders, Syria should fall first under the protection, and then the colonization of some European power. A link was wanted in the

chain of resistance which connected the ranges of Caucasus with the Atlas. She idealized her foster-brother into a hero, and saw his standard on Mount Lebanon, the beacon of the oriental races, like the spear of Shami or the pavilion of Abdel Kader. Eva had often influenced her father for the advantage of Fakredeem, but at last even Eva felt that she should sue in vain.

A year before, involved in difficulties which it seemed no combination could control, and having nearly occasioned the occupation of Syria by a united French and English force, Fakredeem burst out a-crying like a little boy, and came whimpering to Eva, as if somebody had broken his toy or given him a beating. Then it was that Eva had obtained for him a final assistance from her father, the condition being, that this application should be the last.

Eva had given him jewels, had interested other members of her family in his behalf, and effected for him a thousand services, which only a kind-hearted and quick-witted woman could devise. While Fakredeem plundered her without

scruple and used her without remorse, he doted on her; he held her intellect in absolute reverence; a word from her guided him; a look of displeasure, and his heart ached. As long as he was under the influence of her presence, he really had no will, scarcely an idea of his own. He spoke only to elicit her feelings and opinions. He had a superstition that she was born under a fortunate star, and that it was fatal to go counter to her. But the moment he was away, he would disobey, deceive, and, if necessary, betray her; loving her the same all the time. But what was to be expected from one whose impressions were equally quick and vivid, who felt so much for himself and so much for others, that his life seemed a perpetual re-action between intense selfishness and morbid sensibility?

Had Fakredeem married Eva, the union might have given him some steadiness of character, or at least its semblance. The young Emir had greatly desired this alliance—not for the moral purpose that we have intimated—not even from love of Eva, for he was totally insensible to domestic joys, but be-

cause he wished to connect himself with great capitalists, and hoped to gain the Lebanon loan for a dower. But this alliance was quite out of the question. The hand of Eva was destined, according to the custom of the family, for her cousin, the eldest son of Besso of Aleppo. The engagement had been entered into while she was at Vienna, and it was then agreed that the marriage should take place soon after she had completed her eighteenth year. The ceremony was therefore at hand; it was to occur within a very few months.

Accustomed from an early period of life to the contemplation of this union, it assumed in the eyes of Eva a character as natural as that of birth or death. It never entered her head to ask herself whether she liked or disliked it. It was one of those inevitable things of which we are always conscious, yet of which we never think, like the years of our life or the colour of our hair. Had her destiny been in her own hands, it is very probable that she would not have shared it with Fakredeen, for she had never for an instant entertained the wish that there should be any change in the relations which subsisted between them. According to

the custom of the country, it was to Besso that Fakredeen had expressed his wishes and his hopes. The young Emir made liberal offers: his wife and his children might follow any religion they pleased; nay, he was even ready to conform himself to any which they fixed upon. He attempted to dazzle Besso with the prospect of a Hebrew Prince of the Mountains. "My daughter," said the merchant, "would certainly, under any circumstances, marry one of her own faith; but we need not say another word about it; she is betrothed, and has been engaged for some years, to her cousin."

When Fakredeen, during his recent visit to Bethany, found that Eva, notwithstanding her Bedouen blood, received his proposition for kidnapping a young English nobleman with the utmost alarm and even horror, he immediately relinquished it, diverted her mind from the contemplation of a project, on her disapproval of which, notwithstanding his efforts at distraction, she seemed strangely to dwell, and finally presented her with a new and more innocent scheme in which he required her assistance. According to Fakre-

deen, his new English acquaintance at Beirroot whom he had before quoted, was ready to assist him in the fulfilment of his contract, provided he could obtain sufficient time from Scheriff Effendi; and what he wished Eva to do was personally to request the Egyptian merchant to grant time for this indulgence. This did not seem to Eva an unreasonable favour for her foster-brother to obtain, though she could easily comprehend why his previous irregularities might render him an unsuccessful suitor to his creditor. Glad that it was still in her power in some degree to assist him, and that his present project was at least a harmless one, Eva offered the next day to repair to the city and see Scheriff Effendi on his business. Pressing her hand to his heart, and saluting her with a thousand endearing names, the Emir quitted the Rose of Sharon with the tears in his grateful eyes.

Now the exact position of Fakredeem was this: he had induced the Egyptian merchant to execute the contract for him by an assurance that Besso would be his security for the

venture, although the peculiar nature of the transaction rendered it impossible for Besso, in his present delicate position, personally to interfere in it. To keep up appearances, Fakredeen, with his usual audacious craft, had appointed Scheriff Effendi to meet him at Jerusalem, at the house of Besso, for the completion of the contract; and accordingly, on the afternoon of the day preceding his visit to Bethany, Fakredeen had arrived at Jerusalem without money and without credit, in order to purchase arms for a province.

The greatness of the conjuncture, the delightful climate, his sanguine temperament, combined however to sustain him. As he traversed his delicious mountains, with their terraces of mulberries, and olives, and vines, lounged occasionally for a short time at the towns on the coast, and looked in at some of his creditors to chatter charming delusions, or feel his way for a new combination most necessary at this moment, his blood was quick and his brain creative; and, although he had ridden nearly two hundred miles when he arrived at the "Holy City," he was fresh and full of faith that

“something would turn up.” His Egyptian friend, awfully punctual, was the first figure that welcomed him as he entered the divan of Besso, where the young Emir remained in the position which we have described, smoking interminable nargillies while he revolved his affairs, until the conversation respecting the arrival of Tancred roused him from his brooding meditation.

It was not difficult to avoid Scheriff Effendi for a while. The following morning, Fakreddeen passed half a dozen hours at the bath, and then made his visit to Eva with the plot which had occurred to him the night before at the divan, and which had been matured this day while they were shampooing him. The moment that baffled, he again arrived at Jerusalem, he sought his Egyptian merchant, and thus addressed him:—“You see, Effendi, that you must not talk on this business to Besso, nor can Besso talk to you about it.”

“Good!” said the Effendi.

“But, if it be managed by another person to your satisfaction, it will be as well.”

“ One grain is like another.”

“ It will be managed by another person to your satisfaction.”

“ Good!”

“ The Rose of Sharon is the same in this business as her father?”

“ He is a ruby and she is a pearl.”

“ The Rose of Sharon will see you to-morrow about this business.”

“ Good!”

“ The Rose of Sharon may ask you for time to settle everything; she has to communicate with other places. You have heard of such a city as Aleppo?”

“ If Damascus be an eye, Aleppo is an ear.”

“ Don't trouble the Rose of Sharon, Effendi, with any details if she speaks to you; but be content with all she proposes. She will ask, perhaps, for three months; women are nervous; they think robbers may seize the money on its way, or the key of the chest may not be found when it is wanted—you understand? Agree to what she proposes; but, between ourselves, I will meet you at Gaza

on the day of the new moon, and it is finished."

"Good."

Faithful to her promise, at an early hour of the morrow, Eva, wrapped in a huge and hooded Arab cloak, so that her form could not in the slightest degree be traced, her face covered with a black Arab mask, mounted her horse; her two female attendants, habited in the same manner, followed their mistress; before whom marched her janissary armed to the teeth, while four Arab grooms walked on each side of the cavalcade. In this way, they entered Jerusalem by the gate of Sion, and proceeded to the house of Besso. Fakredeen watched her arrival. He was in due time summoned to her presence, where he learned the success of her mission.

"Scherriff Effendi," she said, "has agreed to keep the arms for three months, you paying the usual rate of interest on the money. This is but just. May your new friend at Beirout be more powerful than I am, and as faithful!"

"Beautiful Rose of Sharon! who can be

like you! You inspire me; you always do. I feel persuaded that I shall get the money long before the time has elapsed." And, so saying, he bade her farewell, to return, as he said, without loss of time to Beiroot.

## CHAPTER VII.

THE dawn was about to break in a cloudless sky, when Tancred, accompanied by Baroni and two servants, all well armed and well mounted, and by Hassan, a sheikh of the Jellaheen Bedouens, tall and grave, with a long spear tufted with ostrich feathers in his hand, his musket slung at his back, and a scimitar at his side, quitted Jerusalem by the gate of Bethlehem.

If it were only to see the sun rise, or to become acquainted with nature at hours excluded from the experience of civilization, it were worth while to be a traveller. There is something especially in the hour that pre-

cedes a Syrian dawn, which invigorates the frame and elevates the spirit. One cannot help fancying that angels may have been resting on the mountain tops during the night—the air is so sweet and the earth so still. Nor, when it wakes, does it wake to the maddening cares of Europe. The beauty of a patriarchal repose still lingers about its existence in spite of its degradation. Notwithstanding all they have suffered during the European development, the manners of the Asiatic races generally are more in harmony with nature than the complicated conventionalisms which harass their fatal rival, and which have increased in exact proportion as the Europeans have seceded from those Arabian and Syrian creeds that redeemed them from their primitive barbarism.

But the light breaks, the rising beam falls on the gazelles still bounding on the hills of Judah, and gladdens the partridge which still calls among the ravines, as it did in the days of the prophets. About half-way between Jerusalem and Bethlehem, Tancred and his companions halted at the tomb of Rachel:

here awaited them a chosen band of twenty stout Jellaheens, the subjects of Sheikh Hassan, their escort through the wildernesses of Arabia Petræa. The fringed and ribbed kerchief of the desert, which must be distinguished from the turban, and is woven by their own women from the hair of the camel, covered the heads of the Bedouens; a short white gown, also of home manufacture, and very rude, with a belt of cords, completed, with slippers, their costume. Each man bore a musket and a dagger.

It was Baroni who had made the arrangement with Sheikh Hassan. Baroni had long known him as a brave and faithful Arab. In general, these contracts with the Bedouens for convoy through the desert are made by Franks through their respective consuls, but Tancred was not sorry to be saved from the necessity of such an application, as it would have excited the attention of Colonel Brace, who passed his life at the British consulate, and who probably would have thought it necessary to put on the uniform of the Bellamont yeomanry cavalry, and have attended the heir of Montacute to

Mount Sinai. Tancred shuddered at the idea of the presence of such a being at such a place; with his large ruddy face, his swaggering, sweltering figure, his flourishing whiskers and his fat hands.

It was the fifth morn after the visit of Tancred to Bethany, of which he had said nothing to Baroni, the only person at his command who could afford or obtain any information as to the name and quality of her with whom he had there so singularly become acquainted. He was far from incurious on the subject; all that he had seen and all that he had heard at Bethany greatly interested him. But the reserve which ever controlled him, unless under the influence of great excitement, a reserve which was the result of pride and not of caution, would probably have checked any expression of his wishes on this head, even had he not been under the influence of those feelings which now absorbed him. A human being, animated by the hope, almost by the conviction, that a celestial communication is impending over his destiny, moves in a supernal sphere, which no

earthly consideration can enter. The long musings of his voyage had been succeeded on the part of Tancred, since his arrival in the Holy Land, by one unbroken and impassioned reverie, heightened, not disturbed, by frequent and solitary prayer, by habitual fasts, and by those exciting conferences with Alonzo Lara, in which he had struggled to penetrate the great Asian mystery, reserved however, if indeed ever expounded, for a longer initiation than had yet been proved by the son of the English noble.

After a week of solitary preparation, during which he had interchanged no word, and maintained an abstinence which might have rivalled an old eremite of Engedi, Tancred had kneeled before that empty sepulchre of the divine Prince of the house of David, for which his ancestor, Tancred de Montacute, six hundred years before, had struggled with those followers of Mahound, who, to the consternation and perplexity of Christendom, continued to retain it. Christendom cares nothing for that tomb now, has indeed forgotten its own name, and calls itself enlightened Europe.

But enlightened Europe is not happy. Its existence is a fever, which it calls progress. Progress to what?

The youthful votary, during his vigils at the sacred tomb, had received solace but not inspiration. No voice from heaven had yet sounded, but his spirit was filled with the sanctity of the place, and he returned to his cell to prepare for fresh pilgrimages.

One day, in conference with Lara, the Spanish Prior had let drop these words — “Sinai led to Calvary: it may be wise to trace your steps from Calvary to Sinai.”

At this moment, Tancred and his escort are in sight of Bethlehem, with the population of a village but the walls of a town, situate on an eminence overlooking a valley, which seems fertile after passing the stony plain of Rephaim. The first beams of the sun, too, were rising from the mountains of Arabia and resting on the noble convent of the Nativity.

From Bethlehem to Hebron, Canaan is still a land of milk and honey, though not so rich and picturesque as in the great expanse of Palestine to the north of the Holy City. The

beauty and the abundance of the promised land may still be found in Samaria and Galilee; in the magnificent plains of Esdraelon, Zabulon, and Gennesareth; and ever by the gushing waters of the bowery Jordan.

About an hour after leaving Bethlehem, in a secluded valley, is one of the few remaining public works of the great Hebrew kings. It is in every respect worthy of them. I speak of those colossal reservoirs cut out of the native rock and fed by a single spring, discharging their waters into an aqueduct of perforated stone, which, until a comparatively very recent period, still conveyed them to Jerusalem. They are three in number, of varying lengths from five to six hundred feet, and almost as broad; their depth still undiscovered. They communicate with each other, so that the water of the uppermost reservoir, flowing through the intermediate one, reached the third, which fed the aqueduct. They are lined with a hard cement like that which coats the pyramids, and which remains uninjured; and it appears that hanging gardens once surrounded them. The Arabs still call these

reservoirs the pools of Solomon, nor is there any reason to doubt the tradition. Tradition, perhaps often more faithful than written documents, is a sure and almost infallible guide in the minds of the people where there has been no complicated variety of historic incidents to confuse and break the chain of memory; where their rare revolutions have consisted of an eruption once in a thousand years into the cultivated world; where society has never been broken up, but their domestic manners have remained the same; where too they revere truth, and are rigid in its oral delivery, since that is their only means of disseminating knowledge.

There is no reason to doubt that these reservoirs were the works of Solomon. This secluded valley then was once the scene of his imaginative and delicious life. Here were his pleasure gardens; these slopes were covered with his fantastic terraces, and the high places glittered with his pavilions. The fountain that supplied these treasured waters was perhaps the "sealed fountain," to which he compared his bride; and here was the garden

palace where the charming Queen of Sheba vainly expected to pose the wisdom of Israel, as she held at a distance before the most dexterous of men the two garlands of flowers, alike in form and colour, and asked the great king, before his trembling court, to decide which of the wreaths was the real one.

They are gone, they are vanished—these deeds of beauty and these words of wit! The bright and glorious gardens of the tiaraed poet and the royal sage, that once echoed with his lyric voice, or with the startling truths of his pregnant aphorisms, end in this wild and solitary valley, in which, with folded arms and musing eye of long abstraction, Tancred halts in his ardent pilgrimage, nor can refrain from asking himself, “Can it then be true that all is Vanity?”

Why—what—is this desolation? Why are there no more kings, whose words are the treasured wisdom of countless ages and the mention of whose name to this moment thrills the heart of the Oriental, from the waves of the midland ocean to the broad rivers of the farthest Ind! Why are there no longer

bright-witted queens to step out of their Arabian palaces and pay visits to the gorgeous "house of the forest of Lebanon," or to where Baalbec, or Tadmor in the wilderness, rose on those plains now strewn with the superb relics of their inimitable magnificence?

And yet some flat-nosed Frank, full of bustle and puffed up with self-conceit, — a race spawned perhaps in the morasses of some Northern forest hardly yet cleared, — talks of Progress! Progress to what, and from whence? Amid empires shrivelled into deserts, amid the wrecks of great cities, a single column or obelisk of which nations import for the prime ornament of their mud-built capitals, amid arts forgotten, commerce annihilated, fragmentary literatures and populations destroyed, the European talks of progress, because, by an ingenious application of some scientific acquirements, he has established a society which has mistaken comfort for civilization.

The soft beam of the declining sun fell upon a serene landscape; gentle undulations covered

with rich shrubs or highly cultivated; corn-fields and olive groves; sometimes numerous flocks; and then vineyards fortified with walls and with watch-towers, as in the time of David, whose city Tancred was approaching. Hebron too was the home of the great Sheikh Abraham; and the Arabs here possess his tomb, which no Christian is permitted to visit. It is strange and touching, that the children of Ishmael should have treated the name and memory of the Sheikh Abraham with so much reverence and affection. But the circumstance that he was the friend of Allah appears with them entirely to have outweighed the recollection of his harsh treatment of their great progenitor. Hebron has even lost with them its ancient Judæan name, and they always call it, in honour of the tomb of the Sheikh, the "City of the Friend."

About an hour after Hebron, in a fair pasture, and near an olive grove, Tancred pitched his tent, prepared on the morrow to quit the land of promise, and approach that "great and terrible wilderness where there was no water."

“The children of Israel,” as they were called according to the custom then and now universally prevalent among the Arabian tribes—as for example, the Beni Kahtan, Beni Kelb, Beni Salem, Beni Sobh, Beni Ghamed, Beni Seydan, Beni Ali, Beni Hateym, all adopting for their description the name of their founder: the “children of Israel” were originally a tribe of Arabia Petræa. Under the guidance of sheikhs of great ability, they emerged from their stony wilderness and settled on the Syrian border.

But they could not maintain themselves against the disciplined nations of Palestine, and they fell back to their desert, which they found intolerable. Like some of the Bedouen tribes of modern times in the rocky wastes contiguous to the Red Sea, they were unable to resist the temptations of the Egyptian cities; they left their free but distressful wilderness, and became Fellaheen. The Pharaohs however made them pay for their ready means of sustenance, as Mehemet Ali has made the Arabs of our days who have quitted the desert to eat the harvests of the Nile.

They enslaved them, and worked them as beasts of burden. But this was not to be long borne by a race whose chiefs in the early ages had been favoured by Jehovah; the Patriarch Emirs, who, issuing from the Caucasian cradle of the great races, spread over the plains of Mesopotamia and disseminated their illustrious seed throughout the Arabian wilderness. Their fiery imaginations brooded over the great traditions of their tribe, and at length there arose among them one of those men whose existence is an epoch in the history of human nature: a great creative spirit and organizing mind, in whom the faculties of conception and of action are equally balanced and possessed in the highest degree; in every respect a man of the complete Caucasian model, and almost as perfect as Adam when he was just finished and placed in Eden.

But Jehovah recognised in Moses a human instrument too rare merely to be entrusted with the redemption of an Arabian tribe from a state of Fellaheen to Bedoueen existence. And therefore he was summoned to be the organ of an eternal revelation of the Divine

will, and his tribe were appointed to be the hereditary ministers of that mighty and mysterious dispensation.

It is to be noted, although the Omnipotent Creator might have found, had it pleased him, in the humblest of his creations, an efficient agent for his purpose, however difficult and sublime, that divine Majesty has never thought fit to communicate except with human beings of the very highest powers. They are always men who have manifested an extraordinary aptitude for great affairs, and the possession of a fervent and commanding genius. They are great legislators, or great warriors, or great poets, or orators of the most vehement and impassioned spirit. Such were Moses, Joshua, the heroic youth of Hebron, and his magnificent son; such too was Isaiah, a man, humanly speaking, not inferior to Demosthenes, and struggling for a similar and as beautiful a cause—the independence of a small state, eminent for its intellectual power, against the barbarian grandeur of a military empire. All the great things have been done by the little nations. It is the Jordan and the Ilyssus that have civilized the modern

racés. An Arabian tribe, a clan of the *Ægean*, have been the promulgators of all our knowledge; and we should never have heard of the Pharaohs, of Babylon the great and Nineveh the superb, of Cyrus and of Xerxes, had not it been for Athens and Jerusalem.

Tancred rose with the sun from his encampment at Hebron, to traverse probably the same route pursued by the spies when they entered the Land of Promise. The transition from Canaan to the stony Arabia is not abrupt. A range of hills separates Palestine from a high but level country similar to the Syrian desert, sandy in some places, but covered in all with grass and shrubs; a vast expanse of downs. Gradually the herbage disappears, and the shrubs are only found tufting the ridgy tops of low undulating sandhills. Soon the sand becomes stony, and no trace of vegetation is ever visible excepting occasionally some thorny plant. Then comes a land which alternates between plains of sand and dull ranges of monotonous hills covered with loose flints; sometimes the pilgrim winds his way through their dull ravines, sometimes he mounts the heights

and beholds a prospect of interminable desolation.

For three nights had Tancred encamped in this wilderness, halting at some spot where they could find some desert shrubs that might serve as food for the camels and fuel for themselves. His tent was soon pitched, the night fires soon crackling, and himself seated at one with the Sheikh and Baroni, he beheld with interest and amusement the picturesque and flashing groups around him. Their fare was scant and simple: bread baked upon the spot, the dried tongue of a gazelle, the coffee of the neighbouring Mocha, and the pipe that ever consoles, if indeed the traveller, whatever his hardships, could need any sustenance but his own high thoughts in such a scene, canopied too by the most beautiful sky and the most delicious climate in the world.

They were in the vicinity of Mount Seir; on the morrow they were to commence the passage of the lofty range which stretches on to Sinai. The Sheikh, who had a feud with a neighbouring tribe, and had been anxious and vigilant while they crossed the open country,

riding on with an advanced guard before his charge, reconnoitring from sandhill to sandhill, often creeping up and lying on his breast, so as not to be visible to the enemy, congratulated Tancred that all imminent danger was past.

“Not that I am afraid of them,” said Hassan, proudly, “but we must kill them or they will kill us.” Hassan, though Sheikh of his own immediate family and followers, was dependent on the great Sheikh of the Jellaheen tribe, and was bound to obey his commands in case the complete clan were summoned to congregate in any particular part of the desert.

On the morrow they commenced their passage of the mountains, and, after clearing several ranges, found themselves two hours after noon in a defile so strangely beautiful, that to behold it would alone have repaid all the exertions and perils of the expedition. It was formed by precipitous rocks of a picturesque shape and of great height, and of colours so brilliant and so blended that to imagine them you must fancy the richest sunset you

have ever witnessed, and that would be inferior, from the inevitable defect of its fleeting character. Here the tints, sometimes vivid, sometimes shadowed down, were always equally fair: light blue heights, streaked perhaps with scarlet and shaded off to lilac or purple; a cleft of bright orange; a broad peach-coloured expanse, veined in delicate circles and wavy lines of exquisite grace; sometimes yellow and purple stripes; sometimes an isolated steep of every hue flaming in the sun, and then, like a young queen on a gorgeous throne, from a vast rock of crimson and gold, rose a milk-white summit. The frequent fissures of this defile were filled with rich woods of oleander and shrubs of every shade of green, from which rose acacia, and other trees unknown to Tancred. Over all this was a deep and cloudless sky, and through it a path winding amid a natural shrubbery, which princes would have built colossal conservatories to preserve.

“ ’Tis a scene of enchantment that has risen to mock us in the middle of the desert,” exclaimed the enraptured pilgrim—“ surely it must vanish even as we gaze !”

About half-way up the defile, when they had traversed it for about a quarter of an hour, Sheikh Hassan suddenly galloped forward and hurled his spear with great force at an isolated crag, the base of which was covered with oleanders, and then looking back he shouted to his companions. Tancred and the foremost hurried up to him.

“Here are tracks of horses and camels that have entered the valley thus far and not passed through it. They are fresh; let all be prepared.”

“We are twenty-five men well armed,” said Baroni. “It is not the Tyahas that will attack such a band.”

“Nor are they the Gherashi or the Mezeines,” said the Sheikh, “for we know what they are after, and we are brothers.”

“They must be Alouins,” said an Arab.

At this moment the little caravan was apparently land-locked, the defile again winding, but presently it became quite straight, and its termination was visible, though at a considerable distance.

“ I see horsemen,” said the Sheikh ; “ several of them advance ; they are not Alouins.”

He rode forward to meet them, accompanied by Tancred and Baroni.

“ Salaam,” said the Sheikh, “ how is it ?” and then he added, aside to Baroni, “ They are strangers ; why are they here ?”

“ Aleikoum ! We know where you come from,” was the reply of one of the horsemen. “ Is that the brother of the Queen of the English ? Let him ride with us, and you may go on in peace.”

“ He is my brother,” said Sheikh Hassan, “ and the brother of all here. There is no feud between us. Who are you ?”

“ We are children of Jethro, and the great Sheikh has sent us a long way to give you salaam. Your desert here is not fit for the camel that your prophet cursed. Come, let us finish our business, for we wish to see a place where there are palm trees.”

“ Are these children of Eblis ?” said Sheikh Hassan to Baroni.

