enough to split marble, and as to fire, the mere idea of it is out of the question. So think it well over before you decide, for however brave a man may be, it is not everyone who can stand it. Remember that you cannot get under shelter for a while and then come back to the place, because the houses of Hassan and Mehemet Effendi look upon the Square and their women-folk will be watching you until morning."

The more the man talked the angrier the Khoja became.

"I don't care a rap if a whole regiment of soldiers keep watch," said he, "I am a man of my word and I'll do it. So that is enough!"

Then one of them said with a mocking smile, "What a brave hero! So you really think you can? On one side of the place where you have to stand is the Cemetery. Just think of that! Don't come afterwards and say we persuaded you! Say good-bye to your wife and children. If anyone owes you any money, or if you have any money put away anywhere, tell me. If you owe any money, ask Ahmed Effendi to see to it. His back is broad enough to bear it."

A WAGER: THE KHOJA'S VIGIL

"I should be a silly ass to do anything of the kind," said the Khoja. "I don't care a rap. I have quite made up my mind. I'll let you see that the Khoja has a frame of steel and a heart of marble. I am accustomed to roughing it. Many is the time I have slept in as hard a frost out on the road or up the mountain pass. Thank God! there is nothing to fear—no wolves and no brigands. As for the silent dead, I am on better terms with them than anyone. I daresay I have slept in a graveyard quite a thousand times. As for saying good-bye and making my will, that is all nonsense. I am not leaving anyone behind to inherit my goods or anything undone, to be done tomorrow; and as for money, you all know that I do not care about it. With me it goes like water."

Seeing that they could not dissuade him, they chose the place in the Square where he was to stand, and left him.

In the morning the Khoja met them at the Mosque as fit as a fiddle and full of fun. They asked him how he had passed the time, and he told the story in the following words:

"Everything was white with snow. There
was not a sound save the howling of the tempest, not a movement save the swaying of the trees and the crash they made as they fell one upon the other. About a mile off, somewhere—I could not quite make out where—the light of a candle could be seen."

When he said this one of them called out, "That won't do! We agreed that there was to be nothing like fire up there, but you were warming yourself all the time by the light of that candle. You have not kept the agreement!"

The others at once backed him up and decided that as the Khoja had broken the agreement he must give the dinner.

In vain he protested that their claim was absurd. They stifled his voice and would not hear a word, so that he saw it was useless to resist.

On the appointed night all the guests arrived, evening prayers were said, and they sat down to beguile the time with conversation. Two o'clock struck, but there was no sign of dinner.

They became impatient and said to the Khoja, "Never mind waiting until it is quite cooked. Bring it in as it is."

"I cannot possibly do that," said the Khoja. "Have a little patience."

They made two or three more attempts to persuade him, but when three o'clock came the guests began to press him so rudely that he said, "All right!" and left the room, as they thought to bring it in. They waited a while longer, but as he did not come back they said, "The rascal is having a game with us. Let us see what he is up to."

They went into the kitchen to look for him, but there was not a sign of the Khoja or anything to eat. Then they went out into the yard and saw that the Khoja had hung an enormous cauldron to a tree and put a candle under it while he sat looking on with a grin on his face.

"Whatever do you mean?" they cried. "This is beyond a joke!"

"Well," said the Khoja, "you see I am cooking your dinner!"

"Good heavens!" they answered, "you hang a cauldron up in the open air and light a candle under it! Do you possibly imagine that a pot could boil with only a candle or even a torch under it—and at such a distance?"
TALES OF NASR-ED-DIN KHOJA

"Really!" said he, "how soon you have forgotten! Only three days ago did you not all decide that I had been warming myself by the light of a candle a mile off? Compared with that I should say this gives out more heat than a Turkish bath. If it be possible to warm oneself by the light of a candle one mile away, cannot a candle give out enough heat to warm a cauldron only a few feet away?"

It is said that after the Khoja had paid them out by playing them this trick he gave them dinner and they spent a merry evening together.

A Safe Hiding-place for Money

NASR-ED-DIN KHOJA had a sum of money, and one day when there was no one in the house he dug a hole and buried it. He had gone as far as the door when he looked back at the place and said, "If I were a burglar I should find it at once," so he removed it and buried it in another spot. Then he stepped back and examined this also, found that it was not suitable, and hid the money in another place. And yet he was not easy in his mind.

Just in front of the house there was a mound. The Khoja went into his garden, cut a stake, tied the bag of money to the end of it, then went to the top of the mound and drove the stake in. Then he came down and had a look.

At last he felt satisfied. He said to himself, "Man is not a bird that he should be able to fly up there. What a capital place for it!" and so saying, he went away.

A thief had been watching the Khoja, and no sooner had he gone than he climbed up the mound, pulled out the stake, and took the money. Then he spread some cow dung on the top and put it back in its place.

After a while the Khoja wanted some money. He went up to the stake to look for it, and found that the bag had disappeared but that there was some cow dung on the top.

