

and everybody appeared at it again, citizens and all. And the king, seeing that the dependent had entered the assembly, called him as before, and made him sit near him. And after making him again recite that very same *Áryá* verse, being pleased, he gave him that very same lemon which he had given him before. And all there thought with astonishment—"Ah! this is the second time that our master is pleased with him without his gaining by it." And the dependent, in despondency, took the lemon in his hand, and thinking that the king's good will had again been barren of results, went out. At that very moment a certain official met him, who was about to enter that assembly, wishing to see the king. He, when he saw that lemon, took a fancy to it, and regarding the omen, procured it from the dependent by giving him a pair of garments. And entering the king's court, he fell at the feet of the sovereign, and first gave him the lemon, and then another present of his own. And when the king recognized the fruit, he asked the official where he got it, and he replied, "From the dependent." And the king, thinking in his heart that Fortune would not even now give the dependent a sight of her, was exceedingly sad. And he rose up from the assembly with that lemon, and the dependent went to the market with the pair of garments he had got. And by selling one garment he procured meat and drink, and tearing the other in half he made two of it. Then on the third day also the king held a general assembly, and all the subjects entered, as before, and when the dependent entered, the king gave him the same lemon again, after calling him and making him recite the *Áryá* verse. Then all were astonished, and the dependent went out, and gave that lemon to the king's favorite. And she, like a moving creeper of the tree of the king's regard, gave him gold, which was, so to speak, the flower, the harbinger of the fruit. The dependent sold it, and enjoyed himself that day, and the king's mistress went into his presence. And she gave him that lemon, which was large and fine, and he, recognizing it, asked her whence she procured it. Then she said, "The dependent gave it me." Hearing that, the

king thought, "Fortune has not yet looked favorably upon him; his merit in a former life must have been slight, since he does not know that my favor is never barren of results." Thus verily the king reflected, and he took that lemon, and put it away safely, and rose up and performed the duties of the day. And on the fourth day the king held an assembly in the same way, and it was filled with all his subjects, feudatories, ministers and all. And the dependent came there again, and again the king made him sit in front of him, and when he bowed before him, the king made him recite the *Áryá* verse; and gave him the lemon, and when the dependent had half got hold of it, he suddenly let it go, and the lemon fell on the ground and broke in half. And as the joining of the lemon, which kept it together, was broken, there rolled out of it many valuable jewels, illuminating that place of assembly. All the people, when they saw it, said, "Ah! we were deluded and mistaken, as we did not know the real state of the case, but such is the nature of the king's favor." When the king heard that, he said, "By this artifice I endeavored to ascertain, whether Fortune would now look on him or not. But for three days his guilt was not effaced; now it is effaced, and for that reason Fortune has now granted him a sight of herself." After the king had said this, he gave the dependent those jewels, and also villages, elephants, horses and gold, and made him a feudal chief. And he rose up from that assembly, in which the people applauded, and went to bathe; and that dependent too, having obtained his ends, went to his own dwelling.

The Cunning Crone

From the Arabic

THERE came one day an old woman to the stuff-bazar, with a casket of mighty fine workmanship, containing trinkets, and she was accompanied by a young baggage.

The crone sat down at the shop of a draper and giving him to know that the girl was of the household of the Prefect of Police of the city, took of him, on credit, stuffs to the value of a thousand dinars and deposited with him the casket as security. She opened the casket and showed him that which was therein and he found it full of trinkets of price; so he trusted her with the goods and she farewelled him and carrying the stuffs to the girl who was with her, went her way. Then the old woman was absent from him a great while, and when her absence was prolonged, the draper despaired of her; so he went up to the Prefect's house and asked anent the woman of his household who had taken his stuffs on credit; but could obtain no tidings of her nor happen on any trace of her. Then he brought out the casket of jewelry and showed it to experts, who told him that the trinkets were gilt and that their worth was but an hundred dirhams. When he heard this, he was sore concerned thereat and presenting himself before the Deputy of the Sultan made his complaint to him; whereupon the official knew that a sleight had been served upon him and that the sons of Adam had cozened him and conquered him and cribbed his stuffs. Now the magistrate in question was a man of experience and judgment, well versed in affairs; so he said to the draper, "Remove somewhat from thy shop, including the casket, and to-morrow morning break the lock and cry out and come to me and complain that they have plundered all thy shop. Also mind thou call upon Allah for aid and wail aloud and acquaint the people, so that a world of folk may flock to thee and sight the breach of the lock and that which is missing from thy shop: and on this wise display it to everyone who presenteth himself that the news may be noised abroad, and tell them that thy chief concern is for a casket of great value, deposited with thee by a great man of the town and that thou standest in fear of him. But be thou not afraid and still say ever and anon in thy saying: My casket was the casket of Such-an-one, and I fear him and dare not bespeak him; but you, O company and all ye who are present, I call you to witness of this for me. And