“ It is the day of judgment,” said Baroni,

looking pale, "such a thing has not happened in my time. I am lost."

"What do these people say?" inquired Tancred.

"There is but one God," said Sheikh Hassan, whose men had now reached him, "and Mahomet is his prophet. Stand aside, sons of Eblis, or you shall bite the earth which curses you!"

A wild shout from every height of the defile was the answer. They looked up, they looked round; the crest of every steep was covered with armed Arabs, each man with his musket levelled.

"My lord," said Baroni, "there is something hidden in all this. This is not an ordinary desert foray. You are known, and this tribe comes from a distance to plunder you;" and then he rapidly detailed what had already passed.

"What is your force, sons of Eblis?" said the Sheikh to the horsemen.

"Count your men, and your muskets, and your swords, and your horses, and your camels; and if they were all double, they would not be our force. Our great Sheikh would have come

in person with ten thousand men, were not your wilderness here fit only for Giaours."

"Tell the young chief," said the Sheikh to Baroni, "that I am his brother, and will shed the last drop of my blood in his service, as I am bound to do, as much as he is bound to give me ten thousand piastres for the journey, and ask him what he wishes?"

"Demand to know distinctly what these men want," said Tancred to Baroni, who then conferred with them.

"They want your lordship," said Baroni, "whom they call the brother of the Queen of the English; their business is clearly to carry you to their great Sheikh, who will release you for a large ransom."

"And they have no feud with the Jellaheens?"

"None; they are strangers; they come from a distance for this purpose; nor can it be doubted that this plot has been concocted at Jerusalem."

"Our position I fear is fatal in this defile," said Tancred, "it is bitter to be the cause of exposing so many brave men to almost inevitable slaughter."

“Tell them, Baroni, that I am not the brother of the Queen of the English; that they are ridiculously misled, and that their aim is hopeless, for all that will be ransomed will be my corpse.”

Sheikh Hassan sate on his horse like a statue, with his spear in his hand and his eye on his enemy; Baroni, advancing to the strange horsemen, who were in position about ten yards from Tancred and his guardian, was soon engaged in animated conversation. He did all that an able diplomatist could effect; told lies with admirable grace, and made a hundred propositions that did not commit his principal. He assured them very heartily that Tancred was not the brother of the Queen of the English; that he was only a young Sheikh, whose father was alive, and in possession of all the flocks and herds, camels and horses; that he had quarrelled with his father; that his father perhaps would not be sorry if he were got rid of, and would not give a hundred piastres to save his life. Then he offered, if they would let Tancred pass, himself to go with them as prisoner to their great Sheikh, and even pro-

posed Hassan and half his men for additional hostages, whilst some just and equitable arrangement could be effected. All however was in vain. The enemy had no discretion; dead or alive, the young Englishman must be carried to their chief.

“I can do nothing,” said Baroni, returning; “there is something in all this which I do not understand. It has never happened in my time.”

“There is then but one course to be taken,” said Tancred; “we must charge through the defile. At any rate we shall have the satisfaction of dying like men. Let us each fix on our opponent. That audacious-looking Arab in a red kefia shall be my victim or my destroyer. Speak to the Sheikh, and tell him to prepare his men. Freeman and Trueman,” said Tancred, looking round to his English servants, “we are in extreme peril; I took you from your homes; if we outlive this day and return to Montacute, you shall live on your own land.”

“Never mind us, my lord: if it worn't for those rocks we would beat these niggers.”

“Are you all ready,” said Tancred to Baroni.

“We are all ready.”

“Then I commend my soul to Jesus Christ, and to the God of Sinai, in whose cause I perish.” So saying, Tancred shot the Arab in the red kefia through the head, and with his remaining pistol disabled another of the enemy. This he did, while he and his band were charging, so suddenly and so boldly, that those immediately opposed to them were scattered. There was a continuous volley, however, from every part of the defile, and the scene was so involved in smoke that it was impossible for Tancred to see a yard around him; still he galloped on and felt conscious that he had companions, though the shouting was so great that it was impossible to communicate. The smoke suddenly drifting, Tancred caught a glimpse of his position; he was at the mouth of the defile, followed by several of his men, whom he had not time to distinguish, and awaited by innumerable foes.

“Let us sell our lives dearly!” was all that he could exclaim. His sword fell from his

wounded arm; his horse, stabbed underneath, sank with him to the ground. He was overpowered and bound. "Every drop of his blood," exclaimed the leader of the strange Arabs, "is worth ten thousand piastres."



## BOOK IV.



## CHAPTER I.

“WHERE is Besso?” said Barizy of the Tower, as the Consul Pasqualigo entered the divan of the merchant, about ten days after the departure of Tancred from Jerusalem for Mount Sinai.

“Where is Besso? I have already smoked two chibouques, and no one has entered except yourself. I suppose you have heard the news?”

“Who has not? It is in every one’s mouth.”

“What have you heard?” asked Barizy of the Tower, with an air of malicious curiosity.

“Some things that everybody knows,” re-

plied Pasqualigo, "and some things that nobody knows."

"Hah, hah!" said Barizy of the Tower, pricking up his ears and preparing for one of those diplomatic encounters of mutual pumping, in which he and his rival were practised, "I suppose you have seen somebody, eh?"

"Somebody has been seen," replied Pasqualigo, and then he busied himself with his pipe just arrived.

"But nobody has seen somebody who was on the spot?" said Barizy.

"It depends upon what you mean by the spot," replied Pasqualigo.

"Your information is second hand," observed Barizy.

"But you acknowledge it is correct?" said Pasqualigo, more eagerly.

"It depends upon whether your friend was present—" and here Barizy hesitated.

"It does," said Pasqualigo.

"Then he was present?" said Barizy.

"He was."

"Then he knows," said Barizy, eagerly,

“ whether the young English prince was murdered intentionally or by hazard.”

“ A—h,” said Pasqualigo, whom not the slightest rumour of the affair had yet reached, “ that is a great question.”

“ But everything depends upon it,” said Barizy. “ If he was killed accidentally, there will be negotiations, but the business will be compromised; the English want Cyprus, and they will take it as compensation. If it is an affair of malice prepense, there will be war, for the laws of England require war if blood royal be spilt.”

The Consul Pasqualigo looked very grave; then, withdrawing his lips for a moment from his amber mouth-piece, he observed, “ It is a crisis.”

“ It will be a crisis,” said Barizy of the Tower, excited by finding his rival a listener, “ but not for a long time. The crisis has not commenced. The first question is: to whom does the desert belong; to the Porte or to the Viceroy?”

“ It depends upon what part of the desert is in question,” said Pasqualigo.

“Of course the part where it took place. I say the Arabian Desert belongs to the Viceroy; my cousin, Barizy of the Gate, says ‘No, it belongs to the Porte.’ Raphael Tafna says it belongs to neither. The Bedoueens are independent.”

“But they are not recognised,” said the Consul Pasqualigo. “Without a diplomatic existence, they are nullities. England will hold all the recognised powers in the vicinity responsible. You will see! The murder of an English prince, under such circumstances too, will not pass unavenged. The whole of the Turkish garrison of the city will march out directly into the desert.”

“The Arabs care shroff for your Turkish garrison of the city,” said Barizy, with great derision.

“They are eight hundred strong,” said Pasqualigo.

“Eight hundred weak you mean. No, as Raphael Tafna was saying, when Mehemet Ali was master, the tribes were quiet enough. But the Turks could never manage the Arabs even in their best days. If the Pacha of

Damascus were to go himself, the Bedoueens would unveil his harem while he was smoking his nargilly."

"Then England will call upon the Egyptians," said the Consul.

"Hah!" said Barizy of the Tower, "have I got you at last? Now comes your crisis, I grant you. The English will send a ship of war with a protocol, and one of their lords who is a sailor: that is the way. They will call upon the pacha to exterminate the tribe who have murdered the brother of their queen; the pacha will reply, that when he was in Syria the brothers of queens were never murdered, and put the protocol in his turban. This will never satisfy Palmerston, he will order ——"

"Palmerston has nothing to do with it," screamed out Pasqualigo; "he is no longer Reis Effendi; he is in exile; he is governor of the Isle of Wight."

"Do you think I do not know that?" said Barizy of the Tower; "but he will be recalled for this purpose. The English will not go to war in Syria without Palmerston. Palmerston

will have the command of the fleet as well as of the army, that no one shall say 'No' when he says 'Yes.' The English will not do the business of the Turks again for nothing. They will take this city; they will keep it. They want a new market for their cottons. Mark me: England will never be satisfied till the people of Jerusalem wear calico turbans."

Let us inquire also with Barizy of the Tower, where was Besso? Alone, in his private chamber, agitated and troubled, awaiting the return of his daughter from the bath; and even now, the arrival may be heard of herself and her attendants in the inner court.

"You want me, my father?" said Eva, as she entered. "Ah! you are disturbed! What has happened?"

"The tenth plague of Pharaoh, my child," replied Besso, in a tone of great vexation. "Since the expulsion of Ibrahim, there has been nothing which has crossed me so much."

"Fakredeem?"

"No, no; 'tis nothing to do with him, poor boy; but of one as young, and whose interests, though I know him not, scarcely less concern me."

“ You know him not; 'tis not then my cousin. You perplex me, my father. Tell me at once.”

“ It is the most vexatious of all conceivable occurrences,” replied Besso, “ and yet it is about a person of whom you never heard, and whom I never saw—and yet there are circumstances connected with him—Alas! alas! you must know, my Eva, there is a young Englishman here, and a young English lord, of one of their princely families——”

“ Yes!” said Eva, in a subdued but earnest tone.

“ He brought me a letter from the best and greatest of men,” said Besso, with great emotion, “ to whom I—to whom we—owe everything: our fortunes, our presence here—perhaps our lives. There was nothing which I was not bound to do for him, which I was not ready and prepared to do. I ought to have guarded over him; to have forced my services on his acceptance; I blame myself now when it is too late. But he sent me his letter by the intendant of his household, whom I knew. I was fearful to obtrude myself. I learnt he was

fanatically Christian, and thought perhaps he might shrink from my acquaintance."

"And what has happened?" inquired Eva, with an agitation which proved her sympathy with her father's sorrow.

"He left the city some days ago to visit Sinai; well armed and properly escorted. He has been waylaid in the wilderness and captured after a bloody struggle."

"A bloody struggle!"

"Yes; they of course would gladly have not fought, but, though entrapped into an ambush, the young Englishman would not yield, but fought with desperation. His assailants have suffered considerably; his own party comparatively little, for they were so placed—surrounded, you understand—in a mountain defile, that they might have been all massacred, but the fear of destroying their prize, restrained at first the marksmen on the heights; and, by a daring and violent charge, the young Englishman and his followers forced the pass, but there they were overpowered by numbers."

"And he wounded?"

“ I hope not severely. But you have heard nothing. They have sent his Intendant to Jerusalem with a guard of Arabs to bring back his ransom. What do you think they want?”

Eva signified her inability to conjecture.

“ Two millions of piastres!”

“ Two millions of piastres! Did you say two? 'Tis a great sum; but we might negotiate. They would accept less—perhaps much less—than two millions of piastres.”

“ If it were four millions of piastres, I must pay it,” said Besso. “ 'Tis not the sum alone that so crosses me. The father of this young noble is a great prince, and could doubtless pay, without serious injury to himself, two millions of piastres for the ransom of his son—but that's not it. He comes here: he is sent to me. I was to care for him, think for him, guard over him: I have never even seen him—and he is wounded, plundered, and a prisoner!”

“ But if he avoided you, my father?” murmured Eva, with her eyes fixed upon the ground.

“ Avoided me!” said Besso; “ he never

thought of me but as of a Jew banker, to whom he would send his servant for money when he needed it. Was I to stand on punctilios with a great Christian noble? I ought to have waited at his gate every day when he came forth, and bowed to the earth, until it pleased him to notice me; I ought——”

“No, no, no, my father!—you are bitter. This youth is not such as you think; at least, in all probability, is not,” said Eva. “You hear he is fanatically Christian; he may be but deeply religious, and his thoughts at this moment may rest on other things than the business of the world. He who makes a pilgrimage to Sinai can scarcely think us so vile as you would intimate.”

“What will he think of those whom he is among? Here is the wound, Eva! Guess then, child, who has shot this arrow. 'Tis my father!”

“O traitor! traitor!” said Eva, quickly covering her face with her hands. “My terror was prophetic! There is none so base!”

“Nay, nay,” said Besso; “these, indeed, are woman’s words. The great Sheikh in this

has touched me nearly, but I see no baseness in it. He could not know the intimate relation that should subsist between me and this young Englishman. He has captured him in the Desert, according to the custom of his tribe. Much as Amalek may injure me, I must acquit him of treason and of baseness."

"Yes, yes," said Eva, with an abstracted air. "You misconceive me. I was thinking of others—and what do you purpose, my father?"

"First, to clear myself of the deep stain that I now feel upon my life," said Besso. "This Englishman comes to Jerusalem with an unbounded credit on my house: he visits the wilderness and is made prisoner by my father-in-law, who is in ambush in a part of the desert which his tribe never frequents, and who sends to me for a princely ransom for his captive. These are the apparent circumstances. These are the facts. There is but one inference from them. I dare say 'tis drawn already by all the gossips of the city: they are hard at it, I doubt not, at this moment in my own divan, winking their eyes and shrugging their shoulders, while they are

smoking my choice tobaccoes and drinking my sherbet of pomegranate. And can I blame them?"

"A pure conscience may defy city gossips."

"A pure conscience must pay the ransom out of my own coffers. I am not over fond of paying two millions of piastres or even half for one whose shadow never fell upon my threshold. And yet I must do it—do it for my father-in-law, the Sheikh of the Rechabites, whose peace I made with Mehemet Ali, for whom I gained the guardianship of the Mecca caravan through the Syrian desert for five years, who has twelve thousand camels which he made by that office. Oh, were it not for you, my daughter, I would curse the hour that I ever mixed my blood with the children of Jethro. After all, if the truth were known, they are sons of Ishmael."

"No, no, dear father, say not such things. You will send to the great Sheikh—he will listen——"

"I send to the Great Sheikh! You know not your grandfather, and you know not me. The truth is, the Sheikh and myself mutually despise

each other, and we have never met without parting in bitterness. No, no; I would rather pay the ransom myself than ask a favour of the Great Sheikh. But how can I pay the ransom, even if I chose? This young Englishman is a fiery youth: he will not yield even to an ambush and countless odds. Do you think a man who charges through a defile crowned with matchlocks, and shoots men through the head, as I am told he did, in the name of Christ, will owe his freedom to my Jewish charity? He will burn the Temple first. This young man has the sword of Gideon. You know little of the world, Eva, and nothing of young Englishmen. There is not a race so proud, so wilful, so rash, and so obstinate. They live in a misty clime, on raw meats, and wines of fire. They laugh at their fathers, and never say a prayer. They pass their days in the chase, gaming, and all violent courses. They have all the power of the State and all its wealth; and, when they can wring no more from their peasants, they plunder the kings of India."

"But this young Englishman, you say, is pious?" said Eva.

“ Ah! this young Englishman—why did he come here! What is Jerusalem to him, or he to Jerusalem. His Intendant, himself a prisoner, waits here. I must see him; he is one of the people of my patron, which proves our great friend’s interest in this youth. O day thrice cursed! day of a thousand evil eyes! day of a new captivity——”

“ My father, my dear father—these bursts of grief do not become your fame for wisdom. We must inquire, we must hold counsel. Let me see the Intendant of this English youth, and hear more than I have yet learnt. I cannot think that affairs are so hopeless as you paint them: I will believe that there is a spring near.”

## CHAPTER II.

IN an almost circular valley, surrounded by mountains, Amalek, great Sheikh of the Rechabite Bedoueen, after having crossed the peninsula of Petraea from the great Syrian Desert, pitched his camp amid the magnificent ruins of an ancient Idumæan city. The pavilion of the chief, facing the sunset, was raised in the arena of an amphitheatre cut out of the solid rock, and almost the whole of the seats of which were entire. The sides of the mountains were covered with excavated tombs and temples and perhaps dwelling places; at any rate, many of them were now occupied by human beings. Fragments of columns were lying about, and

masses of unknown walls. From a defile in the mountains issued a stream, which wound about in the plain, its waters almost hid, but its course beautifully indicated by the undulating shrubbery of oleanders, fig trees, and willows. On one side of these, between the water and the amphitheatre, was a crescent of black tents, groups of horses, and crouching camels. Over the whole scene the sunset threw a violet hue, while the moon, broad and white, floated over the opposite hills.

The carpet of the great Sheikh was placed before his pavillion, and, seated on it alone and smoking a chibouque of date wood, the patriarch ruminated. He had no appearance of age, except from a snowy beard, which was very long: a wiry man, with an unwrinkled face; dark, regular and noble features, beautiful teeth. Over his head, a crimson kefia, ribbed and fringed with gold; his robe was of the same colour, and his boots were of red leather—the chief of one of the great tribes, and said, when they were united, to be able to bring ten thousand horsemen into the field.

One at full gallop, with a long spear, at this

moment darted from the ravine, and, without stopping to answer several who addressed him, hurried across the plain, and did not halt until he reached the Sheikh.

“Salaam, Sheikh of Sheikhs, it is done; the brother of the Queen of the English is your slave.”

“Good!” said Sheikh Amalek, very gravely, and taking his pipe from his mouth. “May your mother eat the hump of a young camel! When will they be here?”

“They will be the first shadows of the moon.”

“Good! is the brother of the Queen with Sheikh Salem?”

“There is only one God: Sheikh Salem will never drink leban again, unless he drink it in Paradise.”

“Certainly, there is only one God. What! has he fallen asleep into the well of Nummula?”

“No; but we have seen many evil eyes. Four hares crossed our path this morning. Our salaam to the English prince was not a salaam of peace. The brother of the Queen of the English is no less than an Antar. He will

fight, yea or nay; and he has shot Sheikh Salem through the head."

"There is but one God, and his will be done. I have lost the apple of mine eye. The Prince of the English is alive?"

"He is alive."

"Good! camels shall be given to the widow of Sheikh Salem, and she shall be married to a new husband. Are there other deeds of Gin?"

"One grape will not make a bunch, even though it be a great one."

"Let truth always be spoken. Let your words flow as the rock of Moses."

"There is only one God: if you call to Ibrahim-ben-Hassan, to Molgrabi Teuba, and Teuba-ben-Amin they will not be roused from their sleep: there are also wounds."

"Tell all the people there is only one God: is it the Sheikh of the Jellaheens that has done these deeds of Gin?"

"Let truth always be spoken; my words shall flow as the rock of Moses. The Sheikh of the Jellaheens counselled the young man not to fight, but the young man is a very Zatanai.

Certainly there are many devils, but there is no devil like a Frank in a round hat."

The evening advanced, the white moon, that had only gleamed, now glittered, the necks of the camels looked tall and silvery in its beam. The night-fires began to blaze, the lamps to twinkle in the crescent of dark tents. There was a shout, a general stir, the heads of spears were seen glistening in the ravine. They came; a winding line of warriors. Some, as they emerged into the plain, galloped forward and threw their spears into the air; but the main body preserved an appearance of discipline, and proceeded at a slow pace to the pavillion of the Sheikh. A body of horsemen came first; then warriors on dromedaries; Sheikh Hassan next, grave and erect as if nothing had happened, though he was wounded, and followed by his men, disarmed, though their chief retained his spear. Baroni followed. He was unhurt, and rode between two Bedouens, with whom he continually conversed. After them, the bodies of Sheikh Salem and his comrades, covered with cloaks and stowed on camels. And then came the great prize,

Tancred, mounted on a dromedary, his right arm bound up in a sling which Baroni had hastily made, and surrounded and followed by a large troop of horsemen, who treated him with the highest consideration, not only because he was a great prince whose ransom could bring many camels to their tribe, but because he had shown those feats of valour which the wild desert honours.

Notwithstanding his wound, which, though slight, began to be painful, and the extreme vexation of the whole affair, Tancred could not be insensible to the strange beauty of the scene which welcomed him. He had read of these deserted cities, carved out of the rocks of the wilderness, and once the capitals of flourishing and abounding kingdoms.

They stopped before the pavillion of the Great Sheikh; the arena of the amphitheatre became filled with camels, horses, groups of warriors, many mounted on the seats, that they might overlook the scene, their arms and shawled heads glistening in the silver blaze of the moon or the ruddy flames of the watch-fires. They assisted Tancred to descend, they ushered him with courtesy to their chief, who

made room for Tancred on his own carpet, and motioned that he should be seated by his side. A small carpet was placed for Sheikh Hassan, and another for Baroni.

“Salaam, brother of many queens, all that you see is yours; Salaam Sheikh Hassan, we are brothers. Salaam,” added Amalek, looking at Baroni, “they tell me that you can speak our language, which is beautiful as the moon and many palm-trees; tell the prince, brother of many queens, that he mistook the message that I sent him this morning, which was an invitation to a feast, not to a war. Tell him we are brothers.”

“Tell the Sheikh,” said Tancred, “that I have no appetite for feasting, and desire to be informed why he has made me a prisoner.”

“Tell the prince, brother of many queens, that he is not a prisoner, but a guest.”

“Ask the Sheikh, then, whether we can depart at once.”

“Tell the prince, brother of many queens, that it would be rude in me to let him depart to-night.”

“Ask the Sheikh whether I may depart in the morning.”

“Tell the prince that, when the morning comes, he will find I am his brother.” So saying, the great Sheikh took his pipe from his mouth and gave it to Tancred—the greatest of distinctions. In a few moments, pipes were also brought to Sheikh Hassan and Baroni.

“No harm can come to you, my lord, after smoking that pipe,” said Baroni. “We must make the best of affairs. I have been in worse straits with M. de Sidonia. What think you of Malay pirates? These are all gentlemen.”

While Baroni was speaking, a young man slowly and with dignity passed through the by-standers, advanced, and, looking very earnestly at Tancred, seated himself on the same carpet as the Grand Sheikh. This action alone would have betokened the quality of the new comer, had not his kefia, similar to that of Sheikh Amalek, and his whole bearing, clearly denoted his princely character. He was very young; and Tancred, while he was struck by his earnest gaze, was attracted by his physiognomy, which indeed, from its refined

beauty and cast of impassioned intelligence, was highly interesting.

Preparations all this time had been making for the feast. Half a dozen sheep had been given to the returning band; everywhere resounded the grinding of coffee; men passed carrying pitchers of leban and panniers of bread cakes hot from their simple oven. The great Sheikh, who had asked many questions after the oriental fashion—which was the most powerful nation, England or France; what was the name of a third European nation of which he had heard, white men with flat noses in green coats; whether the nation of white men with flat noses in green coats could have taken Acre as the English had—the taking of Acre being the test of military prowess; how many horses the queen of the English had, and how many slaves; whether English pistols are good; whether the English drink wine; whether the English are Christian giaours or Pagan giaours—and so on, now invited Tancred, Sheikh Hassan, and two or three others, to enter his pavilion and partake of the banquet.

“The Sheikh must excuse me,” said Tancred to Baroni; “I am wearied and wounded. Ask if I can retire and have a tent.”

“Are you wounded?” said the young Sheikh, who was sitting on the carpet of Amalek, and speaking, not only in a tone of touching sympathy, but in the language of Franguestan.

“Not severely,” said Tancred, less abruptly than he had yet spoken, for the manner and the appearance of the youth touched him; “but this is my first fight, and perhaps I make too much of it. However, my arm is painful and stiff, and indeed, you may conceive, after all this, I could wish for a little repose.”

“The great Sheikh has allotted you a compartment of his pavillion,” said the youth; “but it will prove a noisy resting-place, I fear, for a wounded man. I have a tent here—an humbler one, but which is at least tranquil. Let me be your host!”

“You are most gracious, and I should be much inclined to be your guest, but I am a prisoner,” he said, haughtily, “and cannot presume to follow my own will.”

“I will arrange all,” said the youth, and he conversed with Sheikh Amalek for some moments. Then they all rose, the young man advancing to Tancred, and saying, in a sweet coaxing voice, “You are under my care. I will not be a cruel gaoler—I could not be to you.” So saying, making their reverence to the great Sheikh, the two young men retired together from the arena. Baroni would have followed them, when the youth stopped him, saying, with decision, “The great Sheikh expects your presence—you must on no account be absent. I will tend your chief—you will permit me?” he inquired, in a tone of sympathy, and then, offering to support the arm of Tancred, he murmured, “It kills me to think that you are wounded.”