He said to himself in utter amazement, "Well, I never! I said no man could climb up there, but how has a cow managed to get to the top? What a strange affair!" said he, shaking his head.
**TALES OF NASR-ED-DIN KHOJA**

**Tamerlane's Title**

TAMERLANE said to him, "You know, Khoja, that all the Caliphs of the Abbasides* line had characteristic titles. One was called 'Moaffik-billah,' another 'Mota-wakkil al-Allah,' another 'Motassen-billah.' If I had been one of them I wonder what would have been mine?"

The Khoja replied at once, "O Lord of the world! there is no doubt about you. Your title would have been 'Naouz-billah'" ("God save us from this man!").

**When a Man Marries his Troubles Begin**

THE Khoja was having a house built and he ordered the carpenter to put the floors on the ceilings and the ceilings on the floors.

The man asked him why, and he said, "I

*Abbasides. A dynasty of Caliphs descended from El Abbas, son of Abu-l-Muttalib, paternal uncle of Mohammed. He overthrew the Omayyad Caliph of Damascus, Merwan II, and established the dynasty of Bagdad.

“RAIN COMES FROM GOD”

am going to be married. When a man marries his troubles begin. Everything is soon upside down. Far better do it now than have double expense later on."

“Rain comes from God”

ONE rainy day the Khoja was sitting indoors, and as he looked down the street he saw one of his neighbours pass by in a great hurry for fear of getting wet, and asked him why he was running. He said he was trying to escape from the rain as he did not wish to get wet.

"Oh fie! For shame!" said he. "Rain comes from God! The idea of running away from it! I am ashamed and sorry to hear this. Whatever is the world coming to!"

The poor man went on his way, but evidently felt ashamed of himself, for he began to walk slowly. The Khoja watched him go with a cynical smile on his face, for of course the man reached home wet through.

By a strange coincidence the same man was looking out of his window one rainy day.
and saw the Khoja run past, although only one or two drops had fallen. He had tucked up his skirts and was running like greased lightning.

"Hullo, Khoja," he cried, "have you forgotten the little reminder you gave me the other day? The idea of running away from God's rain!"

The Khoja paused for a moment and said, "I am running because I don't want to tread God's rain under foot," and he rushed into his house, slamming the door behind him.

One Pomegranate for Each Question Answered

A MOLLAH met a literary gentleman and asked him to explain certain questions. He told him that the only person who could do so was Nasr-ed-din Khoja of Aksehir.

It happened that the Mollah had to pass by Aksehir on his journey, and that outside the town he came upon a man dressed in a turban, wearing sandals and driving a plough. It turned out to be the Khoja himself. He went up to him, salamed, and said he had

ONE POMEGRANATE FOR EACH QUESTION

some difficult questions which he wished to ask him, and was proceeding to do so when the Khoja saw that he had some very fine pomegranates in a handkerchief.

"Stop!" said he, "I will answer your questions if you give me those pomegranates."

For each answer he took one pomegranate until there were none left.

"There is just one more question," said the Mollah.

"Not if I know it!" said the Khoja; "you have no pomegranates left," and so saying he went back to his plough.

The Khoja and Hamed go Wolf-hunting

ONe day he went to hunt the wolf and took with him his pupil Hamed.

The latter was very keen on getting a young wolf and made his way into the den. The wolf happened to be outside and was just rushing in when the Khoja caught hold of his tail and held tight.

The wolf began to struggle, and Hamed, who did not know what was going on outside, but felt the dust going into his eyes, cried
TALES OF NASR-ED-DIN KHOJA

out, "What are you making so much dust for, Khoja?"
He answered, "If once the wolf gets his tail free, you will see not only dust—you will see Hell!"

Inshallah! (Please God)

ONE night the Khoja was chatting with his wife and said, "To-morrow, if the weather is wet I mean to go out cutting wood, but if fine I shall go ploughing."
"Say Inshallah! (please God) when you talk like that," said she.
"Not at all," said he; "I shall certainly do one or the other."
As he was leaving the town next morning he met a troop of soldiers. One of them called to him, "Gaffer, come here. Show us the road to Carabash."
The Khoja answered roughly, "I don't know it."
"Hah!" they cried, "you impudent fellow!" and before the Khoja could find time to speak they began to beat him. "We'll show you what's what! Now step out and show us the way!" and they drove him along

INSHALLAH! (PLEASE GOD)

as he ran barefoot in front of them. It rained and he was quite wet when he brought them to the village.
He got back home at midnight, sick, footsore, almost half dead.
When he began to knock at the door his wife called out, "Who is there?"
He answered, "Oh! little wife, it is I, Inshallah" (Please God).

Tamerlane's Dream

TAMERLANE dreamt that he had killed a man who treated him with disrespect.
No sooner did the Khoja hear of it than he packed up his traps and fled to the village. The people said to him, "Khoja, you are the only man who can manage him. Whatever you do or say he never gets angry. We cannot do without you. Why did you leave him and come away?"
The Khoja answered, "By God's grace I am able to cope with any situation when he is awake. If I cannot get what I want, I at least act as a check upon him; but when he is dreaming I dare not interfere. I should get more than I bargained for."
TALES OF NASR-ED-DIN KHOJA

Conscience-money

WHEN the Khoja was a student a rich man gave him five hundred piastres with a request that he would pray for him at the end of each "Namaz."*

The Khoja immediately took out fifty piastres and handed them back saying, "Sir, the nights are short and I sit up gossiping so late that (God forgive me!) I cannot get up in time for morning prayers, so I take an extra snooze instead. Consequently I am ashamed to take pay for them."

