

that swim, or the grains of sand the trees that grow; a noisy multitude.

Now, he was in the pits of despondency, even as one that yieldeth without further struggle to the waves of tempest at midnight, when he was ware of one standing over him, — a woman, old, wrinkled, a very crone, with but room for the drawing of a thread between her nose and her chin; she was, as is cited of them who betray the doings of Time,

Wrinkled at the rind, and overripe at the core,

and every part of her nodded and shook like a tree sapped by the waters, and her joints were sharp as the hind-legs of a grasshopper; she was indeed one close-wrecked upon the rocks of Time.

Now, when the old woman had scanned Shibli Bagarag, she called to him, "O thou! what is it with thee, that thou rollest as one reft of his wits?"

He answered her, "I bewail my condition, which is beggary, and the lack of that which filleth with pleasantness."

So the old woman said, "Tell me thy case."

He answered her, "O old woman, surely it was written at my birth that I should take ruin from the readers of planets. Now, they proclaimed that I was one day destined for great things, if I stood by my tackle, I, a barber. Know then, that I have had many offers and bribes, seductive ones, from the rich and the exalted in rank; and I heeded them not, mindful of what was foretold of me. I stood by my tackle as a warrior standeth by his arms, flourishing them. Now, when I found great things came not to me, and 't was the continuance of sameness and satiety with Baba Mustapha, my uncle, in Shiraz, — the tongue-wagger, the endless tattler, — surely I was advised by the words of the poet to go forth in search of what was wanting, and he says:

'Thou that dreamest an Event,
While Circumstance is but a waste of sand,
Arise, take up thy fortunes in thy hand,
And daily forward pitch thy tent.'

Now, I passed from city to city, proclaiming my science, holding aloft my tackle. Wullahy! many adventures were