

father one morning that he wasn't going to school any more, but wished to become a Sluggard.

"A Sluggard!—you!" said the father, an honest turner of pipe-stems, busy as a bee, and always seated at his lathe before cock-crowing. "You: a Sluggard! What a fancy!"

"Yes, father; I wish to become a Sluggard..... like Sidi Lakdar....."

"By no means, my boy. You will be a turner like your father, or a registrar at the Court of the Cadi like your uncle Ali, but never will I make a Sluggard of you... Come, get to school, or I will break this nice new cherry switch across your back... Away, you little donkey!"

In the face of the switch the child no longer held out, and pretended to be convinced: but instead of going to school he entered a Moorish bazaar, threw himself down upon a soft rug between two piles of Smyrna carpets, and stayed there the whole day stretched upon his back, lazily watching the Moorish lanterns, the blue cloth purses, the golden breast-plates glittering in the sun; and breathing the penetrating odor of flagons of essence of rose and of warm cloaks of fine wool. It was here, henceforth, that he spent all his school hours.

After some days the father got wind of the affair; but in vain did he pray, and coax, and curse the name of Allah, and wear out all the cherry switches in his shop upon the back of the little fellow; it availed nothing. The child never ceased to repeat: "I want to be a Sluggard! I want to be a Sluggard!"—and every day found him stretched in his corner again. Tired of the contest, and after having consulted with Ali, the clerk, the father took a new tack.

"Listen," said he to his son. "Since you desire to be a Sluggard with your whole heart, I am going to take you to Lakdar. He will examine you, and if you are really fit for his trade, I will beg him to take you into his service as an apprentice."

"That just suits me," answered the boy. And no later than the morrow the two of them, newly barbered and perfumed with vervain, set out to find the Sluggard in his garden.

The door was always open. Our friends entered without knocking, but as the weeds were very thick and high they had some difficulty to discover the master of the place. At last they caught sight of him lying under a fig-tree at the bottom of the garden, a bundle of yellow rags which greeted them with a grunt.

"Peace be unto thee, Sidi Lakdar," said the father, bowing, with his hand upon his heart. "Behold my son, who is absolutely resolved to become a Sluggard. I have brought him to you, that you may examine him, and see if he has a call. In that case I beg you to take him with you as an apprentice. I will pay whatever is necessary."

Sidi Lakdar, without answering, made a sign for them to sit down beside him upon the grass. The father seated himself, the son flung himself down at full length, which was already a very good sign. Then all three looked at each other in silence.

It was high noon; the day was warm and sunny; the little close was full of drowsy air. One could hear only the crackling of the wild broom as its shells burst in the sun, the springs gurgling through the grass, and the soft rustling of the birds as they flitted from bough to bough with the sound of the opening and shutting of fans. From time to time, a fig, overripe, tumbled downward from branch to branch. Then Sidi Lakdar would reach out his hand with an air of fatigue, and carry the fruit to his mouth. But the child did not take even that trouble. The choicest figs fell about him without so much as his turning his head. The master, out of the corner of his eye, was watching this splendid indolence, but he refrained from breathing a word.

One hour,—two hours,—passed thus... The pipe-stem turner was beginning to find the interview a trifle long. However, he dared not say anything, but remained there, motionless, his eyes fixed, his legs crossed, overcome himself by the atmosphere of laziness which floated on the heat of the close with a vague odor of bananas and baked oranges. All at once a great fig fell from the tree and flattened itself upon the cheek of the boy. A fine fig, by Allah! Rosy, mellow, and as sweet as honey! To get it into his mouth the boy had but to tip it with his finger; but he found even that too fatiguing, and lay thus, without stirring, the fruit embalming his cheek.

At last the temptation became too strong; he glanced towards his father and called to him in a doleful voice: "Papa," said he, "papa, put it into my mouth!"

At these words, Sidi Lakdar, who was taking a fig in his hand, threw it far away, and addressing the father angrily:

"And this is the child whom you have just offered me for an apprentice! Surely he is my master. It is he who should give me lessons!"

Then falling upon his knees, with his face to the ground, before the still reclining child:

"I salute thee," he said, "O father of Sluggardliness!"...

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To the Editor,

DEAR SIR,

I am pleased to observe that, through your columns, you are drawing the attention of the students towards the consideration of some plan by which the various Faculties may see more of each other and know each other better. It is in no spirit of criticism, but in emphatic support of such indications, that I venture to submit to you what I may call an extension and amplification of the excellent idea started by you. My suggestion takes the shape of an out-and-out University Club, and so far from the idea being a new one in connection with Universities, there is no University out of Canada that dares attempt to live without one.