Who shall feed the Donkey?

THE Khoja grew tired of feeding the donkey and told his wife that in future she must look after it. This she refused to do, and there was such constant wrangling over the matter that at last they agreed to hold their tongues, and that the first one who spoke should feed it.

The Khoja retired to a corner of the room and for hours together kept an obstinate silence. His wife was so annoyed that she put on her veil and went next door.

Towards sunset she was sitting there telling her neighbour all about it. "He is such an obstinate fellow," she said, "that he will die of hunger. What do you say? How would it be if we sent him some soup?"

They decided to do so, and calling a boy sent him round to the Khoja with a basinful.

It happened that when the Khoja's wife left him to go next door a burglar broke into the house and proceeded to make a clean sweep of everything. He went into the room where the Khoja was sitting and saw that he took not the slightest notice of the noise he was making. At first he felt rather scared, but when he saw that the Khoja paid no attention, making no answer when he spoke to him, but sat there like a graven image, he said to himself, "He must have had a stroke of paralysis!" and without more ado, proceeded to gather up everything useful that he could lay hands on.

The burglar was so tickled at the behaviour of the Khoja that he said to himself, "Let me pull his turban off his head and see if that won't make him speak!" He did so,
but the Khoja did not stir, so he put the things on his back and went off.

Just after he left, the boy came, and seeing the image sitting in the corner, said, “They have sent you some soup, sir.”

The Khoja at once tried in dumb-show to make the boy understand that the house had been robbed, that even his turban had been carried off, and that his wife ought to come back at once. He made a hissing noise with his mouth, and, pointing to his head, passed his hand round it three times.

The boy understood by this that he was to turn the basin three times round and then clap it on to the Khoja’s head. He did so, and of course the poor man was drenched. The soup and bits of meat made a horrible mess all over his face, going into his eyes, hair, and beard.

The Khoja, however, would not speak nor stir.

The boy went back, and in answer to questions told them what he had seen—that the doors, cupboards, and boxes were all open, and things all lying about in confusion—and he also told them what he had done with the soup.

WHO SHALL FEED THE DONKEY?

The Khoja’s wife realised that something very serious had happened and at once ran home.

When she saw the damage which had been done she rushed up to the image who sat there grinning in the corner and cried out passionately, “What is the meaning of all this, Khoja?”

“Ha! ha!” said he, “go off and feed the donkey. It was your obstinacy which was the cause of all this.”

Question of Precedence at Public Prayers

THE Khoja visited a Koordish tribe to perform the office of Imam during the fast of Ramazan.

When conducting public prayer his place was of course in the very front of all; but one day the sons of the Koordish Bey came to him and said:

“Khoja, of course we have no wish to hurt your feelings by making you hold your tongue, but you really go too far. Not once, but five times or more you have dared to take precedence of our father, the Bey. One

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would say you think we are nobody, but our
father has five thousand men-at-arms ready
to do his will at a moment’s notice, and you
presume to take precedence of such a mighty
man as that! Be careful! Don’t think
that because he has not yet said anything
about it, he never will. The time may come
when he will get angry, and who then can
save you from his clutches ? ”

They gave it him hot and strong.

Now, although the Khoja still tried to
impress upon them the necessity for public
prayer, he got such repeated warnings
from the young princes that at last he
said to himself, “I must see what is to
be done.”

The matter worried him so much that he
decided to speak to the Bey on the subject
and so put a stop to the interference of his
sons.

In the evening he broke the fast with the
Bey, and after they had taken a glass of
mastic together the Khoja thought it a
good opportunity to speak.

“Sir,” said he, “the young princes—no
doubt with the object of guarding your
honour, but also because they are ignorant of

the obligations of the Sacred Law——” and
then stopped short, for the Bey frowned and
said:

“What is it, Khoja? Is it about the
meeting for public prayer?”

The wretched Khoja now repented a
thousand times over that he had ever raised
the question. He shrank into himself and
said, “Yes, sir; but I did not wish to make a
complaint—God forbid! I only mentioned
it by way of conversation.”

“Khoja,” said the Bey, “they had no
business to have spoken to you about it, but
—mind you, I say this because I like you—
you take great liberties with me.”

When the Khoja, who had counted on the
Bey’s protection with the greatest confidence,
found that he was treated in this high-handed
fashion, he made up his mind that as soon as
the fast was over he would take his fees and
clear out as soon as possible. He answered
however, “You are quite right, sir; but
I venture to submit that one should never
think of where a man stands first, but where
he stands last. Shall I not, when the fast is
over, stand before you as a suppliant? Will
you not stand before me, the poor Khoja, as
the mighty Koordish Bey, while I shall stand alone at the back of the crowd?"

