

sealed it; and I accompanied him till he came without the first house. He found the door bolted from within; so he bade raise it and we entered and found another door. This also he caused pull up, enjoining his men to silence till the doors should be lifted, and we entered and found the band occupied with new game, whom the woman had just brought in and whose throat they were about to cut. The Chief released the man and gave him back whatso the thieves had taken from him; and he laid hands on the woman and the rest and took forth of the house a mint of money, with which they found the purse of the Turkoman sheep-merchant. They at once nailed up the thieves against the house-wall, while, as for the woman, they wrapped her in one of her mantillas and nailing her to a board, set her upon a camel and went round about the town with her. Thus Allah razed their dwelling-places and did away from me that which I feared from them. All this befell while I looked on, and I saw not my friend who had saved me from them the first time, whereat I wondered to the utterest of wonderment. However, some days afterward, he came up to me, and indeed he had renounced the world and donned a Fakir's dress; and he saluted me and went away. Then he again began to pay me frequent visits and I entered into conversation with him and questioned him of the band and how he came to escape, he alone of them all. He replied, "I left them from the day on which Allah the Most High delivered thee from them, for that they would not obey my say; so I swore I would no longer consort with them." Quoth I, "By Allah, I marvel at thee, for that assuredly thou wast the cause of my preservation!" Quoth he, "The world is full of this sort; and we beseech the Almighty to send us safety, for that these wretches practice upon men with every kind of malpractice."

The Clever Thief

The Clever Thief

From the Tibetan.

IN olden times there lived in a hill-town a householder, who married a wife of his own caste. When a son was born unto him, he said to his wife, "Goodwife, now that there is born unto us a causer of debts and diminisher of means, I will take merchandise and go to sea." She replied, "Do so, lord." So he went to sea with his merchandise, and there he died.

After his wife had got over her mourning, she continued to live, partly supported by her handiwork, and partly by her relatives. Not far from her dwelt a weaver who was skilled in his art, and who by means of adroitness succeeded in everything. Seeing that he, by means of his art, had become well to do, she came to the conclusion that weaving was better than going to sea, for when a man did the latter, he needlessly exposed himself to misfortune. So she said to the weaver, "O brother, teach this nephew of yours to weave." He replied, "As that is right, I will do so." The youth became his apprentice, and in a short time learned the art of weaving, for he was sharp and quick.

As the weaver wore fine clothes, took good baths, and partook of delicate food, the youth said to him one day, "Uncle, how is it that although you and I are occupied in exactly the same kind of work, yet you have fine clothes, good baths, and delicate food, but I never have a chance of such things?" The weaver replied, "Nephew, I carry on two kinds of work. By day I practice weaving, but by night thieving."

"If that be so, uncle, I too will practice thieving."

"Nephew, you cannot commit a theft."

"Uncle, I can."

The weaver thought he would test him a little, so he took him to the market-place, purchased a hare there, and gave it to him, saying, "Nephew, I shall take a bath and then re-

turn home. Meanwhile, go on roasting this hare." While he was taking his bath, the youth hastily roasted the hare and ate up one of its legs. When the weaver returned from his bath, he said, "Nephew, have you roasted the hare?"

"Yes!"

"Let's see it, then."

When the youth had brought the hare, and the weaver saw that it only had three legs, he said, "Nephew, where is the fourth leg gone?"

"Uncle, it is true that hares have four legs, but if the fourth leg is not there, it cannot have gone anywhere."

The weaver thought, "Although I have long been a thief, yet this lad is a still greater thief." And he went with the youth and the three-legged hare into a drinking-house and called for liquor. When they had both drunk, the weaver said, "Nephew, the score must be paid by a trick."

"Uncle, he who has drunk may play a trick; why should I, who have not drunk, do this thing?"

The weaver saw that the lad was a great swindler, so he determined to carry out a theft along with him.

They betook themselves to housebreaking. Once when they had made a hole into a house, and the weaver was going to pass his head through the opening, the youth said, "Uncle, although you are a thief, yet you do not understand your business. The legs should be put in first, not the head. For if the head should get cut off, its owner would be recognized, and his whole family would be plunged into ruin. Therefore put your feet in first."

When the weaver had done so, attention was called to the fact, and a cry was raised of "Thieves! thieves!" At that cry a great number of people assembled, who seized the weaver by his legs and began to pull him in. The youth, all by himself, could not succeed in pulling him out; but he cut off the weaver's head and got away with it.

