due to him for his services, on the ground that they had had a bad harvest.

The Khoja was very angry and said, "Very good! It is now the time to winnow the corn, but I will not let you have any wind. Get it if you can."

He then went up on to the top of a hill facing their threshing-floors and stretched a mat out on poles, to serve as a screen.

It is a fact that for several days not a breath of wind blew upon the floors and the villagers were alarmed to see that heavy clouds had collected and threatened rain.

A superstitious villager came to the Khoja and said, "If you will give me some wind I will give you twice as much as the Imam received from me last year."

The Khoja immediately made a hole in the mat pointing straight at the man's threshing-floor, and directly he went down he found that there was a steady wind blowing.

He at once set to work winnowing the corn and soon had great stacks of it ready. In great glee he proceeded to fill his sacks with corn and straw, piled them on his cart and carried them to the house for storage.

When his neighbours saw it they ran down to their threshing-floors, but when they came near they found that there was not a breath of wind.

Then another man said, "It is of no use. You cannot do anything. Go to the Khoja and promise to pay him his due. You will have to buy your wind."

He himself, seeing that there was no help for it, went off to the Khoja and made terms. The Khoja at once opened a hole in the mat facing this man's threshing-floor, and he immediately got what he wanted. Then the villagers rushed in a body up the hill to buy their wind from the Khoja, promising to pay him everything he demanded.

But the Khoja said, "My men! if you think you are going to cajole me into doing this, and when you have got what you want, break your word, you will be sorry for it. God will sift your corn for you in a way you won't like!"

The villagers, however, had received a lesson; they were afraid of him and kept their promise faithfully.

He opened a hole in the mat directly opposite to each man's threshing-floor and they all had a good harvest. They paid
the Khoja twice the amount due to him—enough wheat to live like a fighting cock for a whole year! He loaded it on the ox-carts, and then they all had dinner together at "Farewell Fountain," just outside the village. After the Khoja had said a prayer, he turned to the villagers and said, "You see that if God does not guard a man's rights by His mighty Hand, He does so by His wind!"

The Khoja's Horoscope

A FRIEND asked the Khoja under what star he was born.

He answered, "I remember that mother told me I was born under the sign of the Lamb."

"Nonsense!" said his friend. "The Lamb is not a constellation. You must mean the Ram."

"Well!" answered the Khoja, "it is forty years since mother cast my horoscope. Surely that is time enough for a lamb to grow into a ram!"

The Prize Turkey

ONE day the Khoja saw a bird about the size of a pigeon sold in the market for twelve pounds.

"Evidently," said he, "birds are fetching a high price. Now is the time! To-morrow I will bring that prime turkey of ours here for sale."

Next day he tucked the turkey under his arm, and the bird, proud of its coral necklace, puffed itself out and showed that it highly approved of being carried with such care.

The Khoja entered the market with the bird under his arm, and in full expectation of getting a high price for him began to call out, "A prize turkey for sale—reared on my own farmyard."

When, however, he found that the highest bid was only ten piastres, he lost his temper, and said to the brokers and dealers, "For Heaven's sake what is the meaning of this? Only yesterday I saw you with my very eyes sell a painted bird no bigger than a pigeon for twelve pounds. You were all keen after it. You all joined in the bidding. Of course that bird was painted, but look at this!"
TALES OF NASR-ED-DIN KHOJA

Look at the natural colouring of pearl and coral on its neck. Look at its plumage! See how it glows with reflected light when the sun falls upon it, and how it swells itself out and hisses when it is angry and opens its wings and tail, just like a tent. It has plenty of meat on it. It is as big as a lamb, and in the farmyard when it preens itself and struts like a peacock, I am never tired of looking at it.

"Unfortunately, I am obliged to sell it, or I certainly would not. As I was leaving home my wife and I felt so bad about parting with him. It was quite heart-breaking. When we sobbed out, 'Oh oh!' he tried to cheer us up by saying 'Gool! Gool!'"

This vehement harangue caused the people much amusement, but at last one of them said, "Now, Khoja, don't get so excited. You are not very careful what you say. For instance, that bird you talk about was not a common painted thing. It was that well-known bird the parrot, famous for a variety of natural colours."

The Khoja, who perceived that all his hopes of getting money for the turkey had flown to the winds, cried out in his vexation,

THE PRIZE TURKEY

"Oh, yes, indeed! A parrot! What of that? Isn't it a bird after all? Has it anything special about it?"

The other, who wanted to rub it into him, said, "The parrot has this advantage over your turkey, that it can talk very well."

At this the Khoja pointed to the turkey, which had closed its eyes with philosophic calm, and said, "Your bird may know how to talk, but mine is a devil to think."

Answer to Prayer

T
HE Khoja went to Broussa about some important business.

He went from one department to another, but could not get the matter settled. At last a friend said to him, "If you say your prayers every morning for forty days kneeling by the Mihrab* of the big Mosque, you will be answered, and on the forty-first day the case will be settled."

* Mihrab. A niche in the centre of the wall of a mosque which marks the direction of Mecca. The Imam stands before it when leading the congregation.
The Khoja did this, but nothing came of it.