The Bey paused awhile in thought; then his brow cleared, and he said to the Khoja with a smile, "Ah! Khoja, you see that we are a people who live far from the haunts of civilization. How can we grasp such subtle logic as this?"

Tamerlane and the Figs

TAMERLANE, after defeating Sultan Bayazid at the great battle of Angora, spent some time at Akshehir, where he was on very friendly terms with Nasr-ed-din Khoja. It was due to the Khoja’s influence that the people of Akshehir were saved from massacre, and he often intervened to prevent harsh measures being taken against them. This, however, is by the way. I want to speak of some of the little jokes that passed between them.

I remember especially that one day the Khoja put three plums on a tray and was taking them as a present to Tamerlane when, as he went along the road, the plums kept falling off.

The Khoja kept on saying, "Behave yourselves. Stop playing, or I will eat you! However they would not listen, but went on rolling and toppling over. At last the Khoja got in a rage and ate two of them. The other he presented to Tamerlane, who was very pleased and gave him a good present in return.

A few days after the Khoja put some beetroot into a basket and was taking them to Tamerlane when he met a man on the road who asked what he had in the basket.

"A present for the Ameer," said he—"a basket of beetroot."

"I think," said the man, "he will be better pleased if you give him some figs."

So the Khoja got some fine figs and presented them to the Ameer, who ordered his servants to pelt him with them.

As the figs broke on his head and stuck to his face the Khoja kept muttering, "Thank the Lord! I shall know in future how wise it is to take the advice of another man."

When Tamerlane heard him he asked what he was giving thanks for.

"Well, your Majesty," said he, "I was bringing you some beetroot, but I met a man"
on the road who recommended me to bring these figs. I thank God because if I had brought the beetroot I really cannot think what would have become of me. I should have had my head broken, my eyes knocked out, and have been smashed to bits!"

_The Heart of a Tyrant_

A CERTAIN Tyrant, while stopping at Akshahir, went for an inspection to a village where his soldiers were quartered and stayed away one week. When he came back the Khoja called upon him and said, "Well, how did you get on? Did you enjoy yourself?"

"Oh, yes," he answered, "I had a most enjoyable time. It happened that on the Monday a fire broke out in the village. I saw it all. There were some lives lost. Fancy! One man lost his mother-in-law, and he really seemed to be sorry.

"On Tuesday a mad dog bit two men. They burnt them with hot irons to prevent their going mad also. They bellowed like buffaloes."
THE HEART OF A TYRANT

"On Wednesday there was a flood. A lot of houses fell. The water was covered with furniture and odd things—among them a cradle with a child in it, floating on the water like a boat. The flood carried off cows, calves, and camels. That kept me busy until the evening.

"On Thursday a bull broke loose. He wounded five or six people, knocked out the eye of one man and ripped open the belly of another. They told me that he was not expected to live.

"On Friday a villager in a fit of frenzy murdered his own children. That made me very angry. I had the rascal put to death by torture. That kept me busy till quite late.

"On Saturday a very large old house suddenly fell with a crash. Men, women, and children lay buried under the ruins. One could hear their screams all over the village. I had the rubbish cleared away a bit; but as the house was only built of earth, the bits of furniture quite useless, and the wounded were quite horrible to look at, I thought it better not to save them, and so they perished. Most of them died uttering piercing cries.

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"On Sunday a woman hanged herself on a plum tree. We went to see that too. She left one little girl in the cradle.

"In short, every day of the week we had something to amuse us."

The poor Khoja, utterly unnerved at hearing these stories, and feeling quite faint, said with a voice quivering with indignation, "Thank God you came back soon! If you had stayed there another week, thanks to you, not one stone would have remained upon another."

"To-morrow may be the Judgment Day"

THE Khoja had a pretty little lamb which he would never let go out of his sight and he fed it with the greatest care. Its gambols were a constant source of amusement to him. Some of his friends had cast their eyes upon the lamb and made up their mind that by hook or by crook they would get it from the Khoja and eat it.

One of them came and said, "Khoja, the end of the world is coming. It may be today or to-morrow. If so, what will you do with that lamb? Bring it along and let us eat it."

The Khoja took no notice, and then another friend came and tried the same game, but the Khoja sent him about his business. However, they kept on bothering him until he got sick of it, and agreed to give them a picnic in the country on the following day. The lamb was killed and the fire lighted and the Khoja began to turn the spit. His friends took off their cloaks and vests and handed them to the Khoja to take care of them while they went off in different directions to play games.

The Khoja, who had the painful duty of roasting his pet lamb, seized the opportunity and threw all their clothes into the fire. After a while they came back from their sports, hungry for dinner, but what did they see—all their clothes burnt to ashes!

When they rushed up to the Khoja, yelling out, "Who did this?" he answered, "Why! my lads, what a fuss you are making! To-morrow may be the end of the world. What will you do with clothes then?"

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The Khoja's Horse is "Left-footed"

The Khoja was once travelling with the caravan. Early in the morning everyone began to get on their horses in a hurry.

The servants brought the Khoja's animal up to the horse-block, and he, putting his right foot into the stirrup, swung himself up and of course landed on the horse with his face to the tail.