if there be with thee more than this saying, say it; and the old woman will assuredly come to thee." The draper answered with, "To hear is to obey," and going forth from the Deputy's presence, betook himself to his shop and brought out thence the casket and merchandise making a great display, which he removed to his house. At break of day he arose and going to his shop, broke the lock and shouted and shrieked and called on Allah for aid, till each and every of the folk assembled about him and all who were in the city were present, whereupon he cried out to them, saying even as the Prefect had bidden him; and this was bruited abroad. Then he made for the Prefecture and presenting himself before the Chief of Police, cried out and complained and made a show of distraction. After three days, the old woman came to him and bringing him the thousand dinars, the price of the stuffs, demanded the casket. When he saw her, he seized her and carried her to the Prefect of the city; and when she came before the Kazi, he said to her, "Woe to thee, O Sataness; did not thy first deed suffice thee, but thou must come a second time?" She replied, "I am of those who seek their plunder in the cities, and we foregather every month; and yesterday we foregathered." He asked her, "Canst thou cause me to catch them?" and she answered, "Yes; but, an thou wait till to-morrow, they will have dispersed; so I will deliver them to thee to-night." The Emir said to her, "Go"; and said she, "Send with me one who shall go with me to them and obey me in whatso I shall say to him, and all that I bid him he shall not gainsay and therein conform to my way." Accordingly, he gave her a company of men and she took them and bringing them to a certain door, said to them, "Stand ye here, at this door, and whoso cometh out to you, seize him; and I will come out to you last of all." "Hearing and obeying," answered they and stood at the door, whilst the crone went in. They waited a whole hour, even as the Sultan's deputy had bidden them, but none came out to them and their standing waxed longsome, and when they were weary of waiting, they went up to the door and smote upon it a heavy blow and a violent,

so that they came nigh to break the wooden bolt. Then one of them entered and was absent a long while, but found naught; so he returned to his comrades and said to them, "This is the door of a dark passage, leading to such a thoroughfare; and indeed she laughed at you and left you and went away." When they heard his words, they returned to the Emir and acquainted him with the case, whereby he knew that the old woman was a cunning craft-mistress and that she had mocked at them and cozened them and put a cheat on them, to save herself. Witness, then, the wiles of this woman and that which she contrived of guile, for all her lack of foresight in presenting herself a second time to the draper and not suspecting that his conduct was but a sleight; yet, when she found herself hard upon calamity, she straightway devised a device for her deliverance.

Judgment of a Solomon

From the Chinese

IN our district there lived two men, named Hu Ch'êng and Fêng Ngan, between whom there existed an old feud. The former, however, was the stronger of the two; and accordingly Fêng disguised his feelings under a specious appearance of friendship, though Hu never placed much faith in his professions. One day they were drinking together, and being both of them rather the worse for liquor, they began to brag of the various exploits they had achieved. "What care I for poverty," cried Hu, "when I can lay a hundred ounces of silver on the table at a moment's notice?" Now Fêng was well aware of the state of Hu's affairs, and did not hesitate to scout such pretensions, until Hu further informed him in perfect seriousness that the day before he had met a merchant traveling with a large sum of money and had tumbled him down a dry well by the wayside; in confirmation of which he produced sev-

eral hundred ounces of silver, which really belonged to a brother-in-law on whose behalf he was managing some negotiation for the purchase of land. When they separated, Fêng went off and gave information to the magistrate of the place, who summoned Hu to answer to the charge. Hu then told the actual facts of the case, and his brother-in-law and the owner of the land in question corroborated his statement. However, on examining the dry well by letting a man down with a rope round him, lo! there was a headless corpse lying at the bottom. Hu was horrified at this, and called Heaven to witness that he was innocent; whereupon the magistrate ordered him twenty or thirty blows on the mouth for lying in the presence of such irrefragable proof, and cast him into the condemned cell, where he lay loaded with chains. Orders were issued that the corpse was not to be removed, and a notification was made to the people, calling upon the relatives of the deceased to come forward and claim the body. Next day a woman appeared, and said deceased was her husband; that his name was Ho, and that he was proceeding on business with a large sum of money about him when he was killed by Hu. The magistrate observed that possibly the body in the well might not be that of her husband, to which the woman replied that she felt sure it was; and accordingly the corpse was brought up and examined, when the woman's story was found to be correct. She herself did not go near the body, but stood at a little distance making the most doleful lamentation; until at length the magistrate said, "We have got the murderer, but the body is not complete; you go home and wait until the head has been discovered, when life shall be given for life." He then summoned Hu before him, and told him to produce the head by the next day under penalty of severe torture; but Hu only wandered about with the guard sent in charge of him, crying and lamenting his fate, but finding nothing. The instruments of torture were then produced, and preparations were made as if for torturing Hu; however, they were not applied, and finally the magistrate sent him back to prison, saying, "I suppose that in your hurry