At last one morning he went into the little prayer-house adjoining the big Mosque and prayed earnestly. Then by the mercy of God his prayer was heard and his case settled. The Khoja went straight to the big Mosque by the main entrance and cried with a loud voice, “Shame on you! You could not manage to do what your baby Mosque has done!”

**The Galoshes**

Some friends invited the Khoja to a wedding.

When he entered the house he noticed that there was no one in attendance to receive the guests and take charge of their galoshes. These were all mixed up, so that no one could tell “t’other from which.” Fearing that his galoshes might get lost in the confusion, the Khoja took a handkerchief out of his pocket, wrapped them up in it, and put them into his pocket.

He entered the room and was offered a seat. The gentleman who was sitting next to him saw that the Khoja’s pocket was bulging out and noticed the end of the handkerchief.

“I fancy, sir,” said he, “that you must have some rare book in that pocket.”

“Yes,” replied the Khoja.

“What is it about, may I ask?”

“It is a book on political economy,” said the Khoja.

The man, wishing to carry on the conversation, asked again, “Did you buy it from the bookshop?”

“No,” replied the Khoja; “I bought it from the shoemaker.”

**The Khoja and the Tailor**

**NASR-ED-DIN KHOJA** went to Broussa on business. He walked into the market and bought a pair of cloth trousers, told the shopman to wrap them up, and was proceeding to pay and carry off the parcel when it occurred to him that as his trousers were not very old, he would do better to buy a light coat instead.

He turned to the shopman and said, “I
TALES OF NASR-ED-DIN KHOJA

had meant to buy these trousers, but have changed my mind. Give me a coat for fifteen piastres instead."

"Very good!" said the shopman, and taking out a coat which he thought would fit him, handed it to him. The Khoja took it and was walking out when the shopman said, "You have not paid for it, sir."

"What next?" said the Khoja. "I bought the coat and left the trousers in place of them."

"But you did not pay for the trousers," said the man.

The Khoja looked very much astonished and said, "Upon my word, you Broassa people are funny fellows! Why should I pay for trousers if I never bought them?"

The Village Fair

"Let us go to the fair and have some fun," said the boys.

It was the Bairam holiday, and they went to a field outside the town to have some games.

The Khoja stood there watching them with the greatest interest when a young fellow snatched his turban from his head and threw it among the players. As they passed it on from one to the other, the Khoja ran after it; but though he struggled hard to get it back, it was no use, he could not do it.

The boys had rare fun over it.

"Oh, stop that," he cried. "Give me back my turban and let me go." But they only jeered and laughed and made such a noise that no one thought of listening to him.

He saw it was of no use and that he might wait there for hours and never get it back. So, saying "Drat the boys," he got on to his donkey and left.

As he was going along a friend met him and asked where he had been and why he had nothing on his head.

"Where is your turban?" he asked.

"Oh, it is playing over there," said the Khoja. "It suddenly remembered the days when it was young, and went to play with the boys at the fair."

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The Khoja’s Tact in Managing his Wives

THE Khoja had two wives. He gave each of them a blue shell as a keepsake, telling them not to let anyone see it. One day they came in together and asked him, “Which of us do you love best? Who is your favourite?”

“The one,” he answered, “who has my blue shell.”

Each of the women took comfort. Each one said in her heart “’Tis I he loves best,” and looked with scornful pity upon the other.

Clever Khoja! That is the way he managed his wives!

Dream about Nine Gold Liras

ONE night the Khoja dreamt that a man gave him nine gold liras and that he began to haggle and said to him, “You might at least have made it ten.”

At this point he woke up, and finding that there was nothing in his hand, shut his eyes tight and stretched his hand out, saying, “Very well. Bring them here. I’ll take nine.”

Married or Single? Off with his Head!

A CERTAIN tyrant had a wife who committed adultery. From that time he conceived a hatred for women, and it became his practice whenever he heard people speak of a man as “learned” to send for him and whisper a question in his ear. If he did not receive an answer to his liking, he immediately ordered the man’s head to be cut off.
Not knowing anyone else who could put a stop to this terrible state of things, they persuaded the Khoja to see what he could do.

The tyrant made him sit by his side and whispered in his ear the words, "Are you married or single?"

The Khoja replied, "At my time of life? Not married? What an idea!"

"Ho! ho!" said the tyrant, "so you too are one of them. Off with his head!"

The Khoja, who saw at once that he was in deadly peril, cried out, "Don't be in a hurry!

"Suppose you were to put the question another way. Ask me, for instance, if I divorced my wife and afterwards took her back, or whether she died and I married again, or whether having already one wife I took two or three more. In any case I would be wrong, but one never knows one's danger until it is too late. Perhaps you remember that famous proverb, 'A horse that slips will never break its neck.'"

The tyrant was so pleased with the Khoja's answer that he countermanded the order for his execution.

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Tricks of the Silk Trade

THE Khoja went to the market to sell some silk which his wife had spun, and the merchants tried to get it from him for nothing. "It would be a good thing to pay you out for this," said he to himself.

He found a big camel's head in a dust-heap, took it home and wound the silk round it, making it into a very big ball.

He then went to the market and showed it to some other silk merchants. One of them offered a sum small as compared with the size of the parcel, but when the Khoja reflected that it would be a fair price for the silk if it were weighed separately, he agreed, and cried, "Cash down!"