"Oh, you clumsy man!" they cried, "you got up the wrong way!"

"Not at all!" answered he. "It was the horse. It is left-footed!"

The Khoja tossed by an Ox

The Khoja had an ox—a big, powerful brute with a pair of horns that moved like springs. Whenever he came back from harvesting, he would feel a longing desire to take a ride on those horns.

"Oh!" said he, "if only I might sit there and grasp them with my two hands, and away!"

This became a fixed idea with him.

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The Khoja Tossed by an Ox

One day he saw the ox asleep in the yard and quietly sat down on its forehead, saying to himself, "What a capital opportunity!"

The ox showed a nasty temper, lifted the Khoja and tossed him to the ground. He rolled over on his head and lay senseless.

His wife came up, and seeing him lying there, thought he was dead and began to cry. After a while he opened his eyes, and seeing that his wife was crying, said, "Don't cry, little wife. Of course I have had rather a bad time of it; but after all, I got what I wanted."

An Embarrassing Question

The Khoja had two wives. One day they came in together and began to tease him, saying, "Which of us do you love best?"

The unhappy man felt very much embarrassed, and though he said, "I love you both" and tried to show that he was impartial, they were not content, but continued to press for an answer.

At last the younger of the two said, "Now, suppose that both of us were in a boat on the Akshehir lake and that as we were approach-
ing the shore it capsized and we both fell in. Suppose you were standing on the shore, which of us two would you save first?"

The Khoja was as startled as if the thing had really happened and, quite involuntarily, turned to his old wife, saying, "I think you know how to swim a little bit, don't you?"

He mourns for his Donkey—not for his Wife

The Khoja's wife died, but he showed not the slightest sign of grief. Some time afterwards his donkey died, and his friends noticed that he was terribly distressed.

Some of them asked him the reason, saying, "You did not mourn like this when your wife died; but it is ten days since you lost the donkey, and you are still going about with a clouded brow."

"Ah, yes!" said he. "When my wife died, the neighbours came to condole with me, saying, 'Don't fret, Khoja! We will find you another, far better than she was'; but when the donkey died, no one came to give me comfort like that. Have I not good reason to grieve?"

The Khoja slaps the Judge in Court

The Khoja slaps the Judge in Court

A MAN hit the Khoja a blow on the back, and when he turned round sharp to see who it was, the man said, "I beg your pardon, I thought you were one of my pals."

The Khoja collared hold of him, dragged him into Court, and made a complaint before the Cadi.

It appeared, however, that the man was the Cadi's friend. He received a summons to attend on a certain day, and when he came into Court the Cadi turned to the Khoja and said, "Give him a slap too, and so you will be quits."

But as the Khoja was dissatisfied, the Cadi said, "Then the man must pay a fine of one piastre. Off you go," said he. "Bring the money here, and we will pay it to the Khoja as compensation."

The man went off, and the Khoja waited for hours, until he was convinced that the Cadi had allowed him to escape.

He watched for an opportunity, and when he saw that the Cadi was deep in thought, gave him a slap, saying, "Your Honour, I
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cannot wait any longer. Take that, and collect the fine of one piastre from the man,”
and off he went.

Measuring the Earth

ONE day some people met him and said,
“Come, Khoja, you know a thing or
two. We are very much puzzled to know
the size of the earth—how many feet or
yards it measures.”

Just then a funeral passed by, and the
Khoja pointed to the coffin, saying, “The
man who can answer your question lies there.
Ask him, for he has just taken its measure.”

A Way to make the Donkey Go

THE Khoja passed by the place where the
fishermen were caulking their boats. He
asked them why they had lighted a fire and
what they were doing to the boats.

“Well, you see,” said they, “we burn the
bottom of the boat a little bit and then we
rub in the tar. That makes the boat sail
fast.”

A WAY TO MAKE THE DONKEY GO

“Ho! ho!” said the Khoja to himself,
and directly he got home he took out the
donkey, put hobbles on its feet, and fastened
some brushwood on to its tail. No sooner
had he set light to it than the donkey broke
his hobbles and bolted.

“Ha! ha!” cried the Khoja. “There’s
a donkey for you! Before I had time to rub
in the tar, off he goes!”

The Khoja and the Fox

ONCE while the Khoja was a student he
made a tour of the villages in search of
employment as Imam during the Fast. At
every village he met with a polite refusal.
“How do you do?” they said. “So glad
to see you, but sorry we have already
engaged our Imam.”

After calling at five or six villages he came
to one which had been much harassed by the
depredations of a fox. There was not a
chicken or turkey left in the place, and it
had even carried off the villagers’ boots and
shoes—in short, the damage was inconceiv-
able.
At last they laid a trap and, after no end of trouble, caught it.
When the Khoja arrived, the villagers were holding a meeting to discuss the particular tortures by which they would put the fox to death.
As he came up to them they said, “Oh, what damage that cursed brute has done! But, thank Goodness, we have caught it and we are now talking of taking our revenge by putting it to exquisite torture.”
“No! no!” said the Khoja; “you leave that to me.”
“Well, well,” they said to each other, “he must be a man of some experience—far more so than we are.”