Tancred was attracted to the young stranger: his prepossessing appearance, his soft manners, the contrast which they afforded to all around, and to the scenes and circumstances which Tancred had recently experienced, were winning. Tancred, therefore, gladly accompanied him to his pavillion, which was pitched outside the amphitheatre, and stood

apart. Notwithstanding the modest description of his tent by the young Sheikh, it was by no means inconsiderable in size, for it possessed several compartments, and was of a different colour and fashion from those of the rest of the tribe. Several steeds were picketed in Arab fashion near its entrance, and a group of attendants, smoking and conversing with great animation, were sitting in a circle close at hand. They pressed their hands to their hearts as Tancred and his host passed them, but did not rise. Within the pavillion, Tancred found a luxurious medley of cushions and soft carpets, forming a delightful divan; pipes and arms, and, to his great surprise, several numbers of a French newspaper published at Smyrna.

“ Ah!” exclaimed Tancred, throwing himself on the divan, “ after all I have gone through to-day, this is indeed a great and an unexpected relief.”

“ ’Tis your own divan,” said the young Arab, clapping his hands; “ and, when I have given some orders for your comfort, I shall only be your guest, though not a distant one.”

He spoke some words in Arabic to an attendant who entered, and who returned very shortly with a silver lamp fed with palm oil, which he placed on the ground.

“I have two poor Englishmen here,” said Tancred, “my servants; they must be in sad straits; unable to speak a word ——”

“I will give orders that they shall attend you. In the mean time, you must refresh yourself, however lightly, before you repose.” At this moment there entered the tent several attendants with a variety of dishes, which Tancred would have declined, but the young Sheikh, selecting one of them, said, “This, at least, I must urge you to taste, for it is a favourite refreshment with us after great fatigue, and has some properties of great virtue.” So saying, he handed to Tancred a dish of bread, dates, and prepared cream, which Tancred, notwithstanding his previous want of relish, cheerfully admitted to be excellent. After this, as Tancred would partake of no other dish, pipes were brought to the two young men, who, reclining on the divan, smoked and conversed.

“Of all the strange things that have happened to me to-day,” said Tancred, “not the least surprising, and certainly the most agreeable, has been making your acquaintance. Your courtesy has much compensated me for the rude treatment of your tribe; but I confess, such refinement is what, under any circumstances, I should not have expected to find among the tents of the desert, any more than this French journal.”

“I am not an Arab,” said the young man, speaking slowly and with an air of some embarrassment.

“Ah!” exclaimed Tancred.

“I am a Christian prince.”

“Yes!”

“A prince of the Lebanon, devoted to the English, and one who has suffered much in their cause.”

“You are not a prisoner here, like myself?”

“No. I am here, seeking some assistance for those sufferers who should be my subjects, were I not deprived of my sceptre, and they of a prince whose family has reigned over and

protected them for more than seven centuries. The powerful tribe of which Sheikh Amalek is the head often pitch their tents in the great Syrian desert, in the neighbourhood of Damascus, and there are affairs in which they can aid my unhappy people."

"It is a great position, yours," said Tancred, in an animated tone, "at the same time a Syrian and a Christian prince!"

"Yes," said the young Emir, eagerly, "if the English would only understand their own interests, with my co-operation, Syria might be theirs."

"The English," said Tancred, "why should the English take Syria?"

"France will take it if they do not."

"I hope not," said Tancred.

"But something must be done," said the Emir. "The Porte never could govern it. Do you think anybody in Lebanon really cares for the Pacha of Damascus? If the Egyptians had not disarmed the Mountain, the Turks would be driven out of Syria in a week."

"A Syrian and a Christian prince!" said Tancred, musingly. "There are elements in

that position stronger than the Porte, stronger than England, stronger than united Europe. Syria was a great country when France and England were forests. The tri-colour has crossed the Alps and the Rhine, and the flag of England has beat even the tri-colour, but if I were a Syrian prince, I would raise the cross of Christ and ask for the aid of no foreign banner."

"If I could only raise a loan," said the Emir, "I could do without France and England."

"A loan!" exclaimed Tancred; "I see the poison of modern liberalism has penetrated even the desert. Believe me, national redemption is not an affair of usury."

At this moment there was some little disturbance without the tent, which it seems was occasioned by the arrival of Tancred's servants, Freeman and Trueman. These excellent young men persisted in addressing the Arabs in their native English, and, though we cannot for a moment believe that they fancied themselves understood, still, from a mixture of pride and perverseness peculiarly British, they

continued their valuable discourse as if every word told, or if not apprehended, was a striking proof of the sheer stupidity of their new companions. The noise became louder and louder, and at length Freeman and Trueman entered.

“ Well,” said Tancred, “ and how have you been getting on ? ”

“ Well, my lord, I don't know,” said Freeman, with a sort of jolly sneer ; “ we have been dining with the savages.”

“ They are not savages, Freeman.”

“ Well, my lord, they have not much more clothes, anyhow ; and, as for knives and forks, there is not such a thing known.”

“ As for that, there was not such a thing known as a fork in England little more than two hundred years ago, and we were not savages then ; for the best part of Montacute Castle was built long before that time.”

“ I wish we were there, my lord ! ”

“ I dare say you do : however, we must make the best of present circumstances. I wanted to know, in the first place, whether you had food ; as for lodging, Mr. Baroni, I

dare say, will manage something for you; and if not, you had better quarter yourselves by the side of this tent. With your own cloaks and mine, you will manage very well."

"Thank you, my lord. We have brought your lordship's things with us. I don't know what I shall do to-morrow about your lordship's boots. The savages have got hold of the bottle of blacking and have been drinking it like anything."

"Never mind my boots," said Tancred; "we have got other things to think of now."

"I told them what it was," said Freeman, "but they went on just the same."

"Obstinate dogs!" said Tancred.

"I think they took it for wine, my lord," said Trueman. "I never see such ignorant creatures."

"You find now the advantage of a good education, Trueman."

"Yes, my lord, we do, and feel very grateful to your lordship's honoured mother for the same. When we came down out of the mountains and see those blazing fires, if I

didn't think they were going to burn us alive, unless we changed our religion. I said the catechism as hard as I could the whole way, and felt as much like a blessed martyr as could be."

"Well, well," said Tancred, "I dare say they will spare our lives. I cannot much assist you here; but if there be anything you particularly want, I will try and see what can be done."

Freeman and Trueman looked at each other, and their speaking faces held common consultation. At length, the former, with some slight hesitation said, "We don't like to be troublesome, my lord, but if your lordship would ask for some sugar for us—we cannot drink their coffee without sugar."

## CHAPTER III.

“ I WOULD not mention it to your lordship last night,” said Baroni, “ I thought enough had happened for one day.”

“ But now you think I am sufficiently fresh for new troubles.”

“ He spoke it in Hebrew, that myself and Sheikh Hassan should not understand him, but I know something of that dialect.”

“ In Hebrew ! And why in Hebrew ?”

“ They follow the laws of Moses — this tribe.”

“ Do you mean that they are Jews ?”

“ The Arabs are only Jews upon horseback,” said Baroni. “ This tribe, I find, call themselves Rechabites.”

“ Ah!” exclaimed Tancred, and he began to muse. “ I have heard of that name before. Is it possible,” thought he, “ that my visit to Bethany should have led to this captivity!”

“ This affair must have been planned at Jerusalem,” said Baroni. “ I saw from the first it was not a common foray. These people know everything. They will send immediately to Besso; they know he is your banker, and that if you want to build the Temple, he must pay for it, and unless a most immoderate ransom is given, they will carry us all into the interior of the desert.”

“ And what do you counsel?”

“ In this as in all things, to gain time; and principally because I am without resource—but with time expedients develop themselves. Naturally—what is wanted will come; expediency is a law of nature. The camel is a wonderful animal, but the desert made the camel. I have already impressed upon the Great Sheikh that you are not a prince of the blood; that your father is ruined, that there has been a murrain for three years among his

herds and flocks, and that though you appear to be travelling for amusement, you are in fact a political exile. All these are grounds for a reduced ransom. At present he believes nothing that I say, because his mind has been previously impressed with contrary and more cogent representations, but what I say will begin to work when he has experienced some disappointment, and the period of re-action arrives. Re-action is the law of society; it is inevitable. All success depends upon seizing it."

"It appears to me that you are a great philosopher, Baroni," said Tancred.

"I travelled five years with M. de Sidonia," said Baroni. "We were in perpetual scrapes, often worse than this, and my master moralized upon every one of them. I shared his adventures, and I imbibed some of his wisdom: and the consequence is that I always ought to know what to say, and generally what to do."

"Well, here at least is some theatre for your practice; though, as far as I can form an

opinion, our course is simple, though ignominious. We must redeem ourselves from captivity. If it were only the end of my crusade, one might submit to it, like Cœur de Lion, after due suffering; but, occurring at the commencement, the catastrophe is mortifying, and I doubt whether I shall have heart enough to pursue my way. Were I alone, I certainly would not submit to ransom. I would look upon captivity as one of those trials that await me, and I would endeavour to extricate myself from it by courage and address, relying ever on Divine aid; but I am not alone. I have involved you in this mischance, and these poor Englishmen, and, it would seem, the brave Hassan and his tribe. I can hardly ask you to make the sacrifice which I would cheerfully endure; and therefore it seems to me that we have only one course; to march under the forks."

"With submission," said Baroni, "I cannot agree with any of your lordship's propositions. You take an extreme view of our case. Extreme views are never just; something always

turns up which disturbs the calculations formed upon their decided data. This something is Circumstance. Circumstance has decided every crisis which I have experienced, and not the primitive facts on which we have consulted. Rest assured that Circumstance will clear us now."

"I see no room, in our situation, for the accidents on which you rely," said Tancred. "Circumstance, as you call it, is the creature of cities, where the action of a multitude, influenced by different motives, produces innumerable and ever-changing combinations: but we are in the desert. The Great Sheikh will never change his mind any more than his habits of life, which are the same as his ancestors pursued thousands of years ago; and for an identical reason, he is isolated and superior to all influences."

"Something always turns up," said Baroni.

"It seems to me that we are in a cul-de-sac," said Tancred.

"There is always an outlet; one can escape from a cul-de-sac by a window."

"Do you think it would be advisable to

consult the master of this tent?" said Tancred, in a lowered tone. "He is very friendly."

"The Emir Fakredeen," said Baroni.

"Is that his name?"

"So I learnt last night. He is a prince of the house of Shehaab; a great house, but fallen."

"He is a Christian," said Tancred, earnestly.

"Is he?" said Baroni carelessly; "I have known a good many Shehaabs, and if you will tell me their company, I will tell you their creed."

"He might give us some advice."

"No doubt of it, my lord; if advice could break our chains, we should soon be free; but in these countries my only confidant is my camel. Assuming that this affair is to end in a ransom, what we want now is to change the impressions of the great Sheikh respecting your wealth. This can only be done from the same spot where the original ideas emanated. I must induce him to permit me to accompany his messenger to Besso. This mission will take time, and he who gains time gains every-

thing, as M. de Sidonia said to me when the savages were going to burn us alive, and there came on a thunder-storm which extinguished their fagots."

"You must really tell me your history some day, Baroni," said Tancred.

"When my mission has failed. It will perhaps relieve your imprisonment; at present, I repeat, we must work for a moderate ransom, instead of the millions of which they talk, and during the negotiation take the chance of some incident which will more agreeably free us."

"Ah! I despair of that."

"I do not, for it is presumptuous to believe that man can foresee the future, which will be your lordship's case, if you owe your freedom only to your piastres."

"But they say that everything is Calculation, Baroni."

"No," said Baroni, with energy, "everything is Adventure."

In the mean time the Emir Fakredeen was the prey of contending emotions. Tancred had, from the first and in an instant, exercised over his susceptible temperament that magnetic influence

to which he was so strangely subject. In the heart of the wilderness and in the person of his victim, the young Emir suddenly recognised the heroic character which he had himself so vaguely and, as it now seemed to him, so vainly attempted to realize. The appearance and the courage of Tancred, the thoughtful repose of his manner, his high bearing amid the distressful circumstances in which he was involved, and the large views which the few words that had escaped from him on the preceding evening would intimate that he took of public transactions, completely captivated Fakredeem, who seemed at length to have found the friend for whom he had often sighed, the stedfast and commanding spirit whose control, he felt conscious, was often required by his quick but whimsical temperament. And in what relation did he stand to this being whom he longed to press to his heart, and then go forth with him and conquer the world? It would not bear contemplation. The arming of the Maronites became quite a secondary object in comparison with obtaining the friendship of Tancred. Would that he had not involved himself in this conspiracy!

and yet, but for this conspiracy, Tancred and himself might never have met. It was impossible to grapple with the question; circumstances must be watched, and some new combination formed to extricate both of them from their present perplexed position.

Fakredeen sent one of his attendants in the morning to offer Tancred horses, should his guest, as is the custom of Englishmen, care to explore the neighbouring ruins which were celebrated; but Tancred's wound kept him confined to his tent. Then the Emir begged permission to pay him a visit, which was to have lasted only a quarter of an hour; but when Fakredeen had once established himself in the divan with his nargilly, he never quitted it. It would have been difficult for Tancred to have found a more interesting companion; impossible to have made an acquaintance more singularly unreserved. His frankness was startling. Tancred had no experience of such self-revelations: such a jumble of sublime aspirations and equivocal conduct; such a total disregard of means, such complicated plots, such a fertility of perplexed and tenebrous intrigue!

The animated manner and the picturesque phrase too in which all this was communicated heightened the interest and effect. Fakredeen sketched a character in a sentence, and you knew instantly the individual whom he described without any personal knowledge. Unlike the Orientals in general, his gestures were as vivid as his words. He acted the interviews, he achieved the adventures before you. His voice could take every tone and his countenance every form. In the midst of all this, bursts of plaintive melancholy; sometimes the anguish of a sensibility too exquisite alternating with a devilish mockery and a fatal absence of all self-respect.

“It appears to me,” said Tancred, when the young Emir had declared his star accursed, since, after the ceaseless exertions of years, he was still as distant as ever from the accomplishment of his purpose—“it appears to me that your system is essentially erroneous. I do not believe that anything great is ever effected by management. All this intrigue, in which you seem such an adept, might be of some service in a court or in an exclusive senate; but

to free a nation you require something more vigorous and more simple. This system of intrigue in Europe is quite old-fashioned. It is one of the superstitions left us by the wretched eighteenth century, a period when aristocracy was rampant throughout Christendom; and what were the consequences? All faith in God or man, all grandeur of purpose, all nobility of thought, and all beauty of sentiment, withered and shrivelled up. Then the dexterous management of a few individuals, base or dull, was the only means of success. But we live in a different age; there are popular sympathies, however imperfect, to appeal to; we must recur to the high primeval practice, and address nations now as the heroes, and prophets, and legislators of antiquity. If you wish to free your country, and make the Syrians a nation, it is not to be done by sending secret envoys to Paris or London, cities themselves which are perhaps both doomed to fall; you must act like Moses and Mahomet."

"But you forget the religions," said Fakredeen—"I have so many religions to deal with.

If my fellows were all Christians, or all Moslem, or all Jews, or all Pagans, I grant you—something might be effected; the cross, the crescent, the ark, or an old stone, anything would do; I would plant it on the highest range in the centre of the country, and I would carry Damascus and Aleppo both in one campaign; but I am debarred from this immense support; I could only preach nationality, and, as they all hate each other worse almost than they do the Turks, that would not be very inviting—nationality, without race as a plea, is like the smoke of this nargilly, a fragrant puff. Well, then, there remains only personal influence—ancient family, vast possessions, and traditionary power—mere personal influence can only be maintained by management, by what you stigmatize as intrigue; and the most dexterous member of the Shehaab family will be, in the long run, Prince of Lebanon.”

“And if you wish only to be Prince of the Lebanon, I dare say you may succeed,” said Tancred, “and perhaps with much less pains than you at present give yourself. But what

becomes of all your great plans of an hour ago, when you were to conquer the East, and establish the independence of the oriental races?"

"Ah!" exclaimed Fakredeen with a sigh, "these are the only ideas for which it is worth while to live."

"The world was never conquered by intrigue: it was conquered by faith. Now, I do not see that you have faith in anything."

"Faith," said Fakredeen, musingly, as if his ear had caught the word for the first time, "faith! that is a grand idea. If one could only have faith in something and conquer the world!"

"See now," said Tancred, with unusual animation, "I find no charm in conquering the world to establish a dynasty—a dynasty like everything else wears out—indeed it does not last as long as most things, it has a precipitate tendency to decay. There are reasons; we will not now dwell on them. One should conquer the world not to enthrone a man, but an idea—for ideas exist for ever. But what idea? There is the touchstone of all philosophy! Amid the wreck of creeds, the crash of

empires, French revolutions, English reforms, Catholicism in agony, and Protestantism in convulsions; discordant Europe demands the key-note, which none can sound. If Asia be in decay, Europe is in confusion. Your repose may be death, but our life is anarchy."

"I am thinking," said Fakredeem, thoughtfully, "how we in Syria could possibly manage to have faith in anything; I had faith in Mehemet Ali, but he is a Turk, and that upset him. If, instead of being merely a rebellious Pacha, he had placed himself at the head of the Arabs, and revived the Caliphate, you would have seen something. Head the desert and you may do anything. But it is so difficult. If you can once get the tribes out of it, they will go anywhere. See what they did when they last came forth. It is a simoom, a kamsin, fatal, irresistible. They are as fresh too as ever. The Arabs are always young; it is the only race that never withers. I am an Arab myself,—from my ancestor who was the standard-bearer of the Prophet—the consciousness of race is the only circumstance that sometimes keeps up my spirit."

“ I am an Arab only in religion,” said Tancred, “ but the consciousness of creed sustains me. I know well, though born in a distant and northern isle, that the Creator of the world speaks with man only in this land; and that is why I am here.”

The young Emir threw an earnest glance at his companion, whose countenance, though grave, was calm. “ Then you have faith?” said Fakredeen, inquiringly.

“ I have passive faith,” said Tancred. “ I know that there is a Deity who has revealed his will at intervals during different ages: but of his present purpose I feel ignorant, and therefore I have not active faith; I know not what to do; and should be reduced to a mere spiritual slothfulness, had I not resolved to struggle with this fearful necessity, and so embarked in this great pilgrimage which has so strangely brought us together.”

“ But you have your sacred books to consult?” said Fakredeen.

“ There were sacred books when Jehovah conferred with Solomon; there was a still greater number of sacred books when Jehovah

inspired the prophets; the sacred writings were yet more voluminous, when the Creator ordained that there should be for human edification a completely new series of inspired literature. Nearly two thousand years have passed since the last of those works appeared. It is a greater interval than elapsed between the writings of Malachi and the writings of Matthew.”

“The prior of the Maronite convent, at Mar Hanna, has often urged on me, as conclusive evidence of the falseness of Mahomet’s mission, that our Lord Jesus declared that after him ‘many false prophets should arise,’ and warned his followers.”

“There spoke the Prince of Israel,” said Tancred, “not the universal Redeemer. He warned his tribe against the advent of false Messiahs—no more. Far from terminating by his coming the direct communication between God and man, his appearance was only the herald of a relation between the Creator and his creatures, more fine, more permanent, and more express. The inspiring and consoling influence of the Paraclete only commenced

with the ascension of the Divine Son. In this fact perhaps may be found a sufficient reason why no written expression of the celestial will has subsequently appeared. But, instead of foreclosing my desire for express communication, it would, on the contrary, be a circumstance to authorize it."

"Then how do you know that Mahomet was not inspired?" said Fakredeen.

"Far be it from me to impugn the divine commission of any of the seed of Abraham," replied Tancred. "There are doctors of our church who recognise the sacred office of Mahomet, though they hold it to be what divine commissions, with the great exception, have ever been, limited and local."

"God has never spoken to a European?" said Fakredeen, inquiringly.

"Never."

"But you are a European."

"And your inference is just," said Tancred, in an agitated voice, and with a changing countenance. "It is one that has for some time haunted my soul. In England, when I prayed in vain for enlightenment, I at last

induced myself to believe that the Supreme Being would not deign to reveal his will unless in the land which his presence had rendered holy; but since I have been a dweller within its borders, and poured forth my passionate prayers at all its holy places, and received no sign, the desolating thought has sometimes come over my spirit, that there is a qualification of blood as well as of locality necessary for this communion, and that the favoured votary must not only kneel in the Holy Land but be of the holy race."

"I am an Arab," said Fakredeem. "It is something."

"If I were an Arab in race as well as in religion," said Tancred, "I would not pass my life in schemes to govern some mountain tribes."

"I'll tell you," said the Emir, springing from his divan, and flinging the tube of his nargilly to the other end of the tent; "the game is in our hands, if we have energy. There is a combination which would entirely change the whole face of the world, and bring back empire to the East. Though you are not the

brother of the Queen of the English, you are nevertheless a great English prince, and the Queen will listen to what you say; especially if you talk to her as you talk to me, and say such fine things in such a beautiful voice. Nobody ever opened my mind like you. You will magnetize the Queen as you have magnetized me. Go back to England and arrange this. You see — gloze it over as they may, one thing is clear—it is finished with England. There are three things which alone must destroy it. Primo, O'Connell appropriating to himself the revenues of half of her majesty's dominions. Secondo, the cottons — the world begins to get a little disgusted with those cottons; naturally everybody prefers silk; I am sure that the Lebanon in time could supply the whole world with silk, if it were properly administered. Thirdly, steam; with this steam your great ships have become a respectable Noah's ark. The game is up; Louis Philippe can take Windsor Castle whenever he pleases, as you took Acre, with the wind in his teeth. It is all over, then. Now, see a *coup d'etat*

that saves all. You must perform the Portuguese scheme on a great scale; quit a petty and exhausted position for a vast and prolific empire. Let the Queen of the English collect a great fleet, let her stow away all her treasure, bullion, gold plate, and precious arms; be accompanied by all her court and chief people, and transfer the seat of her empire from London to Delhi. There she will find an immense empire ready made, a first-rate army, and a large revenue. In the mean time I will arrange with Mehemet Ali. He shall have Bagdad and Mesopotamia, and pour the Bedouen cavalry into Persia. I will take care of Syria and Asia Minor. The only way to manage the Affghans is by Persia and by the Arabs. We will acknowledge the Empress of India as our suzerain, and secure for her the Levantine coast. If she like, she shall have Alexandria as she now has Malta: it could be arranged. Your Queen is young; she has an *avenir*. Aberdeen and Sir Peel will never give her this advice; their habits are formed. They are too old, too *rusés*. But you see! the

greatest empire that ever existed; besides which she gets rid of the embarrassment of her Chambers! And quite practicable; for the only difficult part, the conquest of India, which baffled Alexander, is all done!"

## CHAPTER IV.

It was not so much a conviction as a suspicion that Tancred had conveyed to the young Emir, when the pilgrim had confessed that the depressing thought sometimes came over him, that he was deficient in that qualification of race which was necessary for the high communion to which he aspired. Four and twenty hours before, he was not thus dejected. Almost within sight of Sinai, he was still full of faith. But his vexatious captivity and the enfeebling consequences of his wound dulled his spirit. Alone, among strangers and foes, in pain and in peril, and without that energy which finds excitement in difficulty, and can mock at

danger, which requires no counsellor but our own quick brain, and no champion but our own right arm, the high spirit of Tancred for the first time flagged. As the twilight descended over the rocky city, its sculptured tombs and excavated temples, and its strewn remains of palaces and theatres, his heart recurred with tenderness to the halls and towers of Montacute and Bellamont, and the beautiful affections beneath those stately roofs that, urged on, as he had once thought, by a divine influence, now, as he was half tempted to credit, by a fantastic impulse, he had dared to desert. Brooding in dejection, his eyes were suffused with tears.

It was one of those moments of amiable weakness which make us all akin, when sublime ambition, the mystical predispositions of genius, the solemn sense of duty, all the heaped-up lore of ages, and the dogmas of a high philosophy alike desert us, or sink into nothingness. The voice of his mother sounded in his ear, and he was haunted by his father's anxious glance. Why was he there? Why was he, the child of a northern isle, in the

heart of the Stony Arabia, far from the scene of his birth and of his duties? A disheartening, an awful question, which, if it could not be satisfactorily answered by Tancred of Montacute, it seemed to him that his future, wherever or however passed, must be one of intolerable bale.