The man, however, was suspicious when he found that so big a parcel was to be had for so low a figure, and asked whether the silk had all been spun at the Khoja's house, or where, and he added, "I hope there is nothing inside."

The Khoja turned to the man quite coolly and said, "Head of a camel!"

The customer, who evidently thought this merely an exclamation of impatience, felt
reassured and paid down the money. The
Khoja took it and cleared off some of his
debts with it. Then the man who had
bought the silk went to his shop and untied
it. When he found the head he at once went
off to find the Khoja.

"Is this a nice thing for you to have done?
When I asked you if there was anything in the
parcel, you answered, 'No!' You have
cheated me," said he.

The Khoja only laughed and said, "Oh!
If you would only take to heart this lesson I
have given you. It would be worth a
thousand times more than the few piastres
you gain by cheating! In the first place,
you made far more than you ought to have
done out of my wife's silk, which she had
been spinning until her eyes nearly dropped
out of her head and which I had such trouble
to get rid of.

"In the second place I did not tell you
a lie. I actually told you what I had done
when I said to you, 'Head of a camel!'
You bought it with your eyes open. If I
had acted differently, if I had insisted on
getting a higher price, either the silk would
have remained on my hands at a time when

I am hard up and in need of money, or, if I
had sold it to you at that price, my conscience
would have pricked me and I would have
gone home miserable.

"Men of learning and piety do not go out
of their way to cheat people, nor, unless they
are absolutely obliged, do as I have done.
You think it the end of all things if you cannot
do me out of a little money, but Nasr-ed-din
Khoja is an honest man, always ready to pay
his debts and justify the means he employs to
sell his things."

The Khoja's House on Fire

A FIRE broke out at the Khoja's house
and one of his neighbours ran to find him.

"Run, Khoja!" he cried, "your house is
on fire. I knocked at the door as I was
passing, but there was not a sound. There is
evidently nobody at home."

The Khoja did not look at all alarmed.
"My dear fellow," said he, "my wife and
I have so arranged our domestic affairs that
I have nothing to worry me. I have to
earn a living out of doors while she looks
after the house. I am sorry to trouble you, but would you kindly let her know? This is not my concern."

The Khoja's Feigned Assault on his Wife

Behold the Khoja in a violent passion with a big stick in his hand rushing after his wife and shouting, "I have had enough of you! I'll give you a good thrashing and pay you for all the annoyance you have caused me these thirty years! Then go and complain to anyone you wish!"

His wife ran along screaming, "Help! Good people of Mohammed! This fellow has gone mad again. Save, oh, save me!"

There happened to be a wedding at a house close by, and the guests, hearing the cries, rushed out into the street and carried the Khoja's wife into the harem for safety. They then turned to the Khoja and begged him to be quiet, saying, "We all know how foolish women can be; but is this a nice thing for you to do?—for you are a man of culture and you would be the first to find fault with us if we were to do it."

While they were trying to pacify him, the owner of the house came forward and said, "My dear Khoja, let me profit by this unpleasant business to ask you a favour. Of course I was rude not to have invited you to our party. It was partly because it was for young people and I was afraid you might find it tiresome, but I am so delighted to have this opportunity. Please do us the honour of joining us for a while and let us hear what it was all about."

Though these words served to calm the Khoja to a certain extent, he was still growling with indignation when he entered the house.

As the wedding breakfast was ready, the guests took their places. The Khoja at once began to describe how the quarrel had arisen and kept them all in a roar of laughter.

Just then some baklava* was brought in. The Khoja ate from the dish which was placed before him with the greatest relish, while he continued his description of the quarrel, and then wound up by saying, "Lucky woman! Lucky rascal! So she took refuge here, did she? If I could have got Baklava. Light, flake-like pastry flavoured with honey.
TALES OF NASR-ED-DIN KHOJA

hold of her I would have given her ear a twist like this,” said he, twirling the dish of baklava round towards himself, which made the people laugh again.

“Ha! ha!” they said, “you can’t help joking even when you are angry!”

After trying a variety of delicacies, the guests left the table and coffee was served.

The Khoja then made a humorous speech to those present. He said, “Our good neighbour here gave a wedding party, but did not invite us. As I found out that he was going to have some nice things to eat and especially my favourite dish baklava, my wife and I thought the matter over and we got up this little pantomime so as to get our share. As for my little wife, I am really very fond of her. God bless her! Would you mind sending someone into the harem to let her know that I am waiting? We must be off, but I hope you will go on enjoying yourselves.”

He left them marvelling at this very ingenious trick he had played them.

A WARRIOR’S RECORD

A Warrior’s Record

VERY near to the Khoja lived a gallant officer devoted to the profession of arms.

The Khoja noticed that it was his habit when he came home in the evening to shoot three arrows, one from the ground-floor, another from the first, and the third from the second floor. This happened so often that it aroused the Khoja’s curiosity and he asked the officer to tell him the reason.

“If you are so anxious to know, come with me,” said he, and took the Khoja into the stable. There he showed him a powerful charger of peerless beauty.

“It was on this steed,” said he, “that I placed myself at the head of my Spahis and by a flanking movement caused the defeat of the Crusaders at the battle of Nicopoli.”

So saying he shot an arrow into the air and the Khoja cried, “Bravo!”

Then they went up to the first floor. Here he showed the Khoja an armory full of weapons of matchless price.