The ministers brought the news to the king, saying, "Your Majesty, the thief was himself arrested at the spot where the housebreaking took place; but some one cut off his head and went away with it." The king said, "O

friends, he who has cut off the head and gone away with it is a great thief. Go and expose the headless trunk at the crossway of the main street. Then place yourselves on one side, and arrest whoever embraces it and wails over it, for that will be the thief." Thereupon those servants of the king exposed the headless trunk at the crossway of the main street, and stationed themselves on one side. Thinking it would be wrong not to embrace his uncle and moan over him, the other thief assumed the appearance of a madman, and took to embracing men, women, carts, horses, bullocks, buffaloes, goats, and dogs. Afterwards, all men thinking he was mad, he pressed the headless trunk to his breast, wailed over it as long as he liked, and then went his way. The king was informed by his men that a madman had pressed the headless trunk to his bosom, and while he held it there had wailed over it, and had then gone away. The king said, "O friends, this man of a surety was the other thief. Ye have acted wrongly in not laying hands upon him. Therefore shall hands be laid upon you."

The other thief said to himself, "If I do not show honor to my uncle, I shall be acting badly." So he assumed the appearance of a carter, and drove a cart up to the spot laden with dry wood. When he arrived there, he upset the cart with its load of dry wood, unyoked the oxen, set the cart on fire, and then went away. The headless trunk was consumed by the flames. The king was informed by his men that the corpse was burned, and they told him all that had taken place. The king said, "O friends, the carter was certainly the thief. Ye have acted wrongly in not laying hands upon him. Therefore shall hands be laid upon you."

The thief said to himself, "I shall not be acting rightly unless I take soul-offerings to the burial-place for my uncle." So he assumed the appearance of a Brahman, and wandered from house to house collecting food. From what he collected he made five oblation-cakes, which he left at the burial-place, and then went his way. The king's men told him that a Brahman had wandered from house to house collecting food, and had then left five oblation-cakes on the

spot where the body had been burned, and had then gone away. The king said, "O friends, that was really the thief. Ye have acted wrongly in not laying hands upon him."

The thief thought, "I shall be acting badly if I do not throw my uncle's bones into the Ganges." So he assumed the appearance of a Kāpālika,¹ went to the place where the corpse had been burned, smeared his body with ashes, filled a skull with bones and ashes, flung it into the Ganges, and then went his way. When the king had been told by his men all that had happened, he said, "O friends, this was really the thief. Ye have acted wrongly in not laying hands upon him."

From the "Kah-gyur." One of the oldest of popular tales is the story told by Herodotus (bk. ii. chap. 121) of the treasury of Rhampsinitus, which its builder's two sons are in the habit of robbing, until one of the thieves is caught in the snares set for their feet, whereupon the other, to prevent a discovery, cuts off his brother's head and runs away. The king gives orders to expose the corpse, and to keep watch so as to see whether anyone weeps and wails over it. The surviving son, forced by his mother's threats to look after his brother's burial, comes to the spot provided with skins of wine, makes the watchmen drunk, shaves off the right side of their beards, and carries away the dead body. Thereupon the king's daughter is obliged to yield herself to everyone who will relate to her the cleverest and most scandalous trick he has ever played in his life. The doer of the deed comes and betrays himself. But when the princess tries to seize him, he leaves in her hold, not his own hand, but that of the dead man. At last the king promises his daughter's hand to the doer of this deed, so the thief reveals himself and receives the princess. As a like legend is connected with the treasury of Hyrieus in Orchomenus, where Trophonius cut off the head of his brother Agamedes, and as according to Charax the same story is told also of the treasury of Augeias at Elis, we can easily understand why some commentators, like C. O. Müller, wish to claim the legend for the Greeks, while Buttmann wishes to trace it to the East.—TRANSLATOR.

¹ A skull-carrying Śiva-worshiper.

The King Who Made Mats

From the Persian

IN ancient times there was in the country of Aberbajjan a king who cherished wisdom and administered justice; the tiller of his equity-loving nature kept the garden of his kingdom always clean of the chaff and trash of oppression, and preserved with the light of the torch of high-mindedness and largesses the surface of the breast of those that hoped and solicited, from the darkness of hardship and destitution. By means of his discernment he became acquainted with the worth and station due to men of profession, and always honored the high polish of the speculum of accomplishments and perfections with the throne of dignity and the place of respect.

One day whilst he was sitting in the palace of pomp and splendor, dispensing justice and retribution, and engaged in diving into the depths of the circumstances of the people, two men took hold of the collar of complaint. One of them had no trade, and the other was skillful and accomplished; and although the one who had no trade brought forward arguments and evidences in support of his claim, and it became clear that he was in the right, the king purposely turned the scales in favor of the clever fellow, and ordered the man without a trade to be punished.

The king happened to have a vizier equal to Plato in science, and who always drew upon the leaves of the book of circumstances with the pen of propriety of opinion and prudence of arrangement. Wondering at the decision of the king, he rose from his place and said:

"O thou leader of the caravan of prosperity of realms, by the blows of whose world-conquering scimiter the peace of the breasts of opponents is destroyed, and from the fruits of whose convoy of success the countries of the hearts of the amicable are made populous and flourishing, I have