Was he then a stranger there? uncalled, unexpected, intrusive, unwelcome? Was it a morbid curiosity, or the proverbial restlessness of a satiated aristocrat, that had drawn him to these wilds? What wilds? Had he no connexion with them? Had he not from his infancy repeated, in the congregation of his people, the laws which, from the awful summit of these surrounding mountains, the Father of all had himself delivered for the government of mankind? These Arabian laws regulated his life. And the wanderings of an Arabian tribe in this "great and terrible wilderness," under the immediate direction of the Creator, sanctified by his miracles, governed by his counsels, illumined by his presence, had been the first and guiding history that had been entrusted to his young intelligence, from

which it had drawn its first pregnant examples of human conduct and divine interposition, and formed its first dim conceptions of the relations between man and God. Why then he had a right to be here! He had a connexion with these regions; they had a hold upon him. He was not here like an Indian Brahmin, who visits Europe from a principle of curiosity, however rational or however refined. The land which the Hindoo visits is not his land, nor his father's land; the laws which regulate it are not his laws and the faith which fills its temples is not the revelation that floats upon his sacred Ganges. But for this English youth, words had been uttered and things done, more than thirty centuries ago, in this stony wilderness, which influenced his opinions and regulated his conduct every day of his life, in that distant and seagirt home, which, at the time of their occurrence, was not as advanced in civilization as the Polynesian groups or the islands of New Zealand. The life and property of England are protected by the laws of Sinai. The hard-working people of England are secured in every seven days a

day of rest by the laws of Sinai. And yet they persecute the Jews, and hold up to odium the race to whom they are indebted for the sublime legislation which alleviates the inevitable lot of the labouring multitude!

And when that labouring multitude cease for a while from a toil which equals almost Egyptian bondage, and demands that exponent of the mysteries of the heart, that soother of the troubled spirit, which poetry can alone afford—to whose harp do the people of England fly for sympathy and solace? Who is the most popular poet in this country? Is he to be found among the Mr. Wordsworths and the Lord Byrons, amid sauntering reveries or monologues of sublime satiety? Shall we seek him among the wits of Queen Anne? Even to the myriad-minded Shakspeare can we award the palm? No: the most popular poet in England is the sweet singer of Israel. Since the days of the heritage, when every man dwelt safely under his vine and under his fig-tree, there never was a race who sang so often the odes of David as the people of Great Britain.

Vast as the obligations of the whole human family are to the Hebrew race, there is no portion of the modern populations so much indebted to them as the British people. It was "the sword of the Lord and of Gideon;" that won the boasted liberties of England; chanting the same canticles that cheered the heart of Judah amid their glens, the Scotch, upon their hill-sides, achieved their religious freedom.

Then why do these Saxon and Celtic societies persecute an Arabian race, from whom they have adopted laws of sublime benevolence, and in the pages of whose literature they have found perpetual delight, instruction, and consolation? That is a great question, which, in an enlightened age, may be fairly asked, but to which even the self-complacent nineteenth century would find some difficulty in contributing a reply. Does it stand thus? Independently of their admirable laws which have elevated our condition, and of their exquisite poetry which has charmed it, independently of their heroic history, which has animated us to the pursuit of public liberty,

we are indebted to the Hebrew people for our knowledge of the true God and for the redemption from our sins?

“Then I have a right to be here,” said Tancred of Montacute, as his eyes were fixed in abstraction on the stars of Arabia; “I am not a travelling dilettante, mourning over a ruin, or in ecstasies at a deciphered inscription. I come to the land whose laws I obey, whose religion I profess, and I seek, upon its sacred soil, those sanctions which for ages were abundantly accorded. The angels who visited the Patriarchs, and announced the advent of the judges, who guided the pens of prophets and bore tidings to the apostles, spoke also to the shepherds in the field. I look upon the host of heaven; do they no longer stand before the Lord? Where are the Cherubim—where the Seraphs? Where is Michael the Destroyer? Gabriel of a thousand missions?”

At this moment, the sound of horsemen recalled Tancred from his reverie, and, looking up, he observed a group of Arabs approaching him, three of whom were mounted. Soon he

recognised the Great Sheikh Amalek, and Hassan, the late commander of his escort. The young Syrian Emir was their companion. This was a visit of hospitable ceremony from the Great Sheikh to his distinguished prisoner. Amalek, pressing his hand to his heart, gave Tancred the salute of peace, and then, followed by Hassan, who had lost nothing of his calm self-respect, but who conducted himself as if he were still free, the great Sheikh seated himself on the carpet that was spread before the tent, and took the pipe, which was immediately offered him by Freeman and Trueman, following the instructions of an attendant of the Emir Fakredeem.

After the usual compliments and some customary observations about horses and pistols, Fakredeem, who had seated himself close to Tancred, with a kind of shrinking cajolery, as if he were seeking the protection of some superior being, addressing Amalek in a tone of easy assurance, which remarkably contrasted with the sentimental deference he displayed towards his prisoner, said—

“ Sheikh of Sheikhs, there is but one God : now is it Allah or Jehovah ? ”

“ The palm tree is sometimes called a date tree,” replied Amalek, “ but there is only one tree.”

“ Good,” said Fakredeen, “ but you do not pray to Allah ? ”

“ I pray as my fathers prayed,” said Amalek.

“ And you pray to Jehovah ? ”

“ It is said.”

“ Sheikh Hassan,” said the Emir, “ there is but one God, and his name is Jehovah. Why do you not pray to Jehovah ? ”

“ Truly there is but one God,” said Sheikh Hassan, “ and Mahomet is his prophet. He told my fathers to pray to Allah, and to Allah I pray.”

“ Is Mahomet the prophet of God, Sheikh of Sheikhs ? ”

“ It may be,” replied Amalek, with a nod of assent.

“ Then why do you not pray as Sheikh Hassan ? ”

“ Because Moses, without doubt the prophet of God, for all believe in him—Sheikh Hassan, and Emir Fakredeem, and you too, Prince, brother of queens—married into our family and taught us to pray to Jehovah. There may be other prophets, but the children of Jethro would indeed ride on asses were they not content with Moses.”

“ And you have his five books?” inquired Tancred.

“ We had them from the beginning, and we shall keep them to the end.”

“ And you learnt in them, that Moses married the daughter of Jethro?”

“ Did I learn in them that I have wells and camels? We want no books to tell us who married our daughters.”

“ And yet it is not yesterday that Moses fled from Egypt into Midian?”

“ It is not yesterday for those who live in cities, where they say at one gate that it is morning, and at another it is night. Where men tell lies, the deed of the dawn is the secret of sunset. But in the desert nothing changes; neither the acts of a man’s life, nor

the words of a man's lips. We drink at the same well where Moses helped Zipporah, we tend the same flocks, we live under the same tents; our words have changed as little as our waters, our habits, or our dwellings; what my father learnt from those before him, he delivered to me, and I have told it to my son. What is time and what is truth, that I should forget that a prophet of the Lord married into my house?"

"Where little is done, little is said," observed Sheikh Hassan, "and Silence is the mother of Truth. Since the Hegira, nothing has happened in Arabia, and before that was Moses, and before him the giants."

"Let truth always be spoken," said Amalek; "your words are a flowing stream, and the children of Rechab and the tribes of the Senites never joined him of Mecca, for they had the five books, and they said, 'Is not that enough?' They withdrew to the Syrian wilderness and they multiplied. But the sons of Koreidha, who also had the five books, but who were not children of Rechab, but who came into the desert near Medina after Ne-

buchadnezzar had destroyed El Khuds, they first joined him of Mecca, and then they made war on him, and he broke their bows and led them into captivity; and they are to be found in the cities of Yemen to this day; the children of Israel who live in the cities of Yemen are the tribe of Koreidha."

"Unhappy sons of Koreidha, who made war upon the prophet, and who live in cities!" said Sheikh Hassan, taking a fresh pipe.

"And perhaps," said the young Emir, "if you had not been children of Jethro, you might have acknowledged him of Mecca, Sheikh of Sheikhs."

"There is but one God," said Amalek; "but there may be many prophets. It becomes not a son of Jethro to seek other than Moses. But I will not say that the Koran comes not from God, since it was written by one who was of the tribe of Koreish, and the tribe of Koreish are the lineal descendants of Ibrahim."

"And you believe that the word of God could come only to the seed of Abraham?" asked Tancred, eagerly.

“I and my fathers have watered our flocks in the wilderness since time was,” replied Amalek; “we have seen the Pharaohs, and Nebuchadnezzar, and Iskander, and the Romans, and the Sultan of the French—they conquered everything except us—and where are they? They are sand. Let men doubt of unicorns; but of one thing there can be no doubt, that God never spoke except to an Arab.”

Tancred covered his face with his hands. Then, after a few moments' pause, looking up, he said, “Sheikh of Sheikhs, I am your prisoner; and was, when you captured me, a pilgrim to Mount Sinai, a spot which, in your belief, is not less sacred than in mine. We are, as I have learned, only two days' journey from that holy place. Grant me this boon, that I may at once proceed thither, guarded as you will. I pledge you the word of a Christian noble, that I will not attempt to escape. Long before you have received a reply from Jerusalem, I shall have returned; and whatever may be the result of the visit of Baroni, I shall at least have fulfilled my pilgrimage.”

“Prince, brother of queens,” replied Amalek, with that politeness which is the characteristic of the Arabian chieftains; “under my tents you have only to command—go where you like, return when you please. My children shall attend you as your guardians, not as your guards.” And the Great Sheikh rose and retired.

Tancred re-entered his tent, and, reclining, fell into a reverie of distracting thoughts. The history of his life and mind seemed with a whirling power to pass before him—his birth, in a clime unknown to the patriarchs; his education, unconsciously to himself, in an Arabian literature; his imbibing, from his tender infancy, oriental ideas and oriental creeds; the contrast that the occidental society in which he had been reared presented to them; his dissatisfaction with that social system; his conviction of the growing melancholy of enlightened Europe, veiled, as it may be, with sometimes a conceited bustle, sometimes a desperate shipwreck gaiety, sometimes with all the exciting empiricism of science; his perplexity that, between the Asian reve-

lation and the European practice, there should be so little conformity, and why the relations between them should be so limited and imperfect; above all, his passionate desire to penetrate the mystery of the elder world, and share its celestial privileges and divine prerogative. Tancred sighed.

He looked round; some one had gently drawn his hand. It was the young Emir kneeling, his beautiful blue eyes bedewed with tears.

“You are unhappy,” said Fakredeem, in a tone of plaintiveness.

“It is the doom of man,” replied Tancred; “and in my position sadness should not seem strange.”

“The curse of ten thousand mothers on those who made you a prisoner; the curse of twenty thousand mothers on him who inflicted on you a wound!”

“’Tis the fortune of life,” said Tancred, more cheerfully; “and in truth I was perhaps thinking of other things.”

“Do you know why I trouble you when your heart is dark?” said the young Emir.

“ See now, if you will it, you are free. The great Sheikh has consented that you should go to Sinai. I have two dromedaries here, fleeter than the Kamsin. At the well of Mokatteb, where we encamp for the night, I will serve raki to the Bedoueens; I have some with me, strong enough to melt the snow of Lebanon; if it will not do, they shall smoke some timbak, that will make them sleep like pachas. I know this desert as a man knows his father’s house—we shall be at Hebron before they untie their eyelids. Tell me, is it good?”

“ Were I alone,” said Tancred, “ without a single guard, I must return.”

“ Why?”

“ Because I have pledged the word of a Christian noble.”

“ To a man who does not believe in Christ. Faugh! Is it not itself a sin to keep faith with heretics?”

“ But is he one?” said Tancred. “ He believes in Moses; he disbelieves in none of the seed of Abraham. He is of that seed himself. Would I were such a heretic as Sheikh Amalek!”

“If you will only pay me a visit in the Lebanon, I would introduce you to our patriarch, and he would talk as much theology with you as you like. For my own part, it is not a kind of knowledge that I have much cultivated; you know I am peculiarly situated, we have so many religions on the Mountain; but time presses; tell me, my prince, shall Hebron be our point?”

“If Amalek believed in Baal, I must return,” said Tancred; “even if it were to certain death. Besides, I could not desert my men; and Baroni—what would become of him?”

“We could easily make some plan that would extricate them. Dismiss them from your mind, and trust yourself to me. I know nothing that would delight me more than to balk these robbers of their prey.”

“I should not talk of such things,” said Tancred; “I must remain here, or I must return.”

“What can you want to do on Mount Sinai?” murmured the prince, rather pettishly. “Now, if it were Mount Lebanon,

and you had a wish to employ yourself, there is an immense field! We might improve the condition of the people; we might establish manufactures, stimulate agriculture, extend commerce, get an appalto of the silk, buy it all up at sixty piastres per oke and sell it at Marseilles at two hundred, and at the same time advance the interests of true religion as much as you please."

## CHAPTER V.

TEN days had elapsed since the capture of Tancred; Amalek and his Arabs were still encamped in the rocky city; the beams of the early sun were just rising over the crest of the amphitheatre, when four horsemen, who were recognised as the children of Rechab, issued from the ravine. They galloped over the plain, shouted, and threw their lances in the air; from the crescent of black tents came forth the warriors, some mounted their horses and met their returning brethren, others prepared their welcome. The horses neighed, the camels stirred their long necks. All living things seemed conscious that an event had occurred.

The four horsemen were surrounded by their brethren; but one of them, giving and returning blessings, darted forward to the pavillion of the Great Sheikh.

“Have you brought camels, Shedad, son of Amroo?” inquired one of the welcomers to the welcomed.

“We have been to El Khuds,” was the reply. “What we have brought back is a seal of Solomon.”

“From Mount Seir to the City of the Friend, what have you seen in the joyful land?”

“We found the sons of Hamar by the well-side of Jumda; we found the marks of many camels in the pass of Gharendel, and the marks in the pass of Gharendel were not the marks of the camels of the Beni-hamar.”

“I had a dream, and the children of Tora said to me, ‘Who art thou in the lands of our father’s flocks? Are none but the sons of Rechab to drink the sweet waters of Edom?’ Methinks the marks in the pass of Gharendel were the marks of the camels of the children of Tora.”

“There is feud between the Beni-tora and

the Beni-hamar," replied the other Arab, shaking his head. "The Beni-tora are in the wilderness of Akiba, and the Beni-hamar have burnt their tents and captured their camels and their women. This is why the sons of Hamar are watering their flocks by the well of Jumda."

In the mean time, the caravan, of which the four horsemen were the advanced guard, issued from the pass into the plain.

"Shedad, son of Amroo," exclaimed one of the Bedoueens, "what! have you captured an harem!" For he beheld dromedaries and veiled women.

The Great Sheikh came forth from his pavillion and sniffed the morning air; a dignified smile played over his benignant features, and once he smoothed his venerable beard.

"My son-in-law is a true son of Israel," he murmured complacently to himself. "He will trust his gold only to his own blood."

The caravan wound about the plain, then crossed the stream at the accustomed ford, and approached the amphitheatre.

The horsemen halted, some dismounted, the

dromedaries knelt down, Baroni assisted one of the riders from her seat; the great Sheikh advanced and said, "Welcome in the name of God, welcome with a thousand blessings!"

"I come in the name of God—I come with a thousand blessings," replied the lady.

"And with a thousand something else," thought Amalek to himself; but the Arabs are so polished, that they never make unnecessary allusions to business.

"Had I thought the Queen of Sheba was going to pay me a visit," said the Great Sheikh, "I would have brought the pavillion of Miriam. "How is the Rose of Sharon?" he continued, as he ushered Eva into his tent. "How is the son of my heart—how is Besso, more generous than a thousand kings?"

"Speak not of the son of thy heart," said Eva, seating herself on the divan. "Speak not of Besso, the generous and the good, for his head is strewn with ashes, and his mouth is full of sand."

"What is this!" thought Amalek. "Besso is not ill, or his daughter would not be here. This arrow flies not straight. Does he want

to scrape my piastres? These sons of Israel that dwell in cities will mix their pens with our spears. I will be obstinate as an Azafeer camel."

Slaves now entered, bringing coffee and bread, the Sheikh asking questions as they ate, as to the time Eva quitted Jerusalem, her halting places in the desert, whether she had met with any tribes; then he offered to his grand-daughter his own chibouque, which she took with ceremony, and instantly returned, while they brought her aromatic nargilly.

Eva scanned the imperturbable countenance of her grandfather: calm, polite, benignant, she knew the Great Sheikh too well to suppose for a moment that its superficial expression was any indication of his innermost purpose. Suddenly she said, in a somewhat careless tone, "And why is the Lord of the Syrian pastures in this wilderness, that has been so long accursed?"

The Great Sheikh took his pipe from his mouth, and then slowly sent forth its smoke through his nostrils, a feat of which he was proud. Then he placidly replied: "For the same reason that the man named Baroni made a visit to El Khuds."

“The man named Baroni came to demand succour for his lord, who is your prisoner.”

“And also to obtain two millions of piastres,” added Amalek.

“Two millions of piastres? Why not at once ask for the throne of Solomon?”

“Which would be given if required,” rejoined Amalek. “Was it not said in the divan of Besso, that if this Prince of Franguestan wished to rebuild the Temple, the treasure would not be wanting?”

“Said by some city gossip,” said Eva, scornfully.

“Said by your father, daughter of Besso, who, though he live in cities, is not a man who will say that almonds are pearls.”

Eva controlled her countenance, though it was difficult to conceal her mortification as she perceived how well informed her grandfather was of all that passed under their roof, and of the resources of his prisoner. It was necessary, after the last remark of the Great Sheikh, to take new ground, and, instead of dwelling, as she was about to do, on the exaggeration of public

report, and attempting to ridicule the vast expectations of her host, she said, in a soft tone, "You did not ask me why Besso was in such affliction, father of my mother?"

"There are many sorrows: has he lost ships? If a man is in sound health, all the rest are dreams. And Besso needs no hakeem, or you would not be here, my Rose of Sharon."

"The light may have become darkness in our eyes, though we may still eat and drink," said Eva. "And that has happened to Besso which might have turned a child's hair grey in its cradle."

"Who has poisoned his well? Has he quarrelled with the Porte?" said the Sheikh, without looking at her.

"It is not his enemies who have pierced him in the back."

"Humph," said the Great Sheikh.

"And that makes his heart more heavy," said Eva.

"He dwells too much in walls," said the Great Sheikh. "He should have rode into the desert, instead of you, my child. He should

have brought the ransom himself," and the Great Sheikh sent two curling streams out of his nostrils.

"Whoever be the bearer, he is the payer," said Eva. "It is he who is the prisoner, not this son of Franguestan, who, you think, is your captive."

"Your father wishes to scrape my piastres," said the Great Sheikh, in a stern voice, and looking his granddaughter full in the face.

"If he wanted to scrape piastres from the desert," said Eva, in a sweet but mournful voice, "would Besso have given you the convoy of the Hadji without condition or abatement!"

The Great Sheikh drew a long breath from his chibouque. After a momentary pause he said, "In a family there should ever be unity and concord; above all things words should not be dark. How much will the Queen of the English give for her brother?"

"He is not the brother of the Queen of the English," said Eva.

"Not when he is my spoil, in my tent," said Amalek, with a cunning smile; "but put

him on a round hat in a walled city, and then he is the brother of the Queen of the English."

"Whatever his rank, he is the charge of Besso, my father and your son," said Eva, "and Besso has pledged his heart, his life, and his honour, that this young prince shall not be hurt. For him he feels, for him he speaks, for him he thinks. Is it to be told in the bazaars of Franguestan that his first office of devotion was to send this youth into the Desert to be spoiled by the father of his wife!"

"Why did my daughters marry men who live in cities?" exclaimed the old Sheikh.

"Why did they marry men who made your peace with the Egyptian, when not even the desert could screen you? Why did they marry men who gained you the convoy of the Hadj, and gave you the milk of ten thousand camels?"

"Truly there is but one God in the desert and in the city," said Amalek. "Now tell me, Rose of Sharon, how many piastres have you brought me?"

"If you be in trouble, Besso will aid you as he has done; if you wish to buy camels,

Besso will assist you as before; but, if you expect ransom for his charge, whom you ought to have placed on your best mare of Nedgid, then I have not brought a para."

"It is clearly the end of the world," said Amalek with a savage sigh.

"Why I am here," said Eva, "I am only the child of your child, a woman without spears — why do you not seize me, and send to Besso? He must ransom me, for I am the only offspring of his loins. Ask for four millions of piastres! He can raise them. Let him send round to all the cities of Syria, and tell his brethren that a Bedouen Sheikh has made his daughter and her maidens captive — and, trust me, the treasure will be forthcoming. He need not say it is one on whom he has lavished a thousand favours, whose visage was darker than the simoom when he made the great Pacha smile on him, who, however he may talk of living in cities now, could come cringing to El Sham to ask for the contract of the Hadj, by which he had gained ten thousand camels; he need say nothing of all

this, and least of all, need he say that the spoiler is his father!"

"What is this Prince of Franguestan to thee and thine!" said Amalek. "He comes to our land like his brethren, to see the sun and seek for treasure in our ruins, and he bears, like all of them, some written words to your father, saying, give to this man what he asks, and we will give to your people what they ask. I understand all this: they all come to your father because he deals in money, and is the only man in Syria who has money. What he pays, he is again paid. Is it not so, Eva? Daughter of my blood, let there not be strife between us; give me a million piastres, and a hundred camels to the widow of Sheikh Salem, and take the brother of the Queen."

"Camels shall be given to the widow of Sheikh Salem," said Eva, in a conciliatory voice—"but for this ransom of which you speak, my father—it is not a question as to the number of piastres. If you want a million of piastres, shall it be said that Besso would not lend, perhaps give, them to the Great Sheikh he

loves? But you see, my father of fathers, piastres and this Frank stranger are not of the same leaven. Name them not together, I pray you; mix not their waters. It concerns the honour, and welfare, and safety, and glory of Besso that you should cover this youth with a robe of power, and place him upon your best dromedary, and send him back to El Khuds."

The Great Sheikh groaned,

"Have I opened a gate that I am unable to close?" he at length said. "What is begun shall be finished. Have the children of Rechab been brought from the sweet wells of Costal to this wilderness ever accursed to fill their purses with stones? Will they not return and say that my beard is too white? Yet do I wish that this day was finished. Name then at once, my daughter, the piastres that you will give; for the prince, the brother of queens, may to-morrow be dust."

"How so?" eagerly inquired Eva.

"He is a Mejnoun," replied Amalek. "After the man named Baroni departed for El Khuds, the Prince of Franguestan would not rest until he visited Gibel Mousa, and I said

‘Yes’ to all his wishes. Whether it were his wound inflamed by his journey, or grief at his captivity—for these Franks are the slaves of useless sorrow—he returned as wild as Kais, and now lies in his tent, fancying he is still on Mount Sinai. ’Tis the fifth day of the fever, and Shedad, the son of Amrou, tells me that the sixth will be fatal unless we can give him the gall of a phœnix, and such a bird is not to be found in this part of Arabia. Now, you are a great hakeem, my child of children; go then to the young prince, and see what can be done—for if he die, we can scarcely ransom him, and I shall lose the piastres, and your father the backsheesh which I meant to have given him on the transaction.”

“This is very woeful,” murmured Eva to herself, and not listening to the latter observations of her grandfather.

At this moment, the curtain of the pavillion was withdrawn, and there stood before them Fakredeem. The moment his eyes met those of Eva, he covered his face with both his hands.

“How is the Prince of Franguestan?” inquired Amalek.

The young Emir advanced, and threw himself at the feet of Eva. "We must entreat the Rose of Sharon to visit him," he said, "for there is no hakeem in Arabia equal to her. Yes, I came to welcome you, and to entreat you to do this kind office for the most gifted and the most interesting of beings," and he looked up in her face with a supplicating glance.

"And you too—are you fearful," said Eva, in a tone of tender reproach, "that by his death you may lose your portion of the spoil?"

The Emir gave a deprecating glance of anguish, and then, bending his head, pressed his lips to the Bedouen robes which she wore. "'Tis the most unfortunate of coincidences, but believe me, dearest of friends, 'tis only a coincidence. I am here merely by accident, I was hunting, I was——"

"You will make me doubt your intelligence as well as your good faith," said Eva, "if you persist in such assurances."

"Ah! if you but knew him," exclaimed Fakredeen, "you would believe me when I tell you that I am ready to sacrifice even my life for his. Far from sharing the spoil," he

added, in a rapid and earnest whisper, "I had already proposed, and could have insured, his escape; when he went to Sinai, to that unfortunate Sinai. I had two dromedaries here, thorough bred, we might have reached Hebron before——"

"You went with him to Sinai?"