“Some of these arms,” said he, “my ancestors brought from Tartary. They wore them during the conquest of Roumelia,
TALES OF NASR-ED-DIN KHOJA

at the defeat of the Servians near Adrianople, during the conquest of Bulgaria and at the great battle of Kossova. There are others which I wore myself at the battle of Nicopoli while pursuing the Servians and some also which I captured from the Crusaders. They will be an heirloom in my family for ever. To me they are of greater value than the most precious things of this world."

In his pride and joy he shot another arrow into the air.

The Khoja had listened to these details with very great interest.

They then went up to the top floor.

The officer now called his wife, who at once covered her face and came into the room. He bade her kiss the Khoja's hand.

The Khoja learned that this lady (who was a fascinating creature with a face like the light of the moon) was related to Princess Maritza of Servia, one of the wives of Sultan Bayazid, and that when the officer brought the Princess to the Sultan this lady was in her suite.

Turning to the Khoja he said, "She took a fancy to me directly she saw me, but when she heard of my prowess on the battlefield she fell violently in love. From that time she was always in tears, but would tell no one the cause of her grief until at last the Princess noticed it.

"The Sultan issued his Iradé* and I married her.

"Her learning, virtue, intelligence, and refinement are even greater than her beauty."

When with a heart full of love and pride he shot another arrow into the air, the Khoja could no longer contain himself and cried, "You have every right to be proud! Those arrows speed in a worthy flight, and I hope that in future, whenever you shoot them, you will send one up also as a salute from Nasr-ed-din Khoja."

Disease called "Loss of Appetite"

A TRAVELLER called at the Khoja's house and he entertained him. He laid the table, put out the bread, and then went to fetch the dinner. When he came back he noticed that the bread was all gone. Without a word he went out again for more.

* Iradé. An Imperial decree.
bread, but when he returned this time he saw that the meat was all finished.

He took the empty dishes and ran off for more, but when he came back there was not a scrap of bread left.

So he went to and fro until there was no meat left in the saucepan, nor bread in the bread-pan, nor had he ever had time to bring them in together so as to wait and see the man eat.

He asked him where he was going and the object of his journey, and he answered, "I am afflicted with a complaint called 'loss of appetite.' I am going to Broussa to see the doctor and get some medicine and shall come back at once. I hope we may meet again in a month at the latest. I have taken quite a fancy to you. When I come back I should like to spend a month with you and see what this fine climate can do for me."

"Oh! I am very sorry," said the Khoja, "but as I intend to go to the country in a day or two I shall not have that pleasure. I will therefore wish you good-bye now," and so he managed to get rid of him.

**The "Poisoned" Dish of Baxlawa**

In view of the high character and learning of the Khoja, the notables of Aksehir were anxious that their boys should profit by his instruction and appointed him head master of the town school.

One of the notables whose boy attended the school examined him on the lessons he was preparing. The boy answered his questions so well that his father was highly delighted and, calling a servant, bade him take the Khoja a present of a tray of baklawa.

It came just when lessons were going on, and the Khoja wondered how he could prevent the boys getting hold of it. He himself had been called away suddenly to attend a funeral, so, as he could do nothing with it till he came back, he called up the head boys and said to them, "I am putting this tray on the shelf here. Be careful you don't touch it. I don't quite trust the man who sent it, for we were once on very bad terms. Most likely there is something poisonous in it, and if so, it is not a mere practical joke, but a crime he has committed. Mind, it is your own look-out; but if you all die of
poison, I shall be held responsible, and you will cause me to be thrown into prison and rot there."

When the Khoja had gone, the head boy, who happened to be his nephew and knew that this was only humbug, took the tray down from the shelf, sent for his particular chums, and tried to persuade them to join him in eating it.

The boys cried, "No! It is poisoned. The Khoja said so. We won't touch it. We don't want to die."

"It is a trick, boys. Just see me eat it! Now you can’t say anything after that," said he, as he took some.

"All right," said the others; "but what answer are we to give the Khoja?"

"You leave that to me," said he. "I have got an answer ready that will quiet him. Now then, let us polish off the baklawa."

Feeling more at ease, the boys at once set to work and made a clean sweep of it, shouting and laughing as they did so.

That rascal of a nephew must have made his plans ever since the baklawa arrived, for no sooner had they finished eating it than he ran into the Khoja's room, caught hold

THE "POISONED" DISH OF BAKLAVA

of a penknife on the inkstand and broke it. At that moment the Khoja came in, and seeing the penknife, asked angrily who had broken it.

The boys all pointed to his nephew as the culprit.

"What did you do this for?" he demanded. "Do you want me to break your bones for you?"

The boy pretended to cry and said, "My pen broke. I tried to mend it with your penknife and broke the knife. Then I said to myself, 'How can I look Uncle in the face? What answer can I give him?' If he comes in now, he is sure to give me such a thrashing that he will break every bone in my body. It was far better to die than bear such torture," said I. Then I began to think what was the best way to kill myself. I did not think it nice to throw myself down the well, because it would make it smell. Then I suddenly remembered the baklawa on the shelf which you told us was poisoned. I took down the tray, and first I repeated the words of our Creed, 'There is no God but God, and Mahomet is his prophet'; then I said good-bye to my schoolfellows and sent word
to my father and sister and to my poor mother who had been angry with me. I begged them all to forgive me, and then saying ‘Bismillah!’ I shut my eyes and swallowed the baklava. I did not forget to clean up the tray with my fingers, but... I am sorry to say... such is my unhappy lot... I did not die... I could not die!”

