

THE SULTAN OF THE EAST.



THERE was a Sultan of the East
Who used to ride a stubborn beast;
A marvel, of the donkey-kind,
That much perplexed his owner's mind.
By turns he moved a rod ahead,
Then backed a rod or so instead;
And thus the day would pass around,
The Sultan gaining little ground.
The servants on before would stray
And pitch their tents beside the way,
And pass the time as best they might,
Until their master hove in sight.
The Sultan many methods tried:
He clicked, and coaxed, and spurs applied,
And stripped a dozen trees, at least,
Of branches, to persuade the beast.
But all his efforts went for naught;
No reformation could be wrought.
At length, before the palace gate
He called the wise men of the state,
And bade them now their skill display
By finding where the trouble lay.
With solemn looks and thoughts profound,
The men of learning gathered round.

