

Ali into excesses which could not fail to bring him to the ground at last. Every day he gave magnificent parties upon the Nile or at Randa, or in the island gardens which the Nile forms at Cairo: this was continued for three years, by which time every thing that his father had left was dissipated; money, jewels, houses, gardens, lands, all went to wreck, except the mansion in which he dwelt.

Thus destitute of resources, he became distressed even to provide sustenance for his wife and children, a boy and a girl, whom his wife had borne to him since his father's death. She was not sparing of her reproaches, and desired him to go and solicit the companions of his pleasures for succour. Ali accordingly applied to them, but from every house he was sent away with excuses, and sometimes with contempt. He came home as he went, empty-handed. His wife was sorely grieved at the disappointment, but in her turn applied to her friends and neighbours, and one of these gave her enough to keep them all for a year. "God be praised," said Ali; "but this cannot always last. I must bestir myself, and see whether I can get any thing by my own exertions." He set out, therefore (he knew not whither, nor for what purpose), and arrived at Bulach: there he found a vessel bound to Damietta, in which he embarked. When he arrived there, he visited a friend, who was about to take a journey to Bagdad. Ali embarked with him in a ship bound to Syria, and thence accompanied a caravan going from Damascus to Bagdad. Within a few days' march of Bagdad, the caravan was attacked by banditti, and plundered; the tenders escaped as well as they could, and Ali fled to Bagdad. He reached the city at the very moment when the gates were closed, but prevailed on the warden to give him a lodging for the night; in the morning he went to an eminent merchant, a friend of his father's, and announced himself as the son of Hassan: the

merchant received him in a friendly manner, and offered him a house for his residence. Ali, having accepted his offer, was led to a handsome street in which there were three empty houses belonging to his friend, who desired him to take his choice of two of them. "And why not of the third?" said Ali. "Because," replied the merchant, "it is infested by ghosts and evil spirits, and they kill such as are fool-hardy enough to pass the night in that mansion." As Ali desired nothing more than to be liberated from a miserable existence, he immediately requested permission to tenant the haunted house; and it was in vain that the merchant labored to dissuade him from so unreasonable an intention. In short, he entered upon possession, taking with him what was necessary for his accommodation. He performed his ablutions with the water of a well in the front court. A slave brought him his evening meal and a lamp, attended at table, and, after removing the dishes, wished him well through his adventure, and withdrew.

Ali took the lamp, and mounted the staircase to explore the upper apartments, in which he found a magnificent hall, the roof of which was of gold, and the floor of marble; here he spread his bed, trimmed his lamp, and sat down to peruse the koran. He had read a few chapters when on a sudden he heard a loud voice saying, "Ali, son of Hassan, come hither." "Come hither, yourself," answered Ali. He had scarcely uttered the words when a shower of gold fell on every side, until the hall was filled. Then Ali, taking the koran in his hand, said,—"I invoke thee, invisible spirit, by the name of God, declare what this means."—"This gold," replied the voice, "was enchanted, and thus has been preserved through many years for you. The words I addressed to you I have addressed to all who have come hither, but no one answering to the name, they feared, and I broke their necks; as soon as you com-

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