The poor Khoja, though exasperated at the loss of his favourite dish and the breaking of the penknife, which had been a present from his father, could not help exclaiming, “My lad, I am amazed that at your age you should have thought of such a clever plan. I am always ready with an answer whatever I am asked, but you will soon be able to give me points. It is quite clear that this is hereditary in our family.”

**Counting the Donkeys**

In Anatolia, when the villagers send their wheat to be ground at the mill, each one loads his own donkey, while one of them takes charge of the lot.

This is a far better plan than that four or

* In the name of God.

five men should remain at the mill for days together, each awaiting his turn.

It happened that our Khoja was once bound for the mill, riding one donkey himself and driving before him eight others loaded with wheat.

Suddenly a doubt crossed his mind, and he thought he had better count the donkeys. He did so, and found there were only eight. He was very much put out, for eight men had handed their animals over to him and one for himself should make nine.

He pulled up, got down, went back a long distance to the bend of the road, and after looking to see if the donkey were hiding behind the trees, came back disconsolate.

Before he got up, however, he counted them again, and lo! there were nine!

“Thank God,” he cried, “they are all right!”

But of course it was not long before his doubts revived.

He began to count again, and would you believe it, there were only eight! So down he jumped in a terrible state of mind, went a long way back, but found nothing, and returned in despair.
TALES OF NASR-ED-DIN KHOJA

Then when he counted them again and found that there were nine, it nearly drove him crazy.

Being, moreover, very superstitious, he called to mind tales about fairies and sprites and the pranks which they play upon poor mortals in the pathless desert. His brain was in a whirl.

After repeating a number of prayers he got up again and went on his way.

But would the Devil leave him alone? Something—some terrible power which he could not resist urged him on and made him count them again. There were eight! He jumped down in a frenzy, stamping his feet and shouting out imprecations and prayers to exorcise the evil spirits. Suddenly he heard strange sounds which made him tremble.

He looked, and lo! all the donkeys had scattered and were busy cropping the grass. He had no strength left to take off their loads and threw himself down in the shade of a tree.

Just then a traveller came down the road and the Khoja, obsessed by his fear of the evil-spirits, shouted to him to come. It turned out that they were acquaintances.

COUNTING THE DONKEYS

When the man saw how exhausted the Khoja was, he asked him the reason and he told him everything—how the spirits, not content with molesting people in town, conspire to torment poor mortals in the pathless desert.

"Don't worry, Khoja," said the man; "it is all your fancy."

But the Khoja swore that though he had not actually seen them he had heard their voices.

At this the man began to feel some doubts himself, but continued his efforts to cheer up the Khoja, who at last said,

"Please stay with me a little while and then help me on to my donkey and see me on my way."

The man took compassion on him and they sat down to have something to eat. The Khoja was soon himself again. He became quite lively and began to crack jokes. Then they collected the donkeys and he mounted one of them, saying, "Come, let us count them once more."

When, however, he again found that there were only eight, he turned to the traveller almost in tears and said, "There
you see! Only eight! Oh! what a time I have had with these donkeys!"

The man burst out laughing. "Khoja! Khoja!" he cried, "why don't you count your foster-brother—the donkey you are on now. All this bother because you never counted your own donkey along with your other foster-brothers!"

The Khoja thought a moment, then, clapping his hand to his forehead, he jumped off his donkey, rushed up to the traveller and embraced him.

The man, who thought the matter very trivial, was taken aback and protested; but the Khoja cried, "God bless you! You have made me a man again. You have restored my reason and given me life. If this riddle, which is so very simple, had remained unsolved, I should either have gone mad or had a heart attack and died."

When one comes to think of it, the solution of the most difficult enigmas dazzles the eye with no brighter light of conviction than if they had been the simplest and most obvious problems.

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**The Governor's Wife**

The Governor of Akshour was tied to his wife's apron-strings. She interfered in the affairs of the Government and began even to appoint and dismiss the officials.

Some of the leading men in the town went to the Khoja and begged him to try to put a stop to it. He had an interview with the Governor, in which he mentioned so many instances of the lady's interference that he persuaded the Governor not to allow her such liberty in future.

When she found that she was losing her influence over her husband, she wanted to know who it was that had been the cause of her receiving this rebuff, and found out through the Khoja's wife that it was he.

It was the Khoja's custom every summer when he returned from the country to stay a few days at the Governor's house, and the lady took the opportunity to invite him to bring his wife with him.

One day while the Khoja and his wife were chatting together in his private room, the lady came in and began to tease the Khoja. Then she gave him some drink and
made him tipsy. Now said she, "Let us have a game. There is a pack-saddle I saw lying out there by the wall. Bring it here."

The Khoja, who was beyond all power of resistance, went to fetch it. She persuaded him to let them put the saddle on his back. They then made something to serve as a bridge, and the lady mounted. The Khoja began to neigh like a horse, and while he was careering round the room with his charming rider, his wife called the Governor, telling him to look through the keyhole and see what was going on. As the Khoja galloped along, kicking and prancing, the Governor roared with laughter, but at last he felt he must go in, and opened the door.