So they stepped aside and began to watch the Khoja, who at once proceeded to take off his cloak and undo his belt, with which he tied the cloak fast round the fox’s belly. Then taking his turban, he tied it tight on the fox’s head and let it go.
“Whatever have you done?” cried the villagers as they made a dash to try to catch the fox again.

But the Khoja stopped them, saying, “You listen to me! I have inflicted upon him a torture more horrible than any of you can conceive. Whatever village he goes to dressed like that, they will say, ‘We have nothing for you,’ and drive him away.”

The Khoja is carried off to the Mortuary

The Khoja left home early one morning for one of the villages, where he had some business to look after.
It happened that a public entertainment had been arranged for that evening, and as the Khoja’s presence was indispensable, because he was such good company, some young fellows made a plan to prevent him going.

The Khoja got all ready for the journey and started off to join the caravan, but on the way he was held up by these people, who demanded where he was going.

“I am off to the village of Heritan for a few days on business,” said he.

“Poor wretch!” they answered. “It is your last journey in this world. You are a dead man, and it is our duty to see that you are properly buried. Some of us look up to you as our Khoja, some of us are your
relatives, others are old cronies of yours, but all of us are your friends.”

So saying they caught hold of him and dragged him off to the Mosque.

The Khoja, who was always frightened out of his wits at the very thought of death, began to struggle and cry,

“Oh, let me be! Drop this stupid joke. If you carry it any further it will become sober earnest and I shall indeed die. I really have important business at the village, so let me go on and join the others. You know that if I don’t catch them up I cannot go alone.”

However, they paid no heed to his entreaties and stifled his cries. At last he lost all power of speech. They bundled him into a coffin and were just going to close the lid when they caught sight of one of their friends going off in another direction. They at once called to him. “Hullo! there. The Khoja is dead. You must come with us to the funeral.”

The man said he was busy, but they insisted.

While they were wrangling about it the Khoja raised his head and said to the man,

KHOJA IS CARRIED OFF TO THE MORTUARY

“It is absurd for you to struggle. My business was much more urgent than yours, but what is to be done? I am dead. The people are all waiting for me in the Mosque, and you—well, you must go too. You cannot help yourself.”

He dreams that he is being forced to marry again

The Khoja dreamt that the ladies of the parish came and were standing round him trying to persuade him to marry a woman, and saying, “She is just the one to suit you!”

He woke up blushing and gave his wife a dig in the ribs to wake her. “Get up, you lazy thing!” said he. “Fancy lying there and taking no notice. Don’t you see that the ladies of the parish are all here trying to marry me by force? You will be getting a partner. Go and drive them away. If you don’t, you’ll only have yourself to blame. Don’t say then I didn’t warn you! Remember that the old wife always has to take a back seat!”

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Mistaken Identity—A Confusion of Thoughts

ONE day a man came up to the Khoja and stood gossiping for a long time. As he was going off the Khoja said, “Excuse me. I do not think I know you. Who are you?”

“Then why,” asked the man, “have you been talking to me all this time as if I were an old acquaintance?”

“I noticed,” answered the Khoja, “that both your cap and your cloak were like mine, so I thought that you must be myself.”

The Khoja as a Lad Perverse and Intractable

WHEN the Khoja was a lad he always did exactly the opposite of what his father told him to do. His father therefore found that his best plan was to tell him to do just what he did not wish him to do.

They were returning from the mill one day and had to cross a stream. There was a bridge, but it was out of repair and unsafe for animals to pass.

“I am going across by the bridge, my lad,” cried his father, “but mind, you are not to take the donkey across the ford.”

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KHOJA AS A LAD PERVERSE, INTRACTABLE

Of course young Nasr-ed-Din at once began to drive the donkey across, but his father could see from the bridge that the sack of flour was all on one side, so he shouted out, “The sack is not hanging over on my side. It is not going to fall into the water. Don’t put it straight, whatever you do. Shove it a little bit more this way!”

Young Nasr-ed-Din shouted, “Father, I have always done exactly the opposite of what you told me to do, but this time I am going to do what you say.” He had scarcely touched the sack before it rolled off into the water.

The Lost Saddle-bag

THE Khoja stopped at a village where he lost his saddle-bag. He at once sent word to the villagers, saying, “If you do not find it and bring it back, I know what I will do.”

As the Khoja was a man of some reputation and not to be trifled with, the villagers were very much alarmed. They had a good search and found it.

One of them, however, was curious to
TALES OF NASR-ED-DIN KHOJA

know what the Khoja would have done if they had not found it.

"If you had not found it?" he answered coolly. "Oh! I have an old rug at home. I would have pulled it to pieces and made another."

Carrying the Blind Men across the River

ONE day the Khoja was sitting on the river-bank when ten blind men came along. They made a bargain with the Khoja that he should carry them over for one para* apiece.

He took them on his back one at a time, but when half-way across he let one of them fall and the flood carried him off.

Then the blind men began to cry out; but the Khoja said, "Noisy fellows! What are you making all this fuss about! I have had quite enough of you. Pay me one para short and have done with it."

