



ANÔNIMO

The Arabian Nights Entertainments

Translated by Jonathan Scott



JVA Editora

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Christine Sturrock.

The "Aldine" Edition of
The Arabian Nights Entertainments
Illustrated by S. L. Wood

FROM THE TEXT OF DR. JONATHAN SCOTT

In Four Volumes

Volume 1

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The Publishers' Preface.

This, the "Aldine Edition" of "The Arabian Nights Entertainments," forms the first four volumes of a proposed series of reprints of the Standard works of fiction which have appeared in the English language.

It is our intention to publish the series in an artistic way, well illustrating a text typographically as perfect as possible. The texts in all cases will be carefully chosen from approved editions.

The series is intended for those who appreciate well printed and illustrated books, or who are in want of a handy and handsome edition of such works to place upon their bookshelves.

The exact origin of the Tales, which appear in the Arabic as "The Thousand and One Nights," is unknown. The Caliph Haroon al Rusheed, who, figures in so lifelike a manner in many of the stories, was a contemporary of the Emperor Charlemagne, and there is internal evidence that the collection was made in the Arabic language about the end of the tenth century.

They undoubtedly convey a picturesque impression of the manners, sentiments, and customs of Eastern Mediaeval Life.

The stories were translated from the Arabic by M. Galland and first found their way into English in 1704, when they were retranslated from M. Galland's French text and at once became exceedingly popular.

This process of double translation had great disadvantages; it induced Dr. Jonathan Scott, Oriental Professor, to publish in 1811, a new edition, revised and corrected from the Arabic.

It is upon this text that the present edition is formed.

It will be found free from that grossness which is unavoidable in a strictly literal translation of the original into English; and which has rendered the splendid translations of Sir R. Burton and Mr. J. Payne quite unsuitable as the basis of a popular edition, though at the

same time stamping the works as the two most perfect editions for the student.

The scholarly translation of Lane, by the too strict an adherence to Oriental forms of expression, and somewhat pedantic rendering of the spelling of proper names, is found to be tedious to a very large number of readers attracted by the rich imagination, romance, and humour of these tales.

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The Ass, the Ox, and the Labourer.

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The Story of the First Old Man and the Hind.

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STORY OF THE THREE CALENDERS, SONS OF SULTANS; AND OF
THE FIVE

LADIES OF BAGDAD.

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OF LOVE'S SLAVE.

The Arabian Nights Entertainments.

The chronicles of the Sassanians, ancient kings of Persia, who extended their empire into the Indies, over all the adjacent islands, and a great way beyond the Ganges, as far as China, acquaint us, that there was formerly a king of that potent family, who was regarded as the most excellent prince of his time. He was as much beloved by his subjects for his wisdom and prudence, as he was dreaded by his neighbours, on account of his valour, and well-disciplined troops. He had two sons; the elder Shier-ear, the worthy heir of his father, and endowed with all his virtues; the younger Shaw-zummaun, a prince of equal merit.

After a long and glorious reign, this king died; and Shier-ear mounted his throne. Shaw-zummaun, being excluded from all share in the government by the laws of the empire, and obliged to live a private life, was so far from envying the happiness of his brother, that he made it his whole business to please him, and in this

succeeded without much difficulty. Shier-ear, who had naturally a great affection the prince his brother, gave him the kingdom of Great Tartary. Shaw-zummaun went immediately and took possession of it, and fixed the seat of his government at Samarcand, the metropolis of the country.

After they had been separated ten years, Shier-ear, being very desirous of seeing his brother, resolved to send an ambassador to invite him to his court. He made choice of his prime vizier for the embassy, and sent him to Tartary, with a retinue answerable to his dignity. The vizier proceeded with all possible expedition to Samarcand. When he came near the city, Shaw-zummaun was informed of his approach, and went to meet him attended by the principal lords of his court, who, to shew the greater honour to the sultan's minister, appeared in magnificent apparel. The king of Tartary received the ambassador with the greatest demonstrations of joy; and immediately asked him concerning the welfare of the sultan his brother. The vizier having acquainted him that he was in health, informed him of the purpose of his embassy. Shaw-zummaun was much affected, and answered: "Sage vizier, the sultan my brother does me too much honour; nothing could be more agreeable to me, for I as ardently long to see him as he does to see me. Time has not diminished my friendship more than his. My kingdom is in peace, and I want no more than ten days to get myself ready to return with you. There is therefore no necessity for your entering the city for so short a period. I pray you to pitch your tents here, and I will order everything necessary to be provided for yourself and your attendants." The vizier readily complied; and as soon as the king returned to the city, he sent him a prodigious quantity of provisions of all sorts, with presents of great value.