"Fie! fie! Khoja!" he said. "What on earth are you doing?"

"Ha!" said the Khoja quite coolly, "now you see with your own eyes what she has done with me. It was because I wanted to protect you from this tyranny that I gave you that piece of advice. So far as we are concerned we are only individuals. The reins of Government are not in our hands. Our authority is purely domestic and restricted to looking after our own wives at home.

**THE GOVERNOR'S WIFE**

It does not matter what people say of us, because it does not affect others; but if you, the Governor, put the bridle into your wife's hand like this, the whole country suffers."

The Governor was doubly impressed by this piece of advice, and as to his wife, she gave up the struggle and retired in disgust.

**The Clumsy Barber**

The Khoja went to get a shave. The barber was clumsy, and each time he plied the razor he cut him and then stuck on a bit of cotton.

When the Khoja reached out his hand to take his turban and go, the barber said, "But you are only half shaved!"

"You clown!" answered he, "on one half of my head you have sown cotton. Leave it alone. Let me sow the rest of it with flax."

**The Khoja caught stealing Wheat at the Mill**

The Khoja took some wheat to the mill to be ground. While he was waiting, he proceeded to take handfuls of wheat out of
the sacks belonging to the villagers and put them into his own.

"What are you doing there?" demanded the miller.

"Oh! what a fool I am!" answered he.

"My wits are all astray."

"If you are such a fool," said the miller, "why don't you take the wheat from your own sack and put it into that of the villagers?"

"I am stupid enough as it is," said he, "but if I did that I should be a downright ass!"

The Khoja as a Musician

THE Khoja was invited to a party, when one of the guests, thinking it would amuse the company, put a mandoline into the Khoja's hand and begged him to give them a tune.

The Khoja caught hold of the instrument and struck the wires from top to bottom, producing a horrible, rasping noise.

"Stop! stop! Khoja!" they cried. "That is not the way to play. To bring out the
melody you must move your fingers up and down until you find the proper keys."

"My fingers could not find them at first, but now they have; and I shall be very careful not to move them again! Twang! Twang!"

The Bastinado

NASR-ED-DIN KHOJA was sitting with Tamerlane when they brought in a drunken soldier.

"Give him three hundred blows of the bastinado," cried Tamerlane, and then he saw the Khoja smile.

This made him angry and he called out, "No! Five hundred! Give him five hundred!"

The Khoja burst out laughing, and Tamerlane, starting up like a burning brand from the furnace, shrieked out the words, "Then give him eight hundred!"

At this the Khoja began to rock with laughter, which made Tamerlane dance with rage and cry, "You—who call yourself an authority on the Sacred Law—you clown with a turban like a mill-stone, how dare

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you mock at me when I give sentence—I, a mighty conqueror who has made the world tremble! What a cold and cruel heart you must have to be still laughing!"

The Khoja replied, "You are quite right in one respect. I do know how serious a matter this is, and I quite agree that you are a bloodthirsty tyrant, but I cannot help feeling surprised at one thing. Either you do not know how to count or you are what your name 'Timour' implies—a man of iron and not a creature of flesh and blood. You know absolutely nothing about the Sacred Law for which you are so zealous. The law allows a maximum of eighty blows for drunkenness*—if so, what becomes of your eight hundred? It is very easy for you to give orders, but you should at least take the trouble to think whether they can be carried out."

* Drunkenness. If a Moslem drink wine and two witnesses testify to his having done so or his breath smell of wine, he may be beaten with a maximum of eighty blows.

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The Khoja goes Hunting with Tamerlane

The Khoja came on a visit to Tamerlane, who one day gave him a broken-winded hack to ride and took him out hunting.

It came on to rain, so the huntsmen put spurs to their horses and rode for shelter. As the Khoja's horse could scarcely walk, it certainly could not gallop, and he remained behind. He took off his clothes and sat on them. After a while, when the rain left off, he put them on again and in due time arrived at the inn.

When Tamerlane noticed that the Khoja had not got wet, he asked him the reason.

The Khoja said, "Who could get wet riding a spirited animal like that? Directly the rain began, I gave him one touch with the spur and he carried me like a bird straight to the inn."

Tamerlane was so astonished that he at once gave orders that the horse should be put in the Royal stable.

Again they went out hunting. Tamerlane rode the horse and, curiously enough, it came on to rain again. The Khoja and the others put spurs to their horses and soon reached
the inn, but Tamerlane was soon wet through and arrived quite late.

Next day he sent for the Khoja to give him a dressing-down.

"How dare you," said he, "tell me a lie and make a fool of me?"

"My dear man," said the Khoja, "there is no reason to be so angry. Have you not your wits about you? You would not have got wet if you had taken your clothes off as I did, kept them dry by sitting on them, and then put them on again when the rain left off."

The Khoja appointed "Judge's Shadow"

When the Khoja was at Konia he applied to the Judge for an appointment as Cadi * in one of the provincial towns. The Judge told him that there was no vacancy, as all the appointments had just been made.

He then applied for employment at head-

* Cadi. See p. 42. The term is properly only applied to the judge of a small provincial town. At the principal town of a province the judge is called "hakem."

