

him praised throughout the land. Philosophy was his greatest acquirement; but hospitality was part of his nature.

Therefore Zohair hardly waited to see the travelers enter the serai, before he called out "Hhareth!"

No answer coming to his call, he again cried, "Hhareth, where art thou? dilatory dog, deformed as the dun camel of Aad. Come hither."

In a few moments Hhareth appeared. He was small in stature, and a hunchback, with long arms that reached below his knees.

Zohair had forgotten his impatience before Hhareth appeared; for though the menial saluted him at least a dozen times, his master never deigned, by word or gesture, to acknowledge his presence; but sat gazing intently at a planet which had risen above the opposite buildings, and now shone serenely and steadily into the philosopher's face. But the philosopher shook his head. "It bodoth no good," quoth he; "why doth it rise to shed its baleful beams upon a moment like this? Nevertheless my purpose hath been formed, and even the malign influence of the stars shall not divert me from extending my hospitality."

Turning his head as he spoke, he saw Hhareth standing beside him, his head bent upon his breast, and his long arms seeming almost to touch the ground. "Go," said Zohair, "to the serai: thou wilt find there an old man. Salute him; and say, 'Zohair, my master, desireth that thou and those who are with thee should not lodge in the serai to-night, but that thou shouldst be his guest till the time of thy departure be come.'"

But Hhareth soon returned with the reply that the old man was content to stay where he was; and would not put the hospitality of Zohair to the test.

Zohair was a man who, having determined on a course, was not easily turned aside. So he resolved to attempt in person what he had failed to accomplish by deputy. Assuming the mantle and the air of dignity which he had temporarily laid aside in his moments of relaxation, he crossed the way and sought the presence of the travelers. He found them making preparations for the night. The camel was lying down, ruminating. Now Zohair had a peculiar regard for the camel. One of his favorite poets had written of the camel's fleetness--its beauty, docility, patience, and wonderful adaptation to the requirements of the country; and this Zohair heartily indorsed. But he went farther: The camel, he said, was among beasts what the philosopher was among men. And now, as he saw the animal in question quietly chewing its cud, he said to himself, "Is not the philosopher also a ruminating animal?" But he did not stop to make this passing observation; and also passed the ass, who was lazily shaking his head at some branches which hung too high for his reach. So, crossing the open square, he came to where the tall servant was preparing a simple meal, under the direction of the little old man, who, in his turn, endeavored to reconcile the discrepancies in his contradictory orders, by placidly stroking his beard.

Zohair performed a most elaborate salaam, and expressed a hope that the old man might live a thousand years. Then scarcely waiting for a brief answer to his salutation, he pressed upon his auditor an offer of his house and his household. He acknowledged that they were altogether unworthy of guests so distinguished; but at least they boasted accommodations superior to those of the serai.