

one, cross-legged, partaking of seasoned sweet dishes, dipping my fingers in them, rejoicing my soul with scandal of the Court!"

Now, he came to a knoll of sand under a palm, from which the yellow domes and mosques of the city of Shagpat, and its black cypresses, and marble palace fronts, and shining pillars, and lofty carven arches that spanned half-circles of the hot grey sky, were plainly visible. Then gazed he awhile despondingly on the city of Shagpat, and groaned in contemplation of his evil plight, as is said by the poet:

The curse of sorrow is comparison!  
As the sun casteth shade, night showeth star,  
We, measuring what we were by what we are,  
Behold the depth to which we are undone.

Wherefore he counselleth:

Look neither too much up, nor down at all,  
But, forward stepping, strive no more to fall.

And the advice is excellent; but, as is again said:

The preacher preacheth, and the hearer heareth,  
But comfort first each function requireth.

And "wisdom to a hungry stomach is thin pottage," saith the shrewd reader of men. Little comfort was there with Shibli Bagarag, as he looked on the city of Shagpat the clothier! He cried aloud that his evil chance had got the better of him, and rolled his body in the sand, beating his breast, and conjuring up images of the profusion of dainties and the abundance of provision in Shiraz, exclaiming, "Well-a-way and woe's me! this it is to be selected for the diversion of him that plotteth against man." Truly is it written:

On different heads misfortunes come:  
One bears them firm, another faints,  
While this one haugs them like a drum  
Whereon to batter loud complaints.

And of the three kinds, they who bang the drum outnumber the silent ones as do the billows of the sea the ships