In the meanwhile, Shaw-zummaun prepared for his journey, gave orders about his most important affairs, appointed a council to govern in his absence, and named a minister, of whose wisdom he

had sufficient experience, and in whom he had entire confidence, to be their president. At the end of ten days, his equipage being ready, he took leave of the queen his wife, and went out of town in the evening with his retinue. He pitched his royal pavilion near the vizier's tent, and conversed with him till midnight. Wishing once more to see the queen, whom he ardently loved, he returned alone to his palace, and went directly to her majesty's apartments. But she, not expecting his return, had taken one of the meanest officers of her household to her bed.

The king entered without noise, and pleased himself to think how he should surprise his wife who he thought loved him with reciprocal tenderness. But how great was his astonishment, when, by the light of the flambeau, he beheld a man in her arms! He stood immovable for some time, not knowing how to believe his own eyes. But finding there was no room for doubt, "How!" said he to himself, "I am scarcely out of my palace, and but just under the walls of Samarcand, and dare they put such an outrage upon me? Perfidious wretches! your crime shall not go unpunished. As a king, I am bound to punish wickedness committed in my dominions; and as an enraged husband, I must sacrifice you to my just resentment." The unfortunate prince, giving way to his rage, then drew his cimeter, and approaching the bed killed them both with one blow, their sleep into death; and afterwards taking them up, he threw them out of a window into the ditch that surrounded the palace.

Having thus avenged himself, he returned to his pavilion without saying one word of what had happened, gave orders that the tents should be struck, and everything made ready for his journey. All was speedily prepared, and before day he began his march, with kettle-drums and other instruments of music, that filled everyone with joy, excepting the king; he was so much afflicted by the disloyalty of his wife, that he was seized with extreme melancholy, which preyed upon his spirits during the whole of his journey.

When he drew near the capital of the Indies, the sultan Shier-ear and all his court came out to meet him. The princes were overjoyed to see one another, and having alighted, after mutual embraces and other marks of affection and respect, remounted, and entered the city, amidst the acclamations of the people. The sultan conducted his brother to the palace provided for him, which had a communication with his own by a garden. It was so much the more magnificent as it was set apart as a banqueting-house for public entertainments, and other diversions of the court, and its splendour had been lately augmented by new furniture.

Shier-ear immediately left the king of Tartary, that he might give him time to bathe, and to change his apparel. As soon as he had done, he returned to him again, and they sat down together on a sofa or alcove. The courtiers out of respect kept at a distance, and the two princes entertained one another suitably to their friendship, their consanguinity, and their long separation. The time of supper being come, they ate together, after which they renewed their conversation, which continued till Shier-ear, perceiving that it was very late, left his brother to repose.

The unfortunate Shaw-zummaun retired to bed. Though the conversation of his brother had suspended his grief for some time, it returned again with increased violence; so that, instead of taking his necessary rest, he tormented himself with the bitterest reflections. All the circumstances of his wife's disloyalty presented themselves afresh to his imagination, in so lively a manner, that he was like one distracted being able to sleep, he arose, and abandoned himself to the most afflicting thoughts, which made such an impression upon his countenance, as it was impossible for the sultan not to observe. "What," said he, "can be the matter with the king of Tartary that he is so melancholy? Has he any cause to complain of his reception? No, surely; I have received him as a brother whom I love, so that I can charge myself with no omission

in that respect. Perhaps it grieves him to be at such a distance from his dominions, or from the queen his wife? If that be the case, I must forthwith give him the presents I designed for him, that he may return to Samarcand." Accordingly the next day Shier-ear sent him part of those presents, being the greatest rarities and the richest things that the Indies could afford. At the same time he endeavoured to divert his brother every day by new objects of pleasure, and the most splendid entertainments. But these, instead of affording him ease, only increased his sorrow.

One day, Shier-ear having appointed a great hunting-match, about two days journey from his capital, in a place that abounded with deer, Shaw-zummaun besought him to excuse his attendance, for his health would not allow him to bear him company. The sultan, unwilling to put any constraint upon him, left him at his liberty, and went a-hunting with his nobles. The king of Tartary being thus left alone, shut himself up in his apartment, and sat down at a window that looked into the garden. That delicious place, and the sweet harmony of an infinite number of birds, which chose it for their retreat, must certainly have diverted him, had he been capable of taking pleasure in anything; but being perpetually tormented with the fatal remembrance of his queen's infamous conduct, his eyes were not so much fixed upon the garden, as lifted up to heaven to bewail his misfortune.

While he was thus absorbed in grief, a circumstance occurred which attracted the whole of his attention. A secret gate of the sultan's palace suddenly opened, and there came out of it twenty women, in the midst of whom walked the sultanness, who was easily distinguished from the rest by her majestic air. This princess thinking that the king of Tartary was gone a-hunting with his brother the sultan, came with her retinue near the windows of his apartment. For the prince had so placed himself that he could see all that passed in the garden without being perceived himself. He