* Para. About a quarter of a farthing.

THE FEAST OF TANTALUS

The Date-stones

THE Khoja was eating dates, and his wife noticed that he did not take out the stones.

"It seems to me that you are not taking out the stones," said she.

"Of course not," said he. "When I bought them the greengrocer did not allow for the stones when he weighed the dates. Had he thrown them away, he could not have sold his dates; and as I paid cash down, do you think I am going to throw them into the street? Not I! Whoever told you I was so wasteful? I paid for them, have eaten them and found them very good, so that is enough!"

The Feast of Tantalus

ONE of the notables invited the Khoja to Iftar.* He went to ask him quite early in the day, then took him round from

* Iftar is the breaking of the month's fast on the eve of the Bairam. It is also applied to the breaking of the fast every evening.
one mosque to another until he became desperately hungry.

As they entered the dining-room he saw stuffed turkey, baklawa, and cakes on the sideboard and felt that he could hold out no longer. As they took their places his mouth began to water.

First some excellent tripe soup was served, and the host with great ceremony proceeded to taste it.

"Drat the man!" he cried. "Kiaya! * come here at once! How often have I bid you tell the cook not to put garlic into the soup? Take it away at once!"

The Khoja looked after it wistfully and gently tightened his belt.

Then turning to him his host remarked, "It is quite impossible to make these cooks understand. They will do as they like, whatever you say to them."

A chorus of voices answered, "They will indeed."

At this moment the turkey was put on the table. It was done to a turn and smelt delicious. The stuffing was made of raisins, rice, and pistachios, and there

* Kiaya. Head servant, butler, or major-domo.
was so much of it that it went all over the dish.

The host took a small piece, but he had no sooner done so than he cried out furiously, "Aga, come here! Did I not tell you the other day to see that the rascal does not use spice? Do you do this on purpose? Thirty years you have been in my service and yet you allow this to go on! God pay you out for this! Take it away!"

Out went the turkey, and the poor Khoja heaved a deep sigh as he saw his sheet-anchor disappear.

Then a eunuch brought in the baklawa, but the host scowled at him and said, "You stupid Arab! Do hungry people begin with sweets? Away with it!"

As the whip fell on his shoulders, the poor fellow let the dish fall and bolted from the room.

The Khoja, seeing all these tempting dishes carried out one after the other, took his spoon and catching hold of a dish of pilaff which was on a side-table, began to devour it.

"Hullo! what are you doing there, Khoja?" cried the host.

"Oh! sir," said the Khoja, "do give me a
chance before you condemn it to the same fate as the others. Let me have a little talk with my old friend the Pilaff—ask how he is and find out what he has inside him! Never mind me!”

At this the guests began to roar with laughter. The dishes were then brought in again, they set to work in earnest and made a merry meal.

Spectacles required to see a Dream

ONE night he woke his wife in a great state of excitement. “Quick!” said he—“be quick. Give me my spectacles before I wake up.” She handed them to him, but asked why he was so excited.

“I am having a beautiful dream,” he answered, “but there are one or two things in it I cannot make out very clearly.”

How the Earth may “Turn Turtle”

A MAN asked him, “Why is it that when morning comes some people go off in one direction and others in another?”

A Recipe for Cooking Liver

“Because,” said he, “if they all went in one direction the earth would lose its balance and turn turtle.”

A Recipe for cooking Liver

ONE day the Khoja bought some liver, and as he was carrying it away a friend met him and asked how he meant to cook it.

“Oh! as usual,” answered he.

“No!” said his friend, “there is a very nice way of doing it. Let me describe it to you.”

He did so, but the Khoja said, “I cannot remember all these details. Write down the recipe on a piece of paper and I will cook the liver accordingly.”

His friend wrote it down and handed it to him.

He was proceeding home deep in thought when a hawk pounced down, took the liver out of his hand, and flew off with it.

The Khoja, however, did not seem to mind, for he held out the recipe and called to the hawk, “What is the use of your doing that? You can’t enjoy it, because I have got the recipe here.”
The Khoja's Mother-in-Law Drowned

Some people came to the Khoja and told him that his mother-in-law had been washing the clothes in the river, that her foot slipped, she had fallen in, and her body had not yet been found.

The Khoja went to the spot, waded into the river, and began to search up-stream.

People on the bank called out, “What are you doing, Khoja? Who ever heard of a corpse floating up-stream. Follow the current and look for it down below.”

The Khoja shook his head and said, “Ah! you don’t know how perverse she was. Everything she did was upside-down. No! you let me be. I know by experience all her little ways.”

The Vicious Donkey

The Khoja took his donkey to market and handed it over to the broker for sale.

A customer came forward and, wishing to find out its age, tried to look at its teeth.

The Vicious Donkey

The donkey at once bit him on the forehead and he drew back with an oath.

Then another customer came and tried to lift its tail. He too got a kick in the shins and went off limping and swearing.

The broker now came to him, and said, “It is no use, sir. No one will buy the donkey. It bites and kicks whenever it gets a chance.”