"He would not suffer it: he desired, he said, to be silent and to be alone. One of the Bedoueens, who accompanied him, told me that they halted in the valley, and that he went up alone into the mountain, where he remained a day and night. When he returned hither, I perceived a great change in him. His words were quick, his eye glittered like fire; he told me that he had seen an angel, and in the morning he was as he is now. I have wept, I have prayed for him in the prayers of every religion, I have bathed his temples with liban, and hung his tent with charms. O Rose of Sharon! Eva, beloved, darling Eva, I have faith in no one but in you. See him, I beseech you, see him! If you but knew him, if you had but listened to his voice, and felt the greatness of his thoughts and spirit, it

would not need that I should make this entreaty. But alas! you know him not; you have never listened to him, you have never seen him: or neither he, nor I, nor any of us, would have been here, and have been thus."

## CHAPTER VI.

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NOTWITHSTANDING all the prescient care of the Duke and Duchess of Bellamont, it was destined that the stout arm of Colonel Brace should not wave by the side of their son when he was first attacked by the enemy, and now that he was afflicted by a most severe, if not fatal, illness, the practised skill of the Doctor Roby was also absent. Fresh exemplification of what all of us so frequently experience, that the most sagacious and matured arrangements are of little avail; that no one is present when he is wanted, and that nothing occurs as it was foreseen. Nor should we forget that the principal cause of all these mischances

might perhaps be recognised in the inefficiency of the third person whom the parents of Tancred had, with so much solicitude and at so great an expense, secured to him as a companion and counsellor in his travels. It cannot be denied, that if the theological attainments of the Rev. Mr. Bernard had been of a more profound and comprehensive character, it is possible that Lord Montacute might not have deemed it necessary to embark upon this new crusade, and ultimately to find himself in the deserts of Mount Sinai. However this may be, one thing was certain, that Tancred had been wounded without a single sabre of the Bellamont yeomanry being brandished in his defence; was now lying dangerously ill in an Arabian tent, without the slightest medical assistance; and perhaps was destined to quit this world, not only without the consolation of a priest of his holy church, but surrounded by heretics and infidels.

“ We have never let any of the savages come near my lord,” said Freeman to Baroni, on his return.

“ Except the fair young gentleman,” added

Trueman, "and he is a Christian, or as good."

"He is a prince," said Freeman, reproachfully. "Have I not told you so twenty times? He is what they call in this country a Hameer, and lives in a castle, where he wanted my lord to visit him. I only wish he had gone with my lord to Mount Siny; I think it would have come to more good."

"He has been very attentive to my lord all the time," said Trueman; "indeed, he has never quitted my lord night or day; and only left his side when we heard the caravan had returned."

"I have seen him," said Baroni; "and now let us enter the tent."

Upon the divan, his head supported by many cushions, clad in a Syrian robe of the young Emir, and partly covered with a Bedouen cloak, lay Tancred, deadly pale, his eyes open and fixed, and apparently unconscious of their presence. He was lying on his back, gazing on the roof of the tent, and was motionless. Fakredeen had raised his wounded arm, which had fallen from the couch, and

had supported it with a pile made of cloaks and pillows. The countenance of Tancred was much changed since Baroni last beheld him: it was greatly extenuated, but the eyes glittered with an unearthly fire.

“We don’t think he has ever slept,” said Freeman, in a whisper.

“He did nothing but talk to himself the first two days,” said Trueman; “but yesterday he has been more quiet.”

Baroni advanced to the divan behind the head of Tancred, so that he might not be observed, and then, letting himself fall noiselessly on the carpet, he touched with a light finger the pulse of Lord Montacute.

“There is not too much blood here,” he said, shaking his head.

“You don’t think it is hopeless?” said Freeman, beginning to blubber.

“And all the great doings of my lord’s coming of age to end in this!” said Trueman.

“They sat down only two less than a hundred at the steward’s table for more than a week!”

Baroni made a sign to them to leave the tent. “God of my fathers!” he said, still

seated on the ground, his arms folded, and watching Tancred earnestly with his bright black eyes; "this is a bad business. This is death or madness—perhaps both. What will M. de Sidonia say? He loves not men who fail. All will be visited on me. I shall be shelved. In Europe they would bleed him, and they would kill him; here they will not bleed him, and he may die. Such is medicine, and such is life! Now, if I only had as much opium as would fill the pipe of a Mandarin! that would be something. God of my fathers, this is a bad business!"

He rose softly; he approached nearer to Tancred, and examined his countenance more closely; there was a slight foam upon the lip, which he gently wiped away.

"The brain has worked too much," said Baroni to himself. "Often have I watched him pacing the deck during our voyage; never have I witnessed an abstraction so prolonged and so profound. He thinks as much as M. de Sidonia, and feels more. There is his weakness. The strength of my master is his superiority to all sentiment. No affections and a great brain

—these are the men to command the world. No affections and a little brain—such is the stuff of which they make petty villains. And a great brain and a great heart—what do they make? Ah! I do not know. The last, perhaps, wears off with time—and yet I wish I could save this youth, for he ever attracts me to him.”

Thus he remained for some time seated on the carpet by the side of the divan, revolving in his mind every possible expedient that might benefit Tancred, and finally being convinced that none was in his power. What roused him from his watchful reverie was a voice that called his name very softly, and looking round he beheld the Emir Fakredeen on tiptoe, with his finger on his month. Baroni rose, and, Fakredeen inviting him with a gesture to leave the tent, he found without, the lady of the caravan.

“I want the Rose of Sharon to see your lord,” said the young Emir, very anxiously, “for she is a great hakeem among our people.”

“Perhaps in the desert, where there is none

to be useful, I might not be useless," said Eva, with some reluctance and reserve.

"Hope has only one arrow left," said Baroni, mournfully.

"Is it indeed so bad?"

"Oh! save him, Eva—save him!" exclaimed Fakredeen, distractedly.

She placed her finger on her lip.

"Or I shall die," continued Fakredeen, "nor indeed have I any wish to live, if he depart from us."

Eva conversed apart for a few minutes with Baroni in a low voice, and then drawing aside the curtain of the tent, they entered.

There was no change in the appearance of Tancred, but as they approached him he spoke. Baroni dropped into his former position, Fakredeen fell upon his knees, Eva alone was visible when the eyes of Tancred met hers. His vision was not unconscious of her presence; he stared at her with intentness. The change in her dress however would in all probability have prevented his recognising her even under indifferent circumstances. She

was habited as a Bedoueen girl; a leathern girdle encircled her blue robe, a few gold coins were braided in her hair, and her head was covered with a fringed kefia.

Whatever was the impression made upon Tancred by this unusual apparition, it appeared to be only transient. His glance withdrawn, his voice again broke into incoherent but violent exclamations. Suddenly he said, with more moderation, but with firmness and distinctness, "I am guarded by angels."

Fakredeem shot a glance at Eva and Baroni, as if to remind them of the tenour of the discourse for which he had prepared them.

After a pause, he became somewhat violent, and seemed as if he would have waved his wounded arm, but Baroni, whose eye, though himself unobserved, never quitted his charge, laid his finger upon the arm, and Tancred did not struggle. Again he spoke of angels, but in a milder and mournful tone.

"Methinks you look like one," thought Eva, as she beheld his spiritual countenance lit up by a superhuman fire.

After a few minutes, she glanced at Baroni

to signify her wish to leave the tent, and he rose and accompanied her. Fakredeen also rose with streaming eyes, and making the sign of the cross.

“Forgive me,” he said to Eva, “but I cannot help it. Whenever I am in affliction I cannot help remembering that I am a Christian.”

“I wish you would remember it at all times,” said Eva, “and then, perhaps, none of us need have been here;” and then, not waiting for his reply, she addressed herself to Baroni. “I agree with you,” she said. “If we cannot give him sleep, he will soon sleep for ever.”

“Oh, give him sleep, Eva,” said Fakredeen, wringing his hands; “you can do anything.”

“I suppose,” said Baroni, “it is hopeless to think of finding any opium here.”

“Utterly,” said Eva, “its practice is quite unknown among them.”

“Send for some from El Khuds,” said Fakredeen.

“Idle!” said Baroni; “this is an affair of hours, not of days.”

“Oh, but I will go,” exclaimed Fakredeen,

“you do not know what I can do on one of my dromedaries! I will ——”

Eva placed her hand on his arm without looking at him, and then continued to address Baroni. “Through the pass I several times observed a small white and yellow flower in patches. I lost it as we advanced, and yet I should think it must have followed the stream. If it be, as I think, but I did not observe it with much attention, the flower of the mountain Arnica, I know a preparation from that shrub, which has a marvellous action on the nervous system.”

“I am sure it is the mountain Arnica, and I am sure it will cure him,” said Fakredeen.

“Time presses,” said Eva to Baroni. “Call my maidens to our aid; and first of all let us examine the borders of the stream.”

While his friends departed to exert themselves, Fakredeen remained behind, and passed his time partly in watching Tancred, partly in weeping, and partly in calculating the amount of his debts. This latter was a frequent, and to him, inexhaustible source of interest and excitement. His creative brain was soon lost in reverie. He conjured up Tancred restored

to health, a devoted friendship between them, immense plans, not inferior achievements, and inexhaustible resources. Then when he remembered that he was himself the cause of the peril of that precious life on which all his future happiness and success were to depend, he cursed himself. Involved as were the circumstances in which he habitually found himself entangled, the present complication was certainly not inferior to any of the perplexities which he had hitherto experienced.

He was to become the bosom friend of a being whom he had successfully plotted to make a prisoner and plunder, and whose life was consequently endangered; he had to prevail on Amalek to relinquish the ransom which had induced the Great Sheikh to quit his Syrian pastures, and had cost the lives of some of his most valuable followers; while, on the other hand, the new moon was rapidly approaching, when the young Emir had appointed to meet Scheriff Effendi at Gaza, to receive the arms and munitions which were to raise him to empire, and for which he had purposed to pay by a portion of his share in the great plunder which he had himself projected. His baffled

brain whirled with wild and impracticable combinations, till, at length, frightened and exhausted, he called for his nargilly, and sought, as was his custom, serenity from its magic tube. In this wise more than three hours had elapsed, the young Emir was himself again, and was calculating the average of the various rates of interest in every town in Syria, from Gaza to Aleppo, when Baroni returned bearing in his hand an Egyptian vase.

“You have found the magic flowers?” asked Fakredeen, eagerly.

“The flowers of Arnica, noble Emir, of which the lady Eva spoke. I wish the potion had been made in the new moon; however, it has been blessed. Two things alone now are wanting, that my lord should drink it, and that it should cure him.”

It was not yet noon when Tancred quaffed the potion. He took it without difficulty, though apparently unconscious of the act. As the sun reached its meridian height, Tancred sank into a profound slumber. Fakredeen rushed away to tell Eva, who had now retired into the innermost apartments of the pavillion

of Amalek; Baroni never quitted the tent of his lord.

The sun set; the same beautiful rosy tint suffused the tombs and temples of the city as on the evening of their first forced arrival: still Tancred slept. The camels returned from the river, the lights began to sparkle in the circle of black tents, still Tancred slept. He slept during the day, and he slept during the twilight, and when the night came, still Tancred slept. The silver lamp, fed by the oil of the palm tree, threw its delicate white light over the couch on which he rested. Mute, but ever vigilant, Fakredeem and Baroni gazed on their friend and master; still Tancred slept.

It seemed a night that would never end, and, when the first beam of the morning came, the Emir and his companion mutually recognised on their respective countenances an expression of distrust, even of terror. Still Tancred slept; in the same posture and with the same expression, unmoved and pale. Was it, indeed, sleep? Baroni touched his wrist, but could find no pulse; Fakredeem held his

bright dagger over the mouth, yet its brilliancy was not for a moment clouded. But he was not cold.

The brow of Baroni was knit with deep thought, and his searching eye fixed upon the recumbent form; Fakredeem, frightened, ran away to Eva.

“ I am frightened, because you are frightened,” said Fakredeem, “ whom nothing ever alarms. O Rose of Sharon! why are you so pale?”

“ It is a stain upon our tents if this youth be lost,” said Eva in a low voice, yet attempting to speak with calmness.

“ But what is it on me!” exclaimed Fakredeem distractedly — “ A stain! I shall be branded like Cain. No, I will never enter Damascus again, or any of the cities of the coast. I will give up all my castles to my cousin Francis El Kazin, on condition that he does not pay my creditors. I will retire to Mar Hanna. I will look upon man no more.”

“ Be calm, my Fakredeem; there is yet hope; my responsibility at this moment is surely not lighter than yours.”

“ Ah! you did not know him, Eva !” exclaimed Fakredeen, passionately—“ you never listened to him! He cannot be to you what he is to me. I loved him !”

She pressed her finger to her lips, for they had arrived at the tent of Tancred. The young Emir, drying his streaming eyes, entered first, and then came back and ushered in Eva. They stood together by the couch of Tancred. The expression of distress, of suffering, of extreme tension, which had not marred but which at least had mingled with the spiritual character of his countenance the previous day, had disappeared. If it were death, it was at least beautiful. Softness and repose suffused his features, and his brow looked as if it had been the temple of an immortal spirit.

Eva gazed upon the form with a fond, deep melancholy; Fakredeen and Baroni exchanged glances. Suddenly Tancred moved, heaved a deep sigh, and opened his dark eyes. The unnatural fire which had yesterday lit them up had fled. Calmly and thoughtfully he surveyed those around him, and then he said, “ The Lady of Bethany !”

## CHAPTER VII.

BETWEEN the Egyptian and the Arabian deserts, formed by two gulfs of the Erythræan sea, is a peninsula of granite mountains. It seems as if an ocean of lava, when its waves were literally running mountains high, had been suddenly commanded to stand still. These successive summits, with their peaks and pinnacles, enclose a series of valleys, in general stern and savage, yet some of which are not devoid of pastoral beauty. There may be found brooks of silver brightness, and occasionally groves of palms and gardens of dates, while the neighbouring heights command sublime landscapes, the opposing mountains of Asia and of Afric,

and the blue bosom of two seas. On one of these elevations, more than five thousand feet above the ocean, is a convent; again, nearly three thousand feet above this convent, is a towering peak, and this is Mount Sinai.

On the top of Mount Sinai are two ruins, a Christian church and a Mahometan mosque. In this, the sublimest scene of Arabian glory, Israel and Ishmael alike raised their altars to the great God of Abraham. Why are they in ruins? Is it that human structures are not to be endured amid the awful temples of nature and revelation; and that the column and the cupola crumble into nothingness in sight of the hallowed Horeb and on the soil of the eternal Sinai?

Ascending the mountain, about half way between the convent and the utmost height of the towering peak, is a small plain surrounded by rocks. In its centre are a cypress tree and a fountain. This is the traditional scene of the greatest event of time.

'Tis night; a solitary pilgrim, long kneeling on the sacred soil, slowly raises his agitated glance to the starry vault of Araby, and,

clasping his hands in the anguish of devotion, thus prays :—

“ O Lord God of Israel, Creator of the universe, ineffable Jehovah ! a child of Christendom, I come to thine ancient Arabian altars to pour forth the heart of tortured Europe. Why art thou silent? Why no longer do the messages of thy renovating will descend on earth? Faith fades and duty dies. A profound melancholy has fallen on the spirit of man. The priest doubts, the monarch cannot rule, the multitude moans and toils, and calls in its frenzy upon unknown gods. If this transfigured mount may not again behold thee; if not again, upon thy sacred Syrian plains, Divinity may teach and solace man; if prophets may not rise again to herald hope; at least, of all the starry messengers that guard thy throne, let one appear, to save thy creatures from a terrible despair !”

A dimness suffused the stars of Arabia; the surrounding heights that had risen sharp and black in the clear purple air, blended in shadowy and fleeting masses, the huge branches

of the cypress tree seemed to stir, and the kneeling pilgrim sank upon the earth senseless and in a trance.

And there appeared to him a form: a shape that should be human, but vast as the surrounding hills. Yet such was the symmetry of the vision that the visionary felt his littleness rather than the colossal proportions of the apparition. It was the semblance of one who, though not young, was still untouched by time; a countenance like an oriental night, dark yet lustrous, mystical yet clear. Thought, rather than melancholy, spoke from the pensive passion of his eyes, while on his lofty forehead glittered a star that threw a solemn radiance on the repose of his majestic features.

“Child of Christendom,” said the mighty form, as he seemed slowly to wave a sceptre, fashioned like a palm tree, “I am the angel of Arabia, the guardian spirit of that land which governs the world; for power is neither the sword nor the shield, for these pass away, but ideas, which are divine. The thoughts of all lands come from a higher source than man,

but the intellect of Arabia comes from the Most High. Therefore it is that from this spot issue the principles which regulate the human destiny.

“ That Christendom which thou hast quitted, and over whose expiring attributes thou art a mourner, was a savage forest while the cedars of Lebanon, for countless ages, had built the palaces of mighty kings. Yet in that forest brooded infinite races that were to spread over the globe and give a new impulse to its ancient life. It was decreed that, when they burst from their wild woods, the Arabian principles should meet them on the threshold of the old world to guide and to civilize them. All had been prepared. The Cæsars had conquered the world to place the Laws of Sinai on the throne of the Capitol, and a Galilean Arab advanced and traced on the front of the rude conquerors of the Cæsars the subduing symbol of the last development of Arabian principles.

“ Yet again—and Europe is in the throes of a great birth. The multitudes again are brooding; but they are not now in the forest: they are in the cities and in the fertile

plains. Since the first sun of this century rose, the intellectual colony of Arabia, once called Christendom, has been in a state of partial and blind revolt. Discontented, they attributed their suffering to the principles to which they owed all their happiness, and in receding from which they had become proportionably miserable. They have hankered after other gods than the God of Sinai and of Calvary, and they have achieved only desolation. Now they despair. But the eternal principles that controlled barbarian vigour can alone cope with morbid civilization. The equality of man can only be accomplished by the sovereignty of God. The longing for fraternity can never be satisfied but under the sway of a common father. The relations between Jehovah and his creatures can be neither too numerous nor too near. In the increased distance between God and man, have grown up all those developments that have made life mournful. Cease then to seek in a vain philosophy the solution of the social problem that perplexes you. Announce the sublime and solacing doctrine of theocratic

equality. Fear not, faint not, falter not. Obey the impulse of thine own spirit, and find a ready instrument in every human being."

A sound, as of thunder, roused Tancred from his trance. He looked around and above. There rose the mountains sharp and black in the clear purple air; there shone, with undimmed lustre, the Arabian stars; but the voice of the angel still lingered in his ear. He descended the mountain: at its base, near the convent, were his slumbering guards, some steeds, and crouching camels.

## CHAPTER VIII.

THE beautiful daughter of Besso, pensive and abstracted, played with her beads in the pavillion of her grandfather. Two of her maidens, who had attended her, in a corner of this inner compartment accompanied the wild murmur of their voices on a stringed instrument, which might in the old days have been a psaltery. They sang the loves of Antar and of Ibla, of Leila and of Mejnoun; the romance of the desert, tales of passion and of plunder, of the rescue of women and the capture of camels, of heroes with a lion heart, and heroines brighter and softer than the moon.

The beautiful daughter of Besso, pensive and abstracted, played with her beads in the pavillion of her grandfather. Why is the beautiful daughter of Besso pensive and abstracted? What thoughts are flitting over her mind, silent and soft, like the shadows of birds over the sunshiny earth?

Something that was neither silent nor soft disturbed the lady from her reverie; the voice of the Great Sheikh, in a tone of altitude and harshness, with him most unusual. He was in an adjacent apartment, vowing that he would sooner eat the mother of some third person, who was attempting to influence him, than adopt the suggestion offered. Then there were softer and more persuasive tones from his companion, but evidently ineffectual. Then the voices of both rose together in emulous clamour—one roaring like a bull, the other shrieking like some wild bird; one full of menace, and the other taunting and impertinent. All this was followed by a dead silence, which continuing, Eva assumed that the Sheikh and his companion had quitted his tent. While her mind was recurring to those

thoughts which occupied them previously to this outbreak, the voice of Fakredeen was heard outside her tent, saying, "Rose of Sharon, let me come into the hareem;" and, scarcely waiting for permission, the young Emir, flushed and excited, entered, and almost breathless threw himself on the divan.

"Who says I am a coward?" he exclaimed, with a glance of devilish mockery; "I may run away sometimes, but what of that? I have got moral courage, the only thing worth having, since the invention of gunpowder. The beast is not killed, but I have looked into the den; 'tis something. Courage, my fragrant Rose, have faith in me at last. I may make an imbroglio sometimes, but, for getting out of a scrape, I would back myself against any picaroon in the Levant; and that is saying a good deal."

"Another imbroglio?"

"Oh, no! the same—part of the great blunder. You must have heard us raging like a thousand Afrites. I never knew the Great Sheikh so wild."

"And why?"

“He should take a lesson from Mehemet Ali,” continued the Emir. “Giving up Syria, after the conquest, was a much greater sacrifice than giving up plunder which he has not yet touched. And the great Pacha did it as quietly as if he were marching into Stamboul instead, which he might have done if he had been an Arab instead of a Turk. Everything comes from Arabia, my dear Eva—at least everything that is worth anything. We two ought to thank our stars every day, that we were born Arabs.”

“And the Great Sheikh still harps upon this ransom?” inquired Eva.

“He does, and most unreasonably. For after all, what do we ask him to give up?—a bagatelle.”

“Hardly that,” said Eva; “two millions of piastres can scarcely be called a bagatelle.”

“It is not two millions of piastres,” said Fakredeem; “there is your fallacy, ’tis the same as your grandfather’s. In the first place, he would have taken one million; then half belonged to me, which reduces his share to

five hundred thousand ; then I meant to have borrowed his share of him."

"Borrowed his share !" said Eva.

"Of course, I should have allowed him interest — good interest. What could the Great Sheikh want five hundred thousand piastres for? He has camels enough ; he has so many horses, that he wants to change some with me for arms at this moment. Is he to dig a hole in the sand by a well-side to put his treasure in, like the treasure of Solomon, or to sew up his bills of exchange in his turban? The thing is ridiculous. I never contemplated, for a moment, that the Great Sheikh should take any hard piastres out of circulation, to lock them up in the wilderness. It might disturb the currency of all Syria, upset the exchanges, and very much injure your family, Eva, of whose interests I am never unmindful. I meant the Great Sheikh to invest his capital ; he might have made a good thing of it. I could have afforded to pay him thirty per cent. for his share, and made as much by the transaction myself ; for you see, as I am paying sixty per cent. at

Beirout, Tripoli, Latakia, and every accursed town of the coast at this moment, the thing is clear; and I wish you would only get your father to view it in the same light, and we might do immense things! Think of this, my Rose of Sharon—dear, dear Eva, think of this; your father might make his fortune and mine too, if he would only lend me money at thirty per cent.”

“You frighten me always, Fakredeem, by these allusions to your affairs. Can it be possible that they are so very bad!”

“Good, Eva, you mean good. I should be incapable of anything, if it were not for my debts. I am naturally so indolent, that if I did not remember in the morning that I was ruined, I should never be able to distinguish myself.”

“You never will distinguish yourself,” said Eva; “you never can, with these dreadful embarrassments.”

“Shall I not?” said Fakredeem, triumphantly. “What are my debts to my resources? That is the point. You cannot judge of a man

by only knowing what his debts are; you must be acquainted with his resources."

"But your estates are mortgaged, your crops sold—at least you tell me so," said Eva, mournfully.

"Estates! crops! A man may have an idea worth twenty estates—a principle of action that will bring him in a greater harvest than all Lebanon."

"A principle of action is indeed precious," said Eva; "but, although you certainly have ideas and very ingenious ones, a principle of action is exactly the thing which I have always thought you wanted."

"Well, I have got it at last," said Fakredeen; "everything comes if a man will only wait."

"And what is your principle of action?"

"Faith."

"In yourself? Surely in that respect you have not hitherto been sceptical?"

"No; in Mount Sinai."

"In Mount Sinai!"

"You may well be astonished; but so it is.

The English Prince has been to Mount Sinai, and he has seen an angel. What passed between them I do not yet know; but one thing is certain—he is quite changed by the interview. He is all for action: as far as I can form an opinion in the present crude state of affairs, it is not at all impossible that he may put himself at the head of the Asian movement. If you have faith, there is nothing you may not do. One thing is quite settled, that he will not at present return to Jerusalem, but, for change of air and other reasons, make a visit with me to Canobia.”

“ He seems to have great purpose in him,” said Eva, with an air of some constraint.