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The Khoja appointed "Judge's Shadow"

quarters, but the Judge always found some excuse for refusing.

At last the Khoja said, "Since your Honour has always treated me with kindness and did in fact promise to give me the first suitable appointment, allow me to point out that there is a post vacant. No one has applied for it, no one is keen about it, and certainly neither the Government nor the people can have any objection to it. You will find it very useful in your work, for it will save you many difficult questions which you cannot settle yourself."

"Very good!" said the Judge. "Let me know at once what it is, and I will make the appointment."

"I want you to appoint me to be your shadow," said the Khoja.

The Judge and his staff were intensely tickled at the idea of such a title, and the Judge said, "Certainly! I hereby appoint you to be my 'shadow,'" and showed him a room which he could use as an office.

The Khoja took the matter quite seriously, went into the room, and having placed a desk with writing materials in one corner, took his place, and from that
day entered upon the regular discharge of his duties.

One man had a claim against another and brought him before the Judge, who asked what it was about; whereupon the plaintiff said, “This man cut thirty loads of wood for Siraj-ed-din Effendi, who is, as your Honour knows, very rich, and as he was cutting it I passed by, and each time that he drove in the axe I cried ‘Hengh! hengh!’ to encourage him and give strength to his arm. I gave him very material help. He has just been paid for his work, but refuses to give me anything for helping him.”

The Judge turned to the defendant and asked if the plaintiff had indeed done so, and he acknowledged that he had. The Judge was greatly puzzled to know how to treat the matter and felt quite nonplussed. While thinking it over he suddenly remembered his “shadow,” and turning to the plaintiff, said, “This is not a question for my department. The gentleman in the room opposite attends to questions of this kind,” and he told the Marshal of the Court to take them there. The Judge then hid himself behind the curtain which led into the Khoja’s room,

being very curious to hear how he would deal with the matter.

After hearing the facts of the case the Khoja said to the plaintiff, “Of course you are right. The idea of his receiving all the money, while you stood by and took so much trouble every time he drove in the axe! It is not to be thought of!”

The defendant cried, “But, sir, it was I who cut the wood. What possible claim can he have because he stood there looking on?”

“Hush, my man!” said the Khoja—“you don’t understand,” and he told his servant to bring him a money-tray. He then took from the man who had cut the wood the money which he had received for the work and proceeded to ring out the coins one by one. He then turned to the man who had cut the wood and said, “Take your money”—“and as for you,” said he, turning to the other, “take the sound of the coins as I rung them on that tray, for that is all you will get.”

Those who were present during the hearing of the case were very much astonished at this odd way of settling it.
Selling Pickles

ONCE the Khoja started to sell pickles. He bought the entire stock-in-trade of a man, including his donkey. He started on his rounds, crying, "Pickles for sale!" but when they came to the crowded part of the town and to the house of a former customer, the donkey would begin to bray so loudly that the Khoja could not make himself heard, and was obliged to hold his tongue.

One day in a crowded thoroughfare the Khoja was just preparing to cry, "Pickles!" when the donkey got the start of him and began to bray. Then he lost his temper and said, "Lock here, mate, are you selling them, or am I?"

A Suit for Payment of "Nothing"

TWO men came before the Judge and pleaded as follows:—
Plaintiff: "Your Honour, this man had a load of wood on his back, and as he was walking along, his foot slipped. He fell, and all the wood came down with him. He begged me to put it on his back again, and I asked him what he would pay me for doing it? He answered, 'Nothing.' I said, 'All right. I agree to do it for nothing,' and I put the wood on his back. I then asked him for payment of 'nothing,' and he will not give it me. Your Honour, I demand my rights. Let him pay me 'nothing' here and now!"

The Judge always handed over delicate questions like this to our friend the Khoja, who, having listened attentively said, "Your claim is just. He must keep his word. He shall pay."

Then pointing to the rug on the divan, he said to the claimant, "Just lift that rug a bit and tell me what is under it."

The man looked, and answered, "Nothing."

"Why," said he, "that is what you want. Take it and go!"

The Khoja's Conviction that he was Dead

THE Khoja was one day outside the town when he was seized with the conviction that he was dead.
He laid himself out and waited for a long time, but no one took the trouble to remove his body.

He was very much annoyed, and at last got up and went home to tell his wife how and where he had died, and having done so went back to the fatal spot.

His wife ran off to the neighbours, tearing her hair and crying bitterly as she told them that the Khoja had died suddenly and his body was lying out in the open country.

The neighbours were very much distressed and asked when and where it had happened and who had brought the news.

"The strange thing is," she answered, "that it was the Khoja himself who brought me word, and he then went back to the place where he died!"

Dispute in Court between Two Low Women

When he was Cadi of Sivri-hissar two impudent women came into Court. One said, "Your Honour, I asked this woman to make me some cord and paid her in advance. She began to make it very thin—

just like string—and sent me a sample, but I won't take it if it is like that. So do please make her give me back my money." As she said this she began to make soft eyes at the Khoja and to show off her charms.

"Dear me!" he said, as he turned to the other, "and what have you to say?"

The woman affected to speak as if she could not control her indignation.

"Our agreement, sir, was that I should make cord the thickness of my finger, like a clothes-line—not rope, the thickness of my wrist." And so saying she bared her arm to let him see what a pretty white hand she had.