“I know,” said the Khoja. “As a matter of fact I did not bring the donkey here in order to sell him, but to let all good Moslems see and understand what I have to put up with.”

Can a Man bite his own Ear?

When the Khoja was Cadi of Aksehir two men came into Court and one accused the other of having bitten his ear.

The other said, “No, your Honour! He bit his own ear.”

The Khoja said, “Come back later on and I will give you an answer.”

He then crossed over to the harem and went into his private room. “Let me see,” said he, “whether it is possible for a man to
TALES OF NASR-ED-DIN KHOJA

bite his own ear.” He caught hold of his ear and while struggling to bite it fell on his back and hurt his head. He tied it up with a rag and went back to Court.

The parties returned, and the plaintiff, wishing to traverse the claim of the defendant, said, “Your Honour! is it conceivable that a man should bite his own ear?”

“Yes, my lad,” answered the Cadi, “he can! He does! Not only so, but he also falls and breaks his head.”

Driving to Sivri-bissar in his Night-clothes

EARLY one morning the Khoja was told that an ox-cart was just passing the door on its way to his native town, Sivri-bissar. He at once jumped out of bed and sprang into the cart just as he was.

The Khoja was so universally respected that people overlooked his little eccentricities.

When, however, they came near to Sivri-bissar the carter sent a man ahead to tell the people that the Khoja had arrived. They all came out to meet him, but when they saw that he was half naked, they asked him the

reason, and he answered, “I am so fond of you all that in my hurry to get away I quite forgot to put on my clothes”

THE GREENGROCER’S BILL

The Greengrocer’s Bill

THE Khoja was passing the greengrocer’s shop when the man reminded him that he had not paid his bill.

The Khoja wanted to get out of paying, but thought he must satisfy the man somehow or other, so he said, “Show me the account. Let me see how much I owe you.”

While the man was turning the pages of the account-book the Khoja looked over his shoulders.

Anyone could see that in the course of years the man had gained many hundreds of piastres by charging five times more than he should have done. At the end of the account there was an entry against the Khoja’s name of thirty-one piastres.

The Khoja noticed that on the opposite page there was an entry against the Cadi’s name of twenty-six piastres.

He turned to the man and said, “Look here. It seems that I owe you thirty-one

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piastres and the Cadi twenty-six. 'He and I are old friends and don't stand on ceremony with one another. Let us split the difference. Suppose we say that we each owe twenty-six. How much remains? Five! Now you give me the five, and we shall be just right.'

The man seemed to be delighted that the two accounts should be settled in this way and handed the Khoja the five piastres. The Khoja then wished him good morning with a chuckle to himself; but when the man was left alone he began to puzzle over this round-about way of settling an account and could not make head or tail of it.

*Ammonia as a Stimulant*

ONE day the Khoja was going up the mountain when his donkey refused to budge.

Someone said "Buy some ammonia from the chemist and rub it behind. You'll soon see how he will go."

When the Khoja tried it, the donkey began to run in an agony.

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*The Drunken Cadi*

THERE was a Cadi at Sivri-hissar named Bekri.

One day he was lying drunk in his vineyard, his cloak on one side of him and his turban on the other.

The same day our friend the Khoja went out for a walk, accompanied by his pupil Hamed, and finding the Cadi in this condition, the Khoja took up his cloak, put it on, and walked off with it. When the Cadi woke up and missed the cloak, he called the constable and told him to keep a sharp look-out and if he found anyone with it, he was to arrest him and bring him into Court.
TALES OF NASR-ED-DIN KHOJA

The constable saw the Khoja wearing it and immediately arrested him. He brought him in while the Court was sitting, and the Khoja at once began his story.

"Yesterday I went for a walk with Hamed, and we came upon a fellow lying drunk in a vineyard. He had been sick, his turban and cloak were lying about, and I took the cloak and put it on. I have witnesses and plenty of evidence to prove it. Find the owner of the cloak, and I will give it to him."

The Cadi answered, "I wonder who it could be! Some extravagant fellow, I should say, judging by the look of it; but as you have been wearing it, I don't wish to have anything more to do with it."

Young Nasr-ed-Din in Charge of the Door

ONE morning his mother said to young Nasr-ed-Din, "I am going for a walk with our neighbours to the shore of the lake," and she gave him strict injunctions to take charge of the street-door, saying, "Mind, you are not to leave it."

The boy sat down on the doorstep eating some dried apricots which his mother had given him. While he was there, his uncle came from the village, thinking that the boy's mother was at home.

"My lad," said he, "go and tell your mother that your aunt and I are coming this evening," and so saying he left.

Nasr-ed-Din at once took the door off its hinges, put it on his back, and went off to the shore.

His mother saw him, and called out, "My boy, whatever are you doing?"

He answered: "You told me not to leave the door, but Uncle told me to tell you that he and Aunt are coming this evening. What else could I do to please you both?"

The Khoja makes Game of the Blind Men

ONE day some blind men were sitting on a bench in front of a cafe when the Khoja passed by.

As he did so he rattled the coins in his money-bag, saying, "Here! Catch hold and divide them between you!" but as he had not given them anything he waited to see what would happen.