“ By the bye,” said Fakredeem, “ how came you, Eva, never to tell me that you were acquainted with him?”

“ Acquainted with him!” said Eva.

“ Yes; he recognised you immediately when he recovered himself, and he has admitted to me since, that he has seen you before; though I could not get much out of him about it. He will talk for ever about Arabia, faith, war,

and angels, but if you touch on anything personal, I observe he is always very shy. He has not my fatal frankness. Did you know him at Jerusalem?"

"I met him by hazard for a moment at Bethany; I neither asked then, nor did he impart to me, his name. How then could I tell you we were acquainted? or be aware that the stranger of my casual interview was this young Englishman whom you have made a captive."

"Hush!" said Fakredeen, with an air of real or affected alarm. "He is going to be my guest at my principal castle. What do you mean by captive? You mean whom I have saved from captivity, or am about to save?"

"Well, that would appear to be the real question to which you ought to address yourself at this moment," said Eva. "Were I you, I should postpone the great Asian movement until you had disembarassed yourself from your present position, rather an equivocal one both for a patriot and a friend."

"Oh! I'll manage the Great Sheikh," said

Fakredeen, carelessly. "There is too much plunder in the future for Amalek to quarrel with me. When he scents the possibility of the Bedoueen cavalry being poured into Syria and Asia Minor, we shall find him more manageable. The only thing now is to heal the present disappointment by extenuating circumstances. If I could screw up a few thousand piastres for backsheesh," and he looked Eva in the face, "or could put anything in his way! What do you think, Eva?"

Eva shook her head.

"What an obstinate Jew dog he is!" said Fakredeen. "His rapacity is revolting!"

"An obstinate Jew dog!" exclaimed Eva, rising, her eyes flashing, her nostril dilating with contemptuous rage. The manner of Fakredeen had not pleased her this morning. His temper was very uncertain, and, when crossed, he was deficient in delicacy. Indeed, he was too selfish, with all his sensibility and refined breeding, to be ever sufficiently considerate of the feelings of others. He was piqued also that he had not been informed of the previous acquaintance of Eva and Tancred.

Her reason for not apprising him of their interview at Bethany, though not easily impugnable, was not as satisfactory to his understanding as to his ear. Again, his mind and heart were so absorbed at this moment by the image of Tancred, and he was so entirely under the influence of his own idealized conceptions of his new and latest friend, that, according to his custom, no other being could interest him. Although he was himself the sole cause of all the difficult and annoying circumstances in which he found himself involved, the moment that his passions and his interests alike required that Tancred should be free and uninjured, he acted, and indeed felt, as if Amalek alone were responsible for the capture and the detention of Lord Montacute.

The young Emir indeed was, at this moment, in one of those moods, which had often marred his popularity, but in which he had never indulged towards Eva before. She had, throughout his life, been the commanding influence of his being. He adored and feared her, and knew that she loved, and rather despised him. But

Eva had ceased to be the commanding influence over Fakredeen. At this moment, Fakredeen would have sacrificed the whole family of Besso to secure the devotion of Tancred; and the coarse and rude exclamation to which he had given vent, indicated the current of his feelings and the general tenour of his mind.

Eva knew him by heart. Her clear sagacious intellect acting upon an individual, whom sympathy and circumstances had combined to make her comprehend, analysed with marvellous facility his complicated motives, and in general successfully penetrated his sovereign design.

“An obstinate Jew dog!” she exclaimed; “and who art thou—thou jackal of this lion!—who should dare to speak thus? Is it not enough that you have involved us all in unspeakable difficulty and possible disgrace, that we are to receive words of contumely from lips like yours! One would think you were the English Consul arrived here to make a representation in favour of his countryman, instead of being the individual who planned his plunder, occasioned his captivity, and

endangered his life! It is a pity that this young noble is not acquainted with your claims to his confidence."

The possibility that in a moment of irritation Eva might reveal his secret, some rising remorse at what he had said, and the superstitious reverence with which he still clung to her, all acting upon Fakredeen at the same time, he felt that he had gone too far, and thereupon he sprang from the divan, on which he had been insolently lolling, and threw himself at the feet of his foster-sister, whimpering and kissing her slippers, and calling her, between his sobs, a thousand fond names.

"I am a villain," he said, "but you know it; you have always known it. For God's sake stand by me now; 'tis my only chance. You are the only being I love in the world, except your family. You know how I respect them. Is not Besso my father? And the Great Sheikh—I honour the Great Sheikh. He is one of my allies. Even this accursed business proves it. Besides, what do you mean by words of contumely from my lips? Am I not a Jew myself, or as good? Why should

I insult them? I only wish we were in the Land of Promise, instead of this infernal wilderness."

"Well, well, let us consult together," said Eva, "reproaches are barren."

"Ah! Eva," said Fakredeen, "I am not reproaching you; but if, the evening I was at Bethany, you had only told me that you had just parted with this Englishman, all this would not have occurred."

"How do you know that I had then just parted with this Englishman?" said Eva, colouring and confused.

"Because I marked him on the road. I little thought then that he had been in your retreat. I took him for some Frank, looking after the tomb of Lazarus."

"I found him in my garden," said Eva, not entirely at her ease, "and sent my attendants to him."

Fakredeen was walking up and down the tent, and seemed lost in thought. Suddenly he stopped, and said, "I see it all; I have a combination that will put all right."

"Put all right?"

“ See, the day after to-morrow I have appointed to meet a friend of mine at Gaza, who has a caravan that wants convoy through the desert to the mountain. The Sheikh of Sheikhs shall have it. It will be as good as ten thousand piastres. That will be honey in his mouth. He will forget the past, and our English friend can return with you and me to El Khuds.”

“ I shall not return to El Khuds,” said Eva. “ The Great Sheikh will convoy me to Damascus, where I shall remain till I go to Aleppo.”

“ May you never reach Aleppo!” said Fakredeem, with a clouded countenance, for Eva in fact alluded to her approaching marriage with her cousin.

“ But after all,” resumed Eva, wishing to change the current of his thoughts, “ all these arrangements, as far as I am interested, depend upon the success of my mission to the Great Sheikh. If he will not release my father’s charge, the spears of his people will never guard me again. And I see little prospect of my success; nor do I think ten thousand piastres,

however honestly gained, will be more tempting than the inclination to oblige our house."

"Ten thousand piastres is not much," said Fakredeem. "I give it every three months for interest to a little Copt at Beirout, whose property I will confiscate the moment I have the government of the country in my hands. But then I only add my ten thousand piastres to the amount of my debt. Ten thousand piastres in coin are a very different affair. They will jingle in the Great Sheikh's purse. His people will think he has got the treasure of Solomon. It will do; he will give them all a gold kaireen apiece, and they will braid them in their girls' hair."

"It will scarcely buy camels for Sheikh Salem's widow," said Eva.

"I will manage that," said Fakredeem. "The Great Sheikh has camels enough, and I will give him arms in exchange."

"Arms at Canobia will not reach the stony wilderness."

"No; but I have got arms nearer at hand; that is, my friend, my friend whom I am going to meet at Gaza, has some; enough, and

to spare. By the Holy Sepulchre I see it!" said Fakredeen. "I tell you how I will manage the whole business. The Great Sheikh wants arms; well, I will give him five hundred muskets for the ransom, and he shall have the convoy besides. He'll take it. I know him. He thinks now all is lost, and, when he finds that he is to have a jingling purse and English muskets enough to conquer Tadmor, he will close."

"But how are we to get these arms?" said Eva.

"Why, Scheriff Effendi, to be sure. You know I am to meet him at Gaza the day after to-morrow, and receive his five thousand muskets. Well, five hundred for the Great Sheikh will make them four thousand five hundred; no great difference."

"Scheriff Effendi!" said Eva, with some surprise, "I thought I had obtained three months' indulgence for you with Scheriff Effendi."

"Ah! yes—no," said Fakredeen, blushing. "The fact is, Eva, darling, beloved Eva, it is no use telling any more lies. I only asked

you to speak to Scheriff Effendi to obtain time for me about payment, to throw you off the scent, as you so strongly disapproved of my buccaneering project. But Scheriff Effendi is a camel. I was obliged to agree to meet him at Gaza on the new moon, pay him his two hundred thousand piastres, and receive the cargo. Well, I turn circumstances to account. The Great Sheikh will convey the muskets to the Mountain."

"But who is to pay for them?" inquired Eva.

"Why, if men want to head the Asian movement, they must have muskets," said Fakredeem; "and, after all, as we are going to save the English Prince two millions of piastres, I do not think he can object to paying Scheriff Effendi for his goods; particularly as he will have the muskets for his money."

## CHAPTER IX.

TANCRED rapidly recovered. On the second day after his recognition of Eva, he had held that conversation with Fakredeen, which had determined the young Emir not to lose a moment in making the effort to induce Amalek to forego his ransom, the result of which he had communicated to Eva on their subsequent interview. On the third day, Tancred rose from his couch, and would even have quitted the tent, had not Baroni dissuaded him. He was the more induced to do so, for on this day he missed his amusing companion, the Emir. It appeared from the account of Baroni, that his highness had departed at dawn, on his

dromedary, and without an attendant. According to Baroni, nothing was yet settled either as to the ransom or the release of Tancred. It seemed that the Great Sheikh had been impatient to return to his chief encampment, and nothing but the illness of Tancred would probably have induced him to remain in the stony Arabia as long as he had done. The lady Eva had not, since her arrival at the ruined city, encouraged Baroni in any communication on the subject which heretofore during their journey had entirely occupied her consideration, from which he inferred that she had nothing very satisfactory to relate; yet he was not without hope, as he felt assured that Eva would not have remained a day were she convinced that there was no chance of effecting her original purpose. The comparative contentment of the Great Sheikh at this moment, her silence, and the sudden departure of Fakredeen, induced Baroni to believe that there was yet something on the cards, and, being of a sanguine disposition, he sincerely encouraged his master, who however did not appear to be very desponding.

“The Emir told me yesterday that he was certain to arrange everything,” said Tancred, “without in anyway compromising us. We cannot expect such an adventure to end like a day of hunting. Some camels must be given, and, perhaps, something else. I am sure the Emir will manage it all, especially with the aid and counsel of that beauteous Lady of Bethany, in whose wisdom and goodness I have implicit faith.”

“I have more faith in her than in the Emir,” said Baroni. “I never know what these Shehaabs are after. Now he has not gone to El Khuds this morning; of that I am sure.”

“I am under the greatest obligations to the Emir Fakredeen,” said Tancred, “and, independently of such circumstances, I very much like him.”

“I know nothing against the noble Emir,” said Baroni, “and I am sure he has been extremely polite and attentive to your lordship—but still those Shehaabs, they are such a set—always after something!”

“He is ardent and ambitious,” said Tancred,

“and he is young. Are these faults! Besides, he has not had the advantage of our stricter training. He has been without guides; and is somewhat undisciplined, and self-formed. But he has a great and interesting position, and is brilliant and energetic. Providence may have appointed him to fulfil great ends.”

“A Shehaab will look after the main chance,” said Baroni.

“But his main chance may be the salvation of his country,” said Tancred.

“Nothing can save his country,” said Baroni. “The Syrians were ever slaves.”

“I do not call them slaves now,” said Tancred; “why, they are armed and are warlike! All that they want is a cause.”

“And that they never will have,” said Baroni.

“Why?”

“The East is used up.”

“It is not more used up than when Mahomet arose,” said Tancred. “Weak and withering as may be the government of the Turks,

it is not more feeble and enervated than that of the Greek empire and the Chosroes."

"I don't know anything about them," replied Baroni, "but I know there is nothing to be done with the people here. I have seen something of them," said Baroni. "M. de Sidonia tried to do something in '39, and, if there had been a spark of spirit or of sense in Syria, that was the time—but——" and here Baroni shrugged his shoulders.

"But what was your principle of action in '39?" inquired Tancred, evidently interested.

"The only principle of action in this world," said Baroni, "we had plenty of money; we might have had three millions."

"And if you had had six, or sixteen, your efforts would have been equally fruitless. I do not believe in national regeneration in the shape of a foreign loan. Look at Greece! And yet a man might climb Mount Carmel, and utter three words which would bring the Arabs again to Grenada, and perhaps further."

"They have no artillery," said Baroni.

“ And the Turks have artillery and cannot use it,” said Lord Montacute. “ Why, the most favoured part of the globe at this moment is entirely defenceless; there is not a soldier worth firing at in Asia except the Sepoys. The Persian, Assyrian, and Babylonian monarchies might be gained in a morning with faith and the flourish of a sabre.”

“ You would have the great powers interfering,” said Baroni.

“ What should I care for the great powers, if the Lord of Hosts were on my side!”

“ Why, to be sure they could not do much at Bagdad or Ispahan.”

“ Work out a great religious truth on the Persian and Mesopotamian plains: the most exuberant soils in the world with the scantiest population—it would revivify Asia. It must spread. The peninsula of Arabia, when in action, must always command the peninsula of the lesser Asia. Asia revivified would act upon Europe. The European comfort, which they call civilization, is, after all, confined to a very small space: the island of Great Britain, France, and the course of a single river—the

Rhine. The greater part of Europe is as dead as Asia, without the consolation of climate and the influence of immortal traditions."

"I just found time, my lord, when I was at Jerusalem, to call in at the Consulate, and see the colonel," said Baroni; "I thought it as well to explain the affair a little to him. I found that even the rumour of our mischance had not reached him; so I said enough to prevent any alarm when it arrived; he will believe that we furnished him with the priority of intelligence, and he expects your daily return."

"You did well to call; we know not what may happen. I doubt however whether I shall return to Jerusalem. If affairs are pleasantly arranged here, I think of visiting the Emir, at his castle of Canobia. A change of air must be the best thing for me, and Lebanon, by his account, is delicious at this season. Indeed, I want air, and I must go out now, Baroni; I cannot stay in this close tent any longer; the sun has set, and there is no longer any fear of those fatal heats of which you are in such dread for me."

It was the first night of the new moon, and

the white beams of the young crescent were just beginning to steal over the lately flushed and empurpled scene. The air was still glowing, and the evening breeze, which sometimes wandered through the ravines from the gulf of Akabah, had not yet arrived. Tancred, shrouded in his Bedouen cloak, and accompanied by Baroni, visited the circle of black tents, which they found almost empty, the whole band, with the exception of the scouts who are always on duty in an Arab encampment, being assembled in the ruins of the amphitheatre, in whose arena, opposite to the pavillion of the great Sheikh, a celebrated poet was reciting the visit of Antar to the temple of the fire-worshippers, and the adventures of that greatest of Arabian heroes among the effeminate and astonished courtiers of the generous and magnificent Nushirvan.

The audience was not a scanty one, for this chosen detachment of the children of Rechab had been two hundred strong, and the great majority of them were now assembled; some seated, as the ancient Idumæans, on the still entire seats of the amphitheatre; most squatted in groups upon the ground, though at a respect-

ful distance from the poet; others standing amid the crumbling pile and leaning against the tall dark fragments just beginning to be silvered by the moon-beam: but in all their countenances, their quivering features, their flashing eyes, the mouth open with absorbing suspense, were expressed a wild and vivid excitement, the heat of sympathy, and a ravishing delight.

When Antar, in the tournament, overthrew the famous Greek knight, who had travelled from Constantinople to beard the court of Persia; when he caught in his hand the assassin spear of the Persian satrap, envious of his Arabian chivalry, and returned it to his adversary's heart; when he shouted from his saddle that he was the lover of Ibla and the horseman of the age; the audience exclaimed with rapturous earnestness, "It is true—it is true!" although they were guaranteeing the assertions of a hero who lived, and loved, and fought more than fourteen hundred years before. Antar is the Iliad of the desert, the hero is the passion of the Bedouens. They will listen for ever to his forays, when he raised

the triumphant cry of his tribe, "Oh! by Abs—oh! by Adnan," to the narratives of the camels he captured, the men he slew, and the maidens to whose charms he was indifferent, for he was "ever the lover of Ibla." What makes this great Arabian invention still more interesting is, that it was composed at a period antecedent to the Prophet: it describes the desert before the Koran, and it teaches us how little the dwellers in it were changed by the introduction and adoption of Islamism.

As Tancred and his companion reached the amphitheatre, a ringing laugh resounded.

"Antar is dining with the King of Persia after his victory," said Baroni; "this is a favourite scene with the Arabs. Antar asks the courtiers the name of every dish and whether the king dines so every day. He bares his arms, and chucks the food into his mouth without ever moving his jaws. They have heard this all their lives, but always laugh at it with the same heartiness. Why, Shedad, son of Amroo," continued Baroni to an Arab near him, "you have listened to this ever since you first tasted liban, and it still pleases you!"

“I am never wearied with listening to fine language,” said the Bedoueen; “perfumes are always sweet, though you may have smelt them a thousand times.”

Except when there was some expression of feeling elicited by the performance, a shout or a laugh, the silence was absolute. Not a whisper could be heard; and it was in the most muffled tone that Baroni intimated to Tancred that the great Sheikh was present, and that, as this was his first appearance since his illness, he must pay his respects to Amalek. So saying, and preceding Tancred, in order that he might announce his arrival, Baroni approached the pavillion. The great Sheikh welcomed Tancred with a benignant smile, motioned to him to sit upon his carpet; rejoiced that he was recovered; hoped that he should live a thousand years; gave him his pipe, and then, turning again to the poet, was instantly lost in the interest of his narrative. Baroni standing as near Tancred as the carpet would permit him, occasionally leant over and gave his lord an intimation of what was occurring.

After a little while, the poet ceased. Then

there was a general hum and great praise, and many men said to each other, "All this is true, for my father told it to me before." The great Sheikh, who was highly pleased, ordered his slaves to give the poet a cup of coffee, and, taking from his own vest an immense purse, more than a foot in length, he extracted from it, after a vast deal of research, one of the smallest of conceivable coins which the poet pressed to his lips, and, notwithstanding the exiguity of the donation, declared that God was great.

"O Sheikh of Sheikhs," said the poet, "what I have recited, though it is by the gift of God, is in fact written, and has been ever since the days of the giants; but I have also dipped my pen into my own brain, and now I would recite a poem which I hope some day may be suspended in the temple of Mecca. It is in honour of one who, were she to rise to our sight, would be as the full moon when it rises over the desert. Yes, I sing of Eva, the daughter of Amalek, (the Bedoueens always omitted Besso in her genealogy,) Eva, the daughter of a thousand chiefs. May she never quit the tents of her race! May she always ride upon Nejid

steeds and dromedaries with harness of silver! May she live among us for ever! May she show herself to the people like a free Arabian maiden!"

"They are the thoughts of truth," said the delighted Bedouens to one another, "every word is a pearl."

And the great Sheikh sent a slave to express his wish that Eva and her maidens should appear. So she came to listen to the ode which the poet had composed in her honour. He had seen palm trees, but they were not as tall and graceful as Eva; he had beheld the eyes of doves and antelopes, but they were not as bright and soft as hers; he had tasted the fresh springs in the wilderness, but they were not more welcome than she, and the soft splendor of the desert moon was not equal to her brow. She was the daughter of Amalek, the daughter of a thousand chiefs. Might she live for ever in their tents, ever ride on Nejid steeds and on dromedaries with silver harness; ever show herself to the people like a free Arabian maiden.

The poet, after many variations on this theme, ceased amid great plaudits.

“ He is a true poet,” said an Arab who was, like most of his brethren, a critic; “ he is in truth a second Antar.”

“ If he had recited these verses before the King of Persia, he would have given him a thousand camels,” replied his neighbour, gravely.

“ They ought to be suspended in the temple of Mecca,” said a third.

“ What I most admire is his image of the full moon—that cannot be too often introduced,” said a fourth.

“ Truly the moon should ever shine,” said a fifth. “ Also in all truly fine verses there should be palm trees and fresh springs.”

Tancred, to whom Baroni had conveyed the meaning of the verses, was also pleased: having observed that on a previous occasion the Great Sheikh had rewarded the bard, Tancred ventured to take a chain, which he fortunately chanced to wear, from his neck, and sent it to the poet of Eva. This made a great sensation, and highly delighted the Arabs.

“ Truly this is the brother of queens,” they whispered to each other.

Now the audience was breaking up and dis-

persing, and Tancred, rising, begged permission of his host to approach Eva, who was seated at the entrance of the pavillion, somewhat withdrawn from them.

“If I were a poet,” said Tancred, bending before her, “I would attempt to express my gratitude to the Lady of Bethany. I hope,” he added, after a moment’s pause, “that Baroni laid my message at your feet; when I begged your permission to thank you in person to-morrow, I had not imagined that I should have been so wilful as to quit the tent to-night.”

“It will not harm you,” said Eva; “our Arabian nights bear balm.”

“I feel it,” said Tancred; “this evening will complete the cure you so benignantly commenced.”

“Mine were slender knowledge and simple means,” said Eva, “but I rejoice that they were of use, more especially as I learn that we are all interested in your pilgrimage.”

“The Emir Fakredeem has spoken to you?” said Tancred, inquiringly, and with a countenance a little agitated.

“He has spoken to me of some things, for

which our previous conversation had not entirely unprepared me."

"Ah!" said Tancred, musingly, "our previous conversation. It is not very long ago since I slumbered by the side of your fountain, and yet it seems to me an age—an age of thought and events."

"Yet even then your heart was turned towards our unhappy Asia!" said the Lady of Bethany.

"Unhappy Asia! Do you call it unhappy Asia! This land of divine deeds and divine thoughts! Its slumber is more vital than the waking life of the rest of the globe, as the dream of genius is more precious than the vigils of ordinary men. Unhappy Asia, do you call it? It is the unhappiness of Europe over which I mourn."

"Europe, that has conquered Hindostan, protects Persia and Asia Minor, affects to have saved Syria," said Eva, with some bitterness.

"Oh! what can we do against Europe!"

"Save it," said Tancred.

"We cannot save ourselves; what means have we to save others?"

“The same you have ever exercised—divine truth. Send forth a great thought, as you have done before—from Mount Sinai, from the villages of Galilee, from the deserts of Arabia—and you may again remodel all their institutions, change their principles of action, and breathe a new spirit into the whole scope of their existence.”

“I have sometimes dreamed such dreams,” murmured Eva, looking down. “No, no,” she exclaimed, raising her head, after a moment’s pause—“it is impossible. Europe is too proud, with its new command over nature, to listen even to prophets. Levelling mountains, riding without horses, sailing without winds—how can these men believe that there is any power, human or divine, superior to themselves?”

“As for their command over nature,” said Tancred, “let us see how it will operate in a second deluge. Command over nature! Why, the humblest root that serves for the food of man has mysteriously withered throughout Europe, and they are already pale at the possible consequences. This slight eccentricity of

that nature, which they boast they can command, has already shaken empires, and may decide the fate of nations. No, gentle lady, Europe is not happy. Amid its false excitement, its bustling invention, and its endless toil, a profound melancholy broods over its spirit and gnaws at its heart. In vain they baptise their tumult by the name of progress; the whisper of a demon is ever asking them, 'Progress from whence and to what?' Excepting those who still cling to your Arabian creeds, Europe—that quarter of the globe to which God has never spoken—Europe is without consolation."

## CHAPTER X.

THREE or four days had elapsed since the departure of Fakredeen, and during each of them Tancred saw Eva; indeed, his hours were very much passed in the pavillion of the Great Sheikh, and, though he was never alone with the daughter of Besso, the language which they spoke, unknown to those about them, permitted them to confer without restraint on those subjects in which they were interested. Tancred opened his mind without reserve to Eva, for he liked to test the soundness of his conclusions by her clear intelligence. Her lofty spirit harmonized with his own high-toned soul. He found both sympathy and

inspiration in her heroic purposes. Her passionate love of her race, her deep faith in the destiny and genius of her Asian land, greatly interested him. To his present position she referred occasionally, but with reluctance; it seemed as if she thought it unkind entirely to pass it over, yet that to be reminded of it was not satisfactory. Of Fakredeen she spoke much and frequently. She expressed with frankness, even with warmth, her natural and deep regard for him, the interest she took in his career, and the high opinion she entertained of his powers; but she lamented his inventive restlessness, which often arrested action, and intimated how much he might profit by the counsels of a friend more distinguished for consistency and sternness of purpose.