"Oh, that is enough!" said he, as he scanned them both from head to foot.

"Settle the matter between you."

To the defendant he said, "You must make it a little thicker. Don't make it so thin that you will find next morning that it has worn out, like my patience."

At this the hussies began to laugh and left the Court.
The Khoja conducts his Own Funeral

ONE day the Khoja climbed up a tree and began to cut the branch upon which he was standing.

A man below saw what he was doing and called out, “Hallo there! Whatever are you up to? You are going to fall.”

The Khoja paid no heed, and at that very moment the branch snapped and he came down with a crash. He jumped up, however, immediately, without waiting to see if he were hurt, and rushed after the man.

“Upon my word, young fellow, you are very clever,” said he, catching hold of him. “Since you could tell that I was going to fall, please say when I shall die.”

The man shook him off and, wishing to proceed on his way, gave the Khoja this cryptic answer: “Put the wood on the donkey’s back and as he goes uphill he will throw up his heels and let fly at you. That will half kill you; but when he does it a second time, it will be all over with you.”

And so saying, he passed on.

The first time the donkey let fly at him the Khoja thought he felt the symptoms of

approaching dissolution, but at the second time the poor man collapsed. “Alas! I am a dead man,” he cried, and gave himself up for lost as he fell to the ground.

People from some villages hard by came upon the Khoja lying there prostrate and apparently lifeless.

“The poor fellow is dead,” said they, gathering round him. Then they brought a coffin and put him in.

Now, as they were carrying him to town they came upon a steep, muddy swamp. Here the road divided, and although they could see several ways across, they could not make up their mind which was best. They talked the matter over, saying, “I wonder which is best, this or that?”

As they did so, the Khoja popped his head out of the coffin, and said, “When I was alive I used to go that way,” pointing with his hand; “but you do just as you like.”

The Scalding Soup

ONE day the Khoja’s wife, being in a bad temper, put the soup on the table scalding hot.
TALES OF NASR-ED-DIN KHOJA

After a while she forgot that it was so hot and swallowed a spoonful. The pain made her eyes fill with tears.

The Khoja asked her why she was crying without apparent reason, and she said, "My poor mother was very fond of this soup. I remembered it, and that made me cry."

The Khoja at once took a spoonful with great respect and swallowed it, and his eyes also filled with tears.

"What is wrong?" said his wife. "Why are you too crying?"

"I am crying," said he, "that your unlucky mother should have died and a wretch like you be still alive!"

The Khoja's Parable for Young Children

THE Khoja had a charming way of treating little children. At Aksehir they would come round him, delighted to listen to his pretty stories, or they would laugh and play with him. If they had any little trouble they would run with it to the Khoja.

So it came to pass that one day they bought some walnuts, and as they could not agree how to divide them, they came to the Khoja and begged him to do it for them.

The Khoja said, "Do you wish me to divide them as God would do it, or as man?"

The children all answered in the innocence of their hearts, "As God would do it."

The Khoja then took two handfuls and began to distribute them. To some he gave many, to some he gave only one, and to others he gave nothing at all.

Of course they could not understand this and asked him why he did it.

"My young friends," said he, "the reason is quite plain. Supposing that I were to divide you all up into groups as I have done with the walnuts. Look at that boy over there. His father, Bedi-ud-din Effendi, is a very rich man, one of the notables of Aksehir, has a good wife and several fine children. Now look at Sinan-ud-din, that poor little mite who stands next to him. His father is very poor, and they are not happy at home. The man himself is a cripple and will never be able to do much work, and his wife is ill. Look again at Hasham-ud-din standing opposite to him. His family is in different circumstances from either of these. In fact, not one
of you is the same as the other and your Khoja least of all.

"There are no bounds to the goodness of God. He has given his servants a mind to think; He has shown them what is good and what is evil, what is wholesome and what is harmful. He has showered them with every grace to enable them to make a right use of their brains, their senses and bodily powers. He who does not know how to make a right use of them will get nothing. Hence the difference in the way God distributes His gifts."

An Impious Petition

The Khoja had to receive some money from a man who lived a long way off. Being hard up, he went to him and demanded payment, but the man answered that he had not a copper coin in the house.

The Khoja came away disgusted, and as he trudged along the road became very hungry. Suddenly he came upon a baker's shop, where he saw beautiful brown loaves fresh from the oven.

His hunger made him forget himself. He caught hold of a loaf on the edge of the counter and carried it off to a willow tree down the road. He sat there in the shade and looked up to Heaven. "O Lord," he said, "Thou knowest that I am hungry and have not a penny in my pocket, and that I have money to receive from Ahmed Ago. Thou art Omniscient, Almighty! Please pay the baker two piastres for the bread on account of what Ahmed owes me."

Having said this prayer, he proceeded to devour the bread.

A Dissertation on Physical Phenomena

A FOREIGN professor came to Akshir and approached Tamerlane with a request that he might be permitted to hold a public enquiry as to certain questions which he wished to propound. "If," said he, speaking through an interpreter, "you have learned doctors, discreet and skilful in debate, let us have a meeting for the purpose."

Tamerlane called the notables together and said, "A foreign professor has come to your country and he wishes to hold a public