In the midst of all this, Fakredeen returned. He came in the early morning, and immediately repaired to the pavillion of the Great Sheikh, with whom he was long closeted. Baroni first brought the news to Tancred, and subsequently told him that the quantity of nargillies smoked by the young Emir indi-

cated not only a prolonged, but a difficult controversy. Some time after this, Tancred, lounging in front of his tent, and watching the shadows as they stole over the mountain tombs, observed Fakredeem issue from the pavillion of Amalek. His flushed and radiant countenance would seem to indicate good news. As he recognised Tancred, he saluted him in the Eastern fashion, hastily touching his heart, his lip, and his brow: when he had reached Tancred, Fakredeem threw himself in his arms, and, embracing him, whispered in an agitated voice on the breast of Lord Montacute, "Friend of my heart, you are free!"

In the mean time, Amalek announced to his tribe that at sunset the encampment would break up, and they would commence their return to the Syrian wilderness, through the regions eastward of the Dead Sea. The Lady Eva would accompany them, and the children of Rechab were to have the honour of escorting her and her attendants to the gates of Damascus. A detachment of five-and-twenty Beni-Rechab were to accompany Fakredeem and Tancred, Hassan and his Jellaheens in a contrary di-

rection of the desert, until they arrived at Gaza, where they were to await further orders from the young Emir.

No sooner was this intelligence circulated, than the silence which had pervaded the desert ruins at once ceased. Men came out of every tent and tomb. All was bustle and noise. They chattered, they sang, they talked to their horses, they apprised their camels of the intended expedition. They declared that the camels had consented to go; they anticipated a prosperous journey; they speculated on what tribes they might encounter.

It required all the consciousness of great duties, all the inspiration of a great purpose, to sustain Tancred under this sudden separation from Eva. Much he regretted that it was not also his lot to traverse the Syrian wilderness, but it was not for him to interfere with arrangements which he could neither control nor comprehend. All that passed amid the ruins of this desert city was as incoherent and restless as the incidents of a dream; yet not without the bright passages of strange fascination, which form part of the mosaic of our slumbering reveries. At dawn,

a prisoner, at noon a free man, yet still, from his position, unable to move without succour, and without guides; why he was captured, how he was enfranchised, alike mysteries; Tancred yielded without a struggle to the management of that individual who was clearly master the situation. Fakredeen decided upon everything, and no one was inclined to impugn the decrees of him whose rule commenced by conferring freedom.

It was only half an hour to sunset. The advanced guard of the children of Rechab, mounted on their dromedaries, and armed with lances, had some hours ago quitted the ruins. The camels, laden with the tents and baggage, attended by a large body of foot men with matchlocks, and who, on occasion, could add their own weight to the burden of their charge, were filing through the mountains; some horsemen were galloping about the plain and throwing the jereed; a considerable body, most of them dismounted, but prepared for the seat, were collected by the river side; about a dozen steeds of the purest race, one or two of them caparisoned, and a couple of dromedaries, were picketed before the pavillion

of the Great Sheikh, which was not yet struck, and about which some grooms were squatted, drinking coffee, and every now and then turning to the horses, and addressing them in tones of the greatest affection and respect.

Suddenly one of the grooms jumped up and said, "He comes," and then going up to a bright bay mare, whose dark prominent eye equalled in brilliancy, and far exceeded in intelligence, the splendid orbs of the antelope, he addressed her, and said, "O Diamond of Derayeh, the princes of the desert can alone ride on thee!"

There came forth from his pavillion the great Amalek, accompanied by some of his sheikhs; there came forth from the pavillion Eva, attended by her gigantic Nubian and her maidens; there came forth from the pavillion the Emir Fakredeem and Lord Montacute.

"There is but one God," said the Great Sheikh as he pressed his hand to his heart, and bade farewell to the Emir and his late prisoner. "May he guard over us all!"

"Truly, there is but one God," echoed the

attendant sheikhs. "May you find many springs!"

The maidens were placed on their dromedaries; the grooms, as if by magic, had already struck the pavillion of their Sheikh, and were stowing it away on the back of a camel; Eva, first imprinting on the neck of the mare a gentle embrace, vaulted into the seat of the Diamond of Derayeh, which she rode in the fashion of Zenobia. To Tancred, with her inspired brow, her cheek slightly flushed, her undulating figure, her eye proud of its dominion over the beautiful animal which moved its head with haughty satisfaction at its destiny, Eva seemed the impersonation of some young classic hero going forth to conquer a world.

Striving to throw into her countenance and the tones of her voice a cheerfulness which was really at this moment strange to them, she said, "Farewell, Fakredeem!" and then, after a moment's hesitation, and looking at Tancred with a faltering glance which yet made his heart tremble, she added, "Farewell, Pilgrim of Sinai."

## CHAPTER XI.

THE Emir of the Lebanon and his English friend did not depart from the desert city until the morrow, Fakredeem being so wearied by his journey that he required repose. Unsustained by his lively conversation, Tancred felt all the depression natural to his position; and, restless and disquieted, wandered about the valley in the moonlight, recalling the vanished images of the past. After some time, unable himself to sleep, and finding Baroni disinclined to slumber, he reminded his attendant of the promise he had once given at Jerusalem, to tell something of his history. Baroni was a lively narrator, and,

accompanied by his gestures, his speaking glance, and all the pantomime of his energetic and yet controlled demeanour, the narrative, as he delivered it, would have been doubtless much more amusing than the calmer form in which, upon reflection, we have thought fit to record some incidents, which the reader must not in any degree suppose to form merely an episode in this history. With this observation, we solicit attention to

### The History of the Baroni Family ;

BEING A CHAPTER IN THE LIFE OF SIDONIA.

#### I.

“I had no idea that you had a garrison here,” said Sidonia, as the distant sounds of martial music were wafted down a long, ancient street, that seemed narrower than it was from the great elevation of its fantastically-shaped houses, into the principal square in which was situate his hotel. The town was one of the least frequented of Flanders; and

Sidonia, who was then a youth, scarcely of twenty summers, was on his rambling way to Frankfort, where he then resided.

“It is not the soldiers,” said the Flemish maiden in attendance, and who was dressed in one of those pretty black silk jackets that seem to blend so well with the sombre yet picturesque dwellings of the Spanish Netherlands. “It is not the soldiers, sir; it is only the Baroni family.”

“And who are the Baroni family?”

“They are Italians, sir, and have been here this week past, giving some representations.”

“Of what kind?”

“I hardly know, sir, only I have heard that they are very beautiful. There is tumbling, I know for certain, and there was the Plagues of Egypt; but I believe it changes every night.”

“And you have not yet seen them?”

“Oh no, sir, it is not for such as me; the second places are half a franc!”

“And what is your name?” said Sidonia.

“Therese; at your service, sir.”

“You shall go and see the Baroni family to-night, Therese, if your mistress will let you.”

“I am sure she would if you would ask her, sir,” said Therese, looking down and colouring with delight. The little jacket seemed very agitated.

“Here they come!” said Sidonia, looking out of the window on the great square.

A man, extremely good-looking and well made, in the uniform of a marshal of France, his cocked hat fringed and plumed, and the colour of his coat almost concealed by its embroidery, played a clarionet like a master; four youths of a tender age, remarkable both for their beauty and their grace, dressed in very handsome scarlet uniforms, with white scarfs, performed upon French horns and similar instruments with great energy and apparent delight; behind them an honest Blouse, hired for the occasion, beat the double drum.

“Two of them are girls,” said Therese; “and they are all the same family, except the drummer, who belongs, I hear, to Ypres.

Sometimes there are six of them—two little ones, who, I suppose, are left at home to-day; they look quite like little angels; the boy plays the triangle and his sister beats a tambourin.”

“ They are great artists,” murmured Sidonia to himself, as he listened to their performance of one of Donizetti’s finest compositions. The father stood in the centre of the great square—the other musicians formed a circle round him; they continued their performance for about ten minutes to a considerable audience, many of whom had followed them, while the rest had collected at their appearance. There was an inclination in the curious multitude to press around the young performers, who would have been in a great degree hidden from general view by this discourteous movement, and even the sound of their instruments in some measure suppressed. Sidonia marked with interest the calm and commanding manner with which, under these circumstances, the father controlled the people. They yielded in an instant to his will: one tall blacksmith seemed scarcely to relish his

somewhat imperious demeanour, and stood rooted to the ground; but Baroni, placing only one hand on the curmudgeon's brawny shoulder, while he still continued playing on his instrument with the other, whirled him away like a puppet. The multitude laughed, and, the disconcerted blacksmith slunk away.

When the air was finished, Baroni took off his grand hat, and in a loud voice addressed the assembled people, informing them that this evening, in the largest room of the Auberge of St. Nicholas, there would be a variety of entertainments, consisting of master-pieces of strength and agility, dramatic recitations, dancing and singing, to conclude with the mystery of the Crucifixion of our blessed Lord and Saviour; in which all the actors in that memorable event—among others the blessed Virgin, the blessed St. Mary Magdalene, the Apostles, Pontius Pilate, the High Priest of the Jews, and many others, would appear, all to be represented by one family.

The speaker having covered himself, the band again formed and passed the window of Sidonia's hotel, followed by a stream of idle

amateurs, animated by the martial strain, and attracted by the pleasure of hearing another fine performance at the next quarter of the town, where the Baroni family might halt to announce the impending amusements of the evening.

The moon was beginning to glitter, when Sidonia threw his cloak around him, and asked the way to the Auberge of St. Nicholas. It was a large, ungainly, whitewashed house, at the extremity of a suburb where the straggling street nearly ceased, and emptied itself into what in England would have been called a green. The many windows flared with lights, the doorway was filled with men smoking, and looking full of importance, as if, instead of being the usual loungers of the tavern, they were about to perform a principal part in the exhibition; they made way with respectful and encouraging ceremony to any one who entered to form part of the audience, and rated with sharp words, and sometimes a ready cuff, a mob of little boys who besieged the door, and implored every one who entered to give them tickets to see the Crucifixion. "It's

the last piece," they perpetually exclaimed, "and we may come in for five sous a head."

Sidonia mounted the staircase, and being a suitor for a ticket for the principal seats, was received with a most gracious smile by a pretty woman, fair-faced and arch, with a piquant nose, and a laughing blue eye, who sat at the door of the room. It was a long and rather narrow apartment; at the end a stage of rough planks, before a kind of curtain, the whole rudely but not niggardly lighted. Unfortunately for the Baroni family, Sidonia found himself the only first-class spectator. There was a tolerable sprinkling of those who paid half a franc for their amusement. These were separated from the first row, which Sidonia alone was to occupy: in the extreme distance was a large space not fitted up with benches, where the miscellaneous multitude, who could summon up five sous apiece later in the evening, to see the Crucifixion, were to be stowed.

"It hardly pays the lights," said the pretty woman at the door. "We have not had good fortune in this town. It seems hard, when

there is so much for the money, and the children take such pains in going the rounds in the morning."

"And you are Madame Baroni?" said Sidonia.

"Yes; I am the mother," she replied.

"I should have thought you had been their sister," said Sidonia.

"My eldest son is fifteen! I often wish that he was anything else but what he is, but we do not like to separate. We are all one family, sir, and that makes us bear many things."

"Well, I think I know a way to increase your audience," said Sidonia.

"Indeed! I am sure it is very kind of you to say so much; we have not met with a gentleman like you the whole time we have been here."

Sidonia descended the stairs; the smoking amateurs made way for him with great parade, and pushed back with equal unkindness the young and wistful throng who still hovered round the portal.

"Don't you see the gentleman wants to go by? Get back, you boys!"

Sidonia halted on the doorway, and, taking advantage of a momentary pause, said, "All the little boys are to come in free."

What a rush!

The performances commenced by the whole of the Baroni family appearing in a row, and bowing to the audience. The father was now dressed in a Greek costume, which exhibited to perfection his compact frame: he looked like the captain of a band of Palikari; on his left appeared the mother, who, having thrown off her cloak, seemed a sylph or a sultana, for her bonnet had been succeeded by a turban. The three girls were on her left hand and on the right of her husband were their three brothers. The eldest son, Francis, resembled his father, or rather was what his father must have been in all the freshness of boyhood; the same form of blended strength and symmetry; the same dark eye, the same determined air and regular features which in time would become strongly marked; the second boy, Alfred, about eleven, was delicate, fair, and fragile, like his mother, his sweet countenance full of tenderness, changed before the audience with a rapid emo-

tion; the youngest son, Michel, was an infant of four years, and with his large blue eyes and long golden hair, might have figured as one of the seraphs of Murillo.

There was analogy in the respective physical appearances of the brothers and the sisters. The eldest girl, Josephine, though she had only counted twelve summers, was in stature, and almost in form, a woman. She was strikingly handsome, very slender, and dark as night. Adelaide, in colour, in look, in the grace of every gesture and in the gushing tenderness of her wild, yet shrinking glance, seemed the twin of Alfred. The little Carlotta, more than two years older than Michel, was the miniature of her mother, and had a piquant coquettish air, mixed with an expression of repose in one so young quite droll, like a little opera dancer. The father clapped his hands, and all, except himself, turned round, bowed to the audience and retired, leaving Baroni and his two elder children. Then commenced a variety of feats of strength. Baroni stretched forth his right arm, and Josephine, with a bound, instantly sprang upon his shoulder; while she thus remained,

balancing herself only on her left leg, and looking like a flying Victory, her father stretched forth his left arm and Francis sprang upon the shoulder opposite to his sister, and formed with her a group which might have crowned a vase. Infinite were the postures into which, for more than half an hour, the brother and sister threw their flexible forms, and all alike distinguished for their agility, their grace, and their precision. At length, all the children, with the exception of Carlotta, glided from behind the curtain, and clustered around their father with a quickness which baffled observation. Alfred and Adelaide suddenly appeared mounted upon Josephine and Francis, who had already resumed their former positions on the shoulders of their father, and stood immovable with outstretched arms, while their brother and sister balanced themselves above. This being arranged, Baroni caught up the young Michel, and, as it were, flung him up on high; Josephine received the urchin, and tossed him up to Adelaide, and in a moment the beautiful child was crowning the living pyramid, his smiling face nearly touching the rough ceiling

of the chamber, and clapping his little hands with practised triumph, as Baroni walked about the stage with the breathing burden.

He stopped, and the children disappeared from his shoulders, like birds from a tree when they hear a sound. He clapped his hands, they turned round, bowed, and vanished.

“As this feat pleases you,” said the father, “and as we have a gentleman here to-night who has proved himself a liberal patron of artists, I will show you something that I rarely exhibit; I will hold the whole of the Baroni family with my two hands;” and hereupon addressing some stout-looking fellows among his audience, he begged them to come forward and hold each end of a plank that was leaning against the wall, one which had not been required for the quickly-constructed stage. This they did with some diffidence, and with that air of constraint characteristic of those who have been summoned from a crowd to perform something which they do not exactly comprehend.

“Be not afraid, my good friends,” said Baroni to them, as Francis lightly sprang on

one end, and Josephine on the other of the plank; then Alfred and Adelaide skipped up together at equal distances; so that the four children were now standing in attitude upon the same basis, which four stout men endeavoured with difficulty to keep firm. At that moment Madame Baroni with the two young children came from behind the curtain, and vaulted exactly on the middle of the board, so that the bold Michel on the one side, and the demure Carlotta on the other, completed the group. "Thank you, my friends," said Baroni, slipping under the plank, which was raised to a height which just admitted him to pass under it, "I will release you," and with his outstretched hands he sustained the whole burthen—the whole of the Baroni family supported by the father.

After this there was a pause of a few minutes, the stage was cleared, and Baroni, in a loose great coat, appeared at its side with a violin. He played a few bars, then turning to the audience, said with the same contemptuous expression, which always distinguished him when he addressed them, "Now you are going

to hear a scene from a tragedy of the great Racine, one of the greatest tragedy-writers that ever existed, if you may never have heard of him; but if you were at Paris and went to the great theatre you would find that what I am telling you is true." And Josephine advanced, warmly cheered by the spectators, who thought that they were going to have some more tumbling. She advanced however as Andromache. It seemed to Sidonia that he had never listened to a voice more rich and passionate, to an elocution more complete; he gazed with admiration on her lightning glance and all the tumult of her noble brow. As she finished, he applauded her with vehemence. He was standing near to her father, leaning against the wall.

"Your daughter is a great actress," he said to Baroni.

"I sometimes think so," said the father, turning round with some courtesy to Sidonia, whom he recognised as the liberal stranger who had so kindly increased his meagre audience; "I let her do this to please herself. She is a good girl—but very few of the respectable savages here speak French. However,

she likes it. Adelaide is now going to sing; that will suit them better."

Then there were a few more bars scraped on the violin, and Adelaide, glowing rather than blushing, with her eyes first on the ground and then on the ceiling, but in all her movements ineffable grace, came forward and courteseyed. She sang an air of Auber and of Bellini; a voice of the rarest quality, and it seemed to Sidonia, promising almost illimitable power.

"Your family is gifted," he said to Baroni, as he applauded his second daughter as warmly as the first; and the audience applauded her too.

"I sometimes think so. They are all very good. I am afraid, however, that this gift will not serve her much. The good-natured savages seem pleased. Carlotta now is going to dance; that will suit them better. She has had good instruction. Her mother was a dancer."

And immediately, with her lip a little curling, a look of complete self-possession, willing to be admired, yet not caring to conceal her disgust, the little Carlotta advanced, and, after pointing her toe, threw a glance at her father

to announce that he might begin. He played with more care and energy than for the other sisters, for Carlotta was exceedingly wilful and imperious, and, if the music jarred, would often stop, shrug her shoulders, and refuse to proceed. Her mother doted on her; even the austere Baroni, who ruled his children like a Pacha, though he loved them, was a little afraid of Carlotta.

The boards were coarse and rough, some even not sufficiently tightened, but it seemed to Sidonia, experienced as he was in the schools of Paris, London, and Milan, that he had never witnessed a more brilliant facility than that now displayed by this little girl. Her soul too was entirely in her art; her countenance generally serious and full of thought, yet occasionally, when a fine passage had been successfully achieved, radiant with triumph and delight. She was cheered, and cheered, and cheered; but treated the applause, when she retired, with great indifference. Fortunately, Sidonia had a rose in his button-hole, and he stepped forward and presented it to

her. This gratified Carlotta, who bestowed on him a glance full of coquetry.

“And now,” said Baroni to the people, “you are going to see the crucifixion of Jesus Christ: all the tableaux are taken from pictures by the most famous artists that ever lived—Raphael, Rubens, and others. Probably you never heard of them. I can’t help that; it is not my fault; all I can say is, that if you go to the Vatican and other galleries you may see them. There will be a pause of ten minutes, for the children want rest.”

Now there was a stir and a devouring of fruit; Baroni, who was on the point of going behind the curtain, came forward, and there was silence again to listen to him.

“I understand,” he said, roughly, “there is a collection going to be made for the children; mind, I ask no one to subscribe to it; no one obliges me by giving anything to it; it is for the children and the children alone, they have it to spend, that is all.”

The collectors were Michel and Adelaide. Michel was always successful at a collection. He

was a great favourite, and wonderfully bold; he would push about in the throng like a Hercules, whenever any one called out to him to fetch a liard. Adelaide, who carried the box, was much too retiring, and did not like the business at all, but it was her turn, and she could not avoid it. No one gave them more than a sous. It is due, however, to the little boys who were admitted free to state that they contributed very handsomely; indeed, they expended all the money they had in the exhibition room, either in purchasing fruit, or in bestowing backsheesh on the performers.

“Encore un liard pour Michel,” was called out by several of them, in order to make Michel rush back, which he did instantly at the exciting sound, ready to overwhelm the hugest men in his resistless course.

At last Adelaide, holding the box in one hand and her brother by the other, came up to Sidonia, and cast her eyes upon the ground.

“For Michel,” said Sidonia, dropping a five-franc piece into the box.

“A piece of a hundred sous!” said Michel.

“And a piece of a hundred sous for yourself

and each of your brothers and sisters, Adelaide," said Sidonia, giving her a purse.

Michel gave a shout, but Adelaide blushed very much, kissed his hand, and skipped away. When she had got behind the curtain, she jumped on her father's neck, and burst into tears. Madame Baroni, not knowing what had occurred, and observing that Sidonia could command from his position a view of what was going on in their sanctuary, pulled the curtain, and deprived Sidonia of a scene which interested him.

About ten minutes after this, Baroni again appeared in his rough great coat, and with his violin. He gave a scrape or two, and the audience became orderly. He played an air, and then turning to Sidonia, looking at him with great scrutiny, he said, "Sir, you are a prince."

"On the contrary," said Sidonia, "I am nothing; I am only an artist like yourself."

"Ah!" said Baroni, "an artist like myself! I thought so. You have taste. And what is your line? Some great theatre I suppose, where even if one is ruined, one at least has

the command of capital. 'Tis a position. I have none. But I have no rebels in my company, no traitors. With one mind and heart we get on—and yet sometimes—” and here a signal near him reminded him that he must be playing another air, and in a moment, the curtain separated in the middle, and exhibited a circular stage on which there were various statues representing the sacred story.

There were none of the usual means and materials of illusion at hand; neither space, nor distance, nor cunning lights; it was a confined tavern room with some glaring tapers, and Sidonia himself was almost within arm's reach of the performers. Yet a representation more complete, more finely conceived and more perfectly executed, he had never witnessed. It was impossible to credit that these marble forms, impressed with ideal grace, so still, so sad, so sacred, could be the little tumblers, who, but half an hour before, were disporting on the coarse boards at his side.

The father always described, before the curtain was withdrawn, with a sort of savage terseness, the subject of the impending scene.

The groups did not continue long; a pause of half a minute, and the circular stage revolved, and the curtain again closed. This rapidity of representation was necessary, lest delay should compromise the indispensable immovableness of the performers.

“Now,” said Baroni, turning his head to the audience, and slightly touching his violin, “Christ falls under the weight of the cross.” And immediately the curtain parted, and Sidonia beheld a group in the highest style of art, and which, though deprived of all the magic of colour, almost expressed the passion of Correggio.

“It is Alfred,” said Baroni, as Sidonia evinced his admiration. “He chiefly arranges all this, under my instructions. In drapery his talent is remarkable.”

At length, after a series of representations, which were all worthy of being exhibited in the pavillions of princes, Baroni announced the last scene.

“What you are going to see now is the Descent from the Cross; it is after Rubens, one of the greatest masters that ever lived—if

you ever heard of such a person," he added in a grumbling voice, and then turning to Sidonia, he said, "This crucifixion is the only thing which these savages seem at all to understand, but I should like you, sir, as you are an artist, to see the children in some Greek or Roman story: Pygmalion, or the Death of Agrippina. I think you would be pleased."

"I cannot be more pleased than I am now," said Sidonia. "I am also astonished."

But here Baroni was obliged to scrape his fiddle, for the curtain moved.

"It is a triumph of art," said Sidonia, as he beheld the immortal group of Rubens reproduced with a precision, and an exquisite feeling which no language can sufficiently convey, or too much extol.

The performances were over, the little artists were summoned to the front scene to be applauded, the scanty audience were dispersing: Sidonia lingered.

"You are living in this house, I suppose?" he said to Baroni.

Baroni shook his head, "I can afford no roof except my own."

“And where is that?”

“On four wheels, on the green here. We are vagabonds, and I suppose must always be so, but, being one family, we can bear it. I wish the children to have a good supper to-night, in honour of your kindness. I have a good deal to do. I must put these things in order,”—as he spoke he was working—“there is the grandmother who lives with us; all this time she is alone, guarded however by the dog. I should like them to have meat to-night, if I can get it. Their mother cooks the supper. Then I have got to hear them say their prayers. All this takes time, particularly as we have to rise early, and do many things before we make our first course through the city.”

“I will come and see you to-morrow,” said Sidonia, “after your first progress.”

“An hour after noon, if you please,” said Baroni. “It is pleasant for me to become acquainted with a fellow artist, and one so liberal as yourself.”

“Your name is Baroni,” said Sidonia, looking at him earnestly.

“My name is Baroni.”

“ An Italian name.”

“ Yes, I come from Cento.”

“ Well, we shall meet to-morrow. Good night, Baroni. I am going to send you some wine for your supper, and take care the grandmamma drinks my health.”

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## II.

It was a sunny morn: upon the green contiguous to the auberge of St. Nicholas was a house upon wheels, a sort of monster omnibus, its huge shafts idle on the ground, while three fat Flemish horses cropped the surrounding pasture. From the door of the house were some temporary steps, like an accommodation ladder, on which sat Baroni, dressed something like a Neapolitan fisherman, and mending his clarionet; the man in the blouse was eating his dinner, seated between the shafts, to which also was fastened the little dog, often the only garrison, except the grandmother, of this strange establishment.

The little dog began barking vociferously, and Baroni, looking up, instantly bade him be quiet. It was Sidonia, whose appearance in the distance had roused the precautionary voice.

“Well,” said Sidonia, “I heard your trumpets this morning.”

“The grandmother sleeps,” said Baroni, taking off his cap, and slightly rising. “The rest also are lying down after their dinner. Children will never repose unless there are rules, and this with them is invariable.”

“But your children surely cannot be averse to repose, for they require it.”

“Their blood is young,” continued Baroni, still mending his clarionet; “they are naturally gay, except my eldest son. He is restless, but he is not gay.”

“He likes his art?”

“Not too much; what he wants is to travel, and, after all, though we are always moving, the circle is limited.”

“Yes; you have many to move. And can this ark contain them all?” said Sidonia, seating himself on some timber that was at hand.

“With convenience even,” replied Baroni; “but everything can be effected by order and discipline. I rule and regulate my house like a ship. In a vessel, there is not as much accommodation for the size as in a house of this kind; yet nowhere is there more decency and cleanliness than on board ship.”

“You have an obedient crew,” said Sidonia, “and that is much.”

“Yes; when they wake, my children say their prayers, and then they come to embrace me and their mother. This they have never omitted during their lives. I have taught them from their birth to obey God and to honour their parents. These two principles have made them a religious and a moral family. They have kept us united, and sustained us under severe trials.”

“Yet such talents as you all possess,” said Sidonia, “should have exempted you from any very hard struggle, especially when united, as apparently in your case, with well-ordered conduct.”

“It would seem that they should,” said Baroni, “but less talents than we possess

would probably obtain as high a reward. The audiences that we address have little feeling for art, and all these performances, which you so much applauded last night, would not perhaps secure even the feeble patronage we experience, if they were not preceded by some feats of agility or strength."

"You have never appealed to a higher class of audience?"

"No; my father was a posture-master, as his father was before him. These arts are traditional in our family, and I care not to say for what length of time and from what distant countries we believe them to have been received by us. My father died by a fall from a tight rope in the midst of a grand illumination at Florence, and left me a youth. I count now only six and thirty summers. I married, as soon as I could, a dancer at Milan. We had no capital, but our united talents found success. We loved our children; it was necessary to act with decision, or we should have been separated and trampled into the mud. Then I devised this house and wandering life, and we exist in general as you see us. In the

winter, if our funds permit it, we reside in some city, where we educate our children in the arts which they pursue. The mother can still dance, sings prettily, and has some knowledge of music. For myself, I can play in some fashion upon every instrument, and have almost taught them as much; I can paint, too, a scene, compose a group, and with the aid of my portfolio of prints, have picked up more knowledge of the costume of different centuries than you would imagine. If you see Josephine to-night in the Maid of Orleans you would perhaps be surprised. A great judge, like yourself a real artist, once told me at Bruxelles, that the grand opera could not produce its equal."

"I can credit it," said Sidonia, "for I perceive in Josephine, as well as indeed in all your children, a rare ability."

"I will be frank," said Baroni, looking at Sidonia very earnestly, and laying down his clarionet. "I conclude from what you said last night, and the interest that you take in the children, that you are something in our way, though on a great scale. I apprehend you

are looking out for novelties for the next season, and sometimes in the provinces things are to be found. If you will take us to London or Paris, I will consent to receive no remuneration if the venture fail: all I shall then require will be a decent maintenance, which you can calculate beforehand; if the speculation answer, I will not demand more than a third of the profits, leaving it to your own liberality to make me any regalo in addition, that you think proper."

"A very fair proposal," said Sidonia.

"Is it a bargain?"

"I must think over it," said Sidonia.

"Well; God prosper your thoughts, for from what I see of you, you are a man I should be proud to work with."

"Well, we may yet be comrades."

The children appeared at the door of the house, and, not to disturb their father, vaulted down. They saluted Sidonia with much respect, and then withdrew to some distance. The mother appeared at the door, and, leaning down, whispered something to Baroni, who, after a little hesitation, said to Sidonia, "The

grandmother is awake; she has a wish to thank you for your kindness to the children. It will not trouble you; merely a word; but women have their fancies, and we like always to gratify her, because she is much alone and never complains."

"By all means," said Sidonia.

Whereupon they ushered forward a venerable woman with a true Italian face; hair white as snow and eyes still glittering with fire, with features like a Roman bust, and an olive complexion. Sidonia addressed her in Italian, which greatly pleased her. She was profuse, even solemn in her thanks to him; she added she was sure, from all that she had heard of him, if he took the children with him, he would be kind to them.

"She has overheard something I said to my wife," said Baroni, a little embarrassed.

"I am sure I should be kind to them," said Sidonia, "for many reasons, and particularly for one;" and he whispered something in Baroni's ear.

Baroni started from his seat with a glowing cheek, but Sidonia, looking at his watch

and promising to attend their evening performance, bade them adieu.

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### III.

THE performances were more meagerly attended this evening than even on the preceding one, but had they been conducted in the royal theatre of a capital, they could not have been more elaborate, nor the troop have exerted themselves with greater order and effect. It mattered not a jot to them whether their benches were thronged or vacant; the only audience for whom the Baroni family cared was the foreign manager, young, generous, and speculative, whom they had evidently without intention already pleased, and whose good opinion they resolved to-night entirely to secure. And in this they perfectly succeeded. Josephine was a tragic muse; all of them, even to little Carlotta, performed, as if their destiny depended on the die. Baroni would not permit the children's

box to be carried round to-night, as he thought it an unfair tax on the generous stranger, whom he did not the less please by this well-bred abstinence. As for the mediæval and historic groups, Sidonia could recal nothing equal to them; and what surprised him most was the effect produced by such miserable materials. It seemed that the whole was effected with some stiffened linen and paper; but the divine touch of art turned everything to gold. One statue of Henri IV. with his flowing plume, and his rich romantic dress, was quite striking. It was the very plume that had won at Ivry, and yet was nothing more than a sheet of paper cut and twisted by the plastic finger of little Alfred.

There was to be no performance on the morrow; the niggard patronage of the town had been exhausted. Indeed, had it not been for Sidonia, the little domestic troop would, ere this, have quitted the sullen town, where they had laboured so finely, and achieved such an ungracious return. On the morrow, Baroni was to ride one of the fat horses over to Berg, a neighbouring town of some importance,

where there was even a little theatre to be engaged, and if he obtained the permission of the mayor, and could make fair terms, he proposed to give there a series of representations. The mother was to stay at home and take care of the grandmother; but the children—all the children—were to have a holiday, and to dine with Sidonia at his hotel.

It would have been quite impossible for the most respectable burgher, even of the grand place of a Flemish city, to have sent his children on a visit in trim more neat, proper, and decorous, than that in which the Baroni family figured on the morrow, when they went to pay their respects to their patron. The girls were in clean white frocks with little black silk jackets, their hair beautifully tied and plaited, and their heads uncovered, according to the fashion of the country; not an ornament, or symptom of tawdry taste was visible, not even a necklace, although they necessarily passed their lives in fanciful or grotesque attire; the boys, in foraging caps all of the same fashion, were dressed in blouses of holland, with bands and buckles, their broad shirt collars thrown

over their shoulders. It is astonishing, as Baroni said, what order and discipline will do; but how that wonderful house upon wheels contrived to contain all these articles of dress, from the uniform of the marshal of France to the diminutive blouse of little Michel, and how their wearers always managed to issue from it, as if they came forth from the most commodious and amply-furnished mansion, was truly yet pleasingly perplexing. Sidonia took them all in a large landau to see a famous château a few miles off, full of pictures and rich old furniture, and built in famous gardens. This excursion would have been delightful to them, if only from its novelty, but, as a substitute for their daily progress through the town, it offered an additional gratification.

The behaviour of these children greatly interested and pleased Sidonia. Their conduct to each other was invariably tender and affectionate; their carriage to him, though full of respect, never constrained, and touched by an engaging simplicity. Above all, in whatever they did or said, there was grace. They did nothing awkwardly; their voices were musical;

they were merry without noise, and their hearts sparkled in their eyes.

“I begin to suspect that these youthful vagabonds, struggling for life, have received a perfect education,” thought the ever musing Sidonia, as he leaned back in the landau, and watched the group that he had made so happy. “A sublime religious principle sustains their souls; a tender morality regulates their lives; and with the heart and the spirit thus developed, they are brought up in the pursuit and production of the beautiful. It is the complete culture of philosophic dreams!”

#### IV.

The children had never sate down before to a regular dinner, and they told Sidonia so. Their confession added a zest to the repast. He gave them occasional instructions, and they listened as if they were receiving directions for a new performance. They were so quick and so tractable, that their progress was

rapid; and at the second course Josephine was instructing Michel, and Alfred guiding the rather helpless but always self-composed Carlotta. After dinner, while Sidonia helped them to sugar-plums, he without effort extracted from each their master wish. Josephine desired to be an actress, while Adele confessed that, though she sighed for the boards, her secret aspirations were for the grand opera. Carlotta thought the world was made to dance.

“For my part,” said Francis, the eldest son, “I have no wish to be idle; but there are two things which I have always desired—first, that I should travel; and secondly, that nobody should ever know me.”

“And what would Alfred wish to be?” said Sidonia.

“Indeed, sir, if it did not take me from my brothers and sisters, I should certainly wish to be a painter.”

“Michel has not yet found out what he wishes,” said Sidonia.

“I wish to play upon the horn,” said Michel, with great determination.

When Sidonia embraced them before their departure, he gave each of the girls a French shawl; to Francis he gave a pair of English pistols, to guard him when he travelled; Alfred received a portfolio full of drawings of costume. It only arrived after dinner, for the town was too poor to supply anything good enough for the occasion, and Sidonia had sent a special messenger, the day before, for it to Lille. Michel was the guardian of a basket laden with good things, which he was to have the pleasure of dividing among the Baroni family. "And if your papa come back to-night," said Sidonia to Josephine, "tell him I should like to have a word with him."

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V.

SIDONIA had already commenced that habit which, during subsequent years, he has so constantly and successfully pursued—namely, of enlisting in his service all the rare talent which he found lying common and unap-

propriated in the great wilderness of the world; no matter if the object to which it would apply might not immediately be in sight. The conjuncture would arrive when it would be wanted. Thus he generally had ready the right person for the occasion; and whatever might be the transaction, the human instrument was rarely wanting. Independent of the power and advantage which this system gave him, his abstract interest in intellect made the pursuit delightful to him. He liked to give ability of all kinds its scope. Nothing was more apt to make him melancholy, than to hear of persons of talents dying without having their chance. A failure is nothing; it may be deserved, or it may be remedied. In the first instance, it brings self-knowledge; in the second, it develops a new combination usually triumphant. But incapacity, from not having a chance of being capable, is a bitter lot, which Sidonia was ever ready to alleviate.

The elder Baroni possessed Herculean strength, activity almost as remarkable, a practised courage, and a controlling mind. He

was in the prime of manhood, and spoke several languages. He was a man, according to Sidonia's views, of high moral principle; entirely trustworthy. He was too valuable an instrument to allow to run to seed as the strolling manager of a caravan of tumblers, and it is not improbable that Sidonia would have secured his services, even if he had not become acquainted with the Baroni family. But they charmed him. In every member of it he recognised character, and a predisposition which might even be genius. He resolved that every one of them should have a chance.

When therefore Baroni, wearied and a little disgusted with an unpromising journey, returned from Berg in the evening, and, in consequence of the message of his children, repaired instantly to the hotel of Sidonia, his astonishment was great when he found the manager converted into a millionaire, and that too the most celebrated in Europe. But no language can convey his wonder when he learnt the career that was proposed to him and the fortunes that were carved out for his children. He himself was to repair, with all his family,

except Josephine and her elder brother, at once to Vienna, where he was to be installed into a post of great responsibility and emolument. He was made superintendent of the couriers of the house of Sidonia in that capital, and especially of those that conveyed treasure. Though his duties would entail frequent absences on him, he was to be master of a constant and complete establishment. Alfred was immediately to become a pupil of the Academy of Painters, and Carlotta of that of dancing; the talents of Michel were to be watched and to be reported to Sidonia at fitting periods. As for Adele, she was consigned to a lady who had once been a celebrated prima donna, with whom she was to pursue her studies, although still residing under the paternal roof.

“Josephine will repair to Paris at once with her brother,” said Sidonia. “My family will guard over her. She will enjoy her brother’s society until I commence my travels. He will then accompany me.”

It is nearly twenty years since these incidents occurred, and perhaps the reader may not altogether feel uninterested in the subsequent fate of the children of Baroni. Made-

moiselle Josephine is at this moment the glory of the French stage; without any question the most admirable tragic actress since Clairon, and inferior not even to her. The spirit of French tragedy has risen from the imperial couch, on which it had long slumbered, since her appearance, at the same time classical and impassioned, at once charmed and commanded the most refined audience in Europe. Adele, under the name of Madame Baroni, is the acknowledged Queen of Song in London, Paris, Berlin, and St. Petersburg; while her younger sister, Carlotta Baroni, shares the triumphs, and equals the renown, of a Taglioni and a Cerito. At this moment, Madame Baroni performs to enthusiastic audiences in the first opera of her brother Michel, who promises to be the rival of Meyerbeer and Mendelssohn; all delightful intelligence to meet the ear of the soft-hearted Alfred, who is painting the new chambers of the Papal palace, a Cavaliere, decorated with many orders, and the restorer of the once famous Roman school.

“ Thus,” continued Baroni to Tancred, “ we have all succeeded in life because we fell across

a great philosopher, who studied our predisposition. As for myself, I told M. de Sidonia that I wished to travel and to be unknown, and so he made of me—a secret agent.”

“ There is something most interesting,” said Tancred, “ in this idea of a single family issuing from obscurity, and disseminating their genius through the world—charming mankind with so many spells. How fortunate for you all, that Sidonia had so much feeling for genius!”

“ And some feeling for his race,” said Baroni.

“ How?” said Tancred, startled.

“ You remember he whispered something in my father’s ear?”

“ I remember.”

“ He spoke it in Hebrew, and he was understood.”

“ You do not mean that you, too, are Jews?”

“ Pure Sephardim, in nature and in name.”

“ But your name surely is Italian?”

“ Good Arabic, my lord. Baroni—that is, the son of Aaron; the name of old clothesmen in London, and of Caliphs at Bagdad.”

## CHAPTER XII.

“How do you like my forest?” asked Fakredeen of Tancred, as, while descending a range of the Lebanon, an extensive valley opened before them, covered with oak trees, which clothed also with their stout trunks, their wide-spreading branches, and their rich starry foliage, the opposite and undulating hills, one of which was crowned with a convent. “It is the only oak forest in Syria. It will serve some day to build our fleet.”

At Gaza, which they had reached by easy journeys, for Fakredeen was very considerate of the health of Tancred, whose wound had scarcely healed, and over whom he watched

with a delicate solicitude which would have almost become a woman, the companions met Scheriff Effendi. The magic signature of Lord Montacute settled the long vexed question of the five thousand muskets, and secured also ten thousand piastres for the commander of the escort to deliver to his chief. The children of Rechab, in convoy of the precious charge, certain cases of which were to be delivered to the Great Sheikh, and the rest to be deposited in indicated quarters of the Lebanon, here took leave of the Emir and his friend, and pursued their course to the north of Hebron and the Dead Sea, in the direction of the Hauraan, where they counted, if not on overtaking the Great Sheikh, at least on the additional security which his neighbourhood would insure them. Their late companions remained at Gaza, awaiting Tancred's yacht, which Baroni fetched from the neighbouring Jaffa. A favouring breeze soon carried them from Gaza to Beiroot, where they landed, and where Fakredeem had the politic pleasure of exhibiting his new and powerful ally, a prince, an English prince, the brother perhaps of a

Queen, unquestionably the owner of a splendid yacht, to the admiring eye of all his, at the same time, credulous and rapacious creditors.

The air of the mountains invigorated Tancred. His eye had rested so long on the ocean and the desert, that the effect produced on the nerves by the forms and colours of a more varied nature were alone reviving.

There are regions more lofty than the glaciated crests of Lebanon; mountain scenery more sublime, perhaps even more beautiful: its peaks are not lost in the clouds like the mysterious Ararat; its forests are not as vast and strange as the towering Himalaya; it has not the volcanic splendour of the glowing Andes; in lake and in cataract it must yield to the European Alps; but for life, vigorous, varied, and picturesque, there is no highland territory in the globe that can for a moment compare with the great chain of Syria.

Man has fled from the rich and servile plains, from the tyranny of the Turk and from Arabian rapine, to clothe the crag with vines, and rest under his fig tree on the mountain top. An ingenious spirit, unwearied industry,

and a bland atmosphere have made a perpetual garden of the Syrian mountains. Their acclivities sparkle with terraces of corn and fruit. Castle and convent crown their nobler heights, and flat-roofed villages nestle amid groves of mulberry trees. Among these mountains we find several human races, several forms of government, and several schemes of religion, yet everywhere liberty—a proud, feudal aristocracy, a conventual establishment, which in its ramifications recalls the middle ages, a free and armed peasantry whatever their creed; Emirs on Arabian steeds, bishops worthy of the apostles, the Maronite monk, the horned head-gear of the Druses.

Some of those beautiful horses, for which Fakredeen was celebrated, had awaited the travellers at Beiroot. The journey through the mountain was to last three days before they reached Canobia. They halted one night at a mountain village where the young Emir was received with enthusiastic devotion, and on the next at a small castle belonging to Fakredeen, and where resided one of his kinsmen. Two hours before sunset, on the third

day, they were entering the oak forest to which we referred, and through whose glades they journeyed for about half an hour. On arriving at the convent-crowned height opposite, they beheld an expanse of country; a small plain amid the mountains; in many parts richly cultivated, studded by several hamlets, and watered by a stream, winding amid rich shrubberies of oleander. Almost in the middle of this plain, on a height superior to the immediate elevations which bounded it, rose a mountain of gradual ascent, covered with sycamores, and crowned by a superb Saracenic castle.

“Canobia!” said Fakredeen to Tancred, “which I hope you never will quit.”

“It would be difficult,” rejoined Tancred, animated. “I have seldom seen a sight more striking and more beautiful.”

In the mean time, Freeman and Trueman, who were far in the rear amid Fakredeen’s attendants, exchanged congratulating glances of blended surprise and approbation.

“This is the first gentleman’s seat I have seen since we left England,” said Freeman.

“There must have been a fine coming of age here,” rejoined Trueman.

“As for that,” replied Freeman, “comings of age depend in a manner upon meat and drink. They ayn’t in noways to be carried out with coffee and pipes. Without oxen roasted whole, and broached hogsheads, they ayn’t in a manner legal.”

A horseman, who was ahead of the Emir and Tancred, now began beating with a stick on two small tabors, one on each side of his saddle, and thus announced to those who were already on the watch the approach of their lord. It was some time however before the road, winding through the sycamore trees and gradually ascending, brought them to the outworks of the castle, of which during their progress they enjoyed a variety of views. It was a very extensive pile, in excellent condition, and apparently strongly fortified. A number of men in showy dresses and with ornamented arms, were clustered round the embattled gateway, which introduced the travellers into a quadrangle of considerable size, and of which the light and airy style pleasingly

and suitably contrasted with the sterner and more massive character of the exterior walls. A fountain rose in the centre of the quadrangle which was surrounded by arcades. Ranged round this fountain, in a circle, were twenty saddled steeds of the highest race, each held by a groom, and each attended by a man-at-arms. All pressed their hands to their hearts as the Emir entered, but with a gravity of countenance which was never for a moment disturbed. Whether their presence were habitual or only for the occasion, it was unquestionably impressive. Here the travellers dismounted, and Fakredeen ushered Tancred through a variety of saloons of which the furniture, though simple, as becomes the East, was luxurious, and of its kind superb; floors of mosaic marbles, bright carpets, arabesque ceilings, walls of carved cedar, and broad divans of the richest stuffs of Damascus.

“And this divan is for you,” said Fakredeen, showing Tancred into a chamber, which opened upon a flower-garden, shaded by lemon trees. “I am proud of my mirror,” he added, with some exultation, as he called Tancred’s

attention to a large French looking-glass, the only one in Lebanon. "And this," added Fakredeem, leading Tancred through a suite of marble chambers, "this is your bath!"

In the centre of one chamber, fed by a perpetual fountain, was a large alabaster basin, the edges of which were strewn with flowers just culled. The chamber was entirely of porcelain; a golden flower on a ground of delicate green.

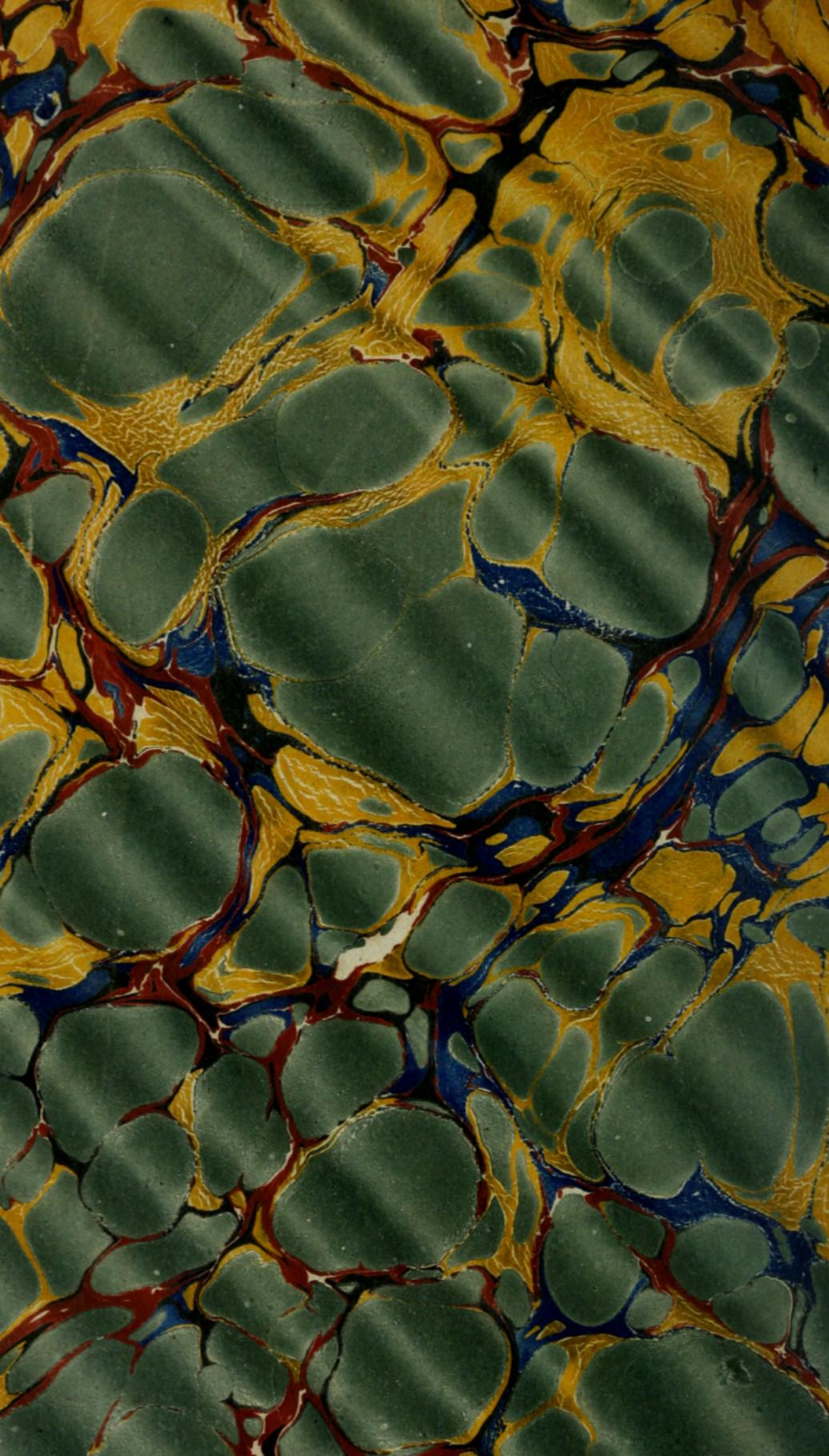
"I will send your people to you," said Fakredeem, "but, in the mean time, there are attendants here who are, perhaps, more used to the duty," and so saying, he clapped his hands, and several servants appeared bearing baskets of curious linen, whiter than the snow of Lebanon, and a variety of robes.

END OF VOL. II.









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