**A Night in New Arabia**

O. Henry

The great city of Bagdad-on-the-Subway is caliph-ridden. Its palaces, bazaars, khans, and byways are thronged with Al Rashids in divers disguises, seeking diversion and victims for their unbridled generosity. You can scarcely find a poor beggar whom they are willing to let enjoy his spoils unsuccored, nor a wrecked unfortunate upon whom they will not reshower the means of fresh misfortune. You will hardly find anywhere a hungry one who has not had the opportunity to tighten his belt in gift libraries, nor a poor pundit who has not blushed at the holiday basket of celery-crowned turkey forced resoundingly through his door by the eleemosynary press.

So then, fearfully through the Harun-haunted streets creep the one-eyed calenders, the Little Hunchback and the Barber’s Sixth Brother, hoping to escape the ministrations of the roving horde of caliphoid sultans.

Entertainment for many Arabian nights might be had from the histories of those who have escaped the largesse of the army of Commanders of the Faithful. Until dawn you might sit on the enchanted rug and listen to such stories as are told of the powerful genie Roc-Ef-El-Er who sent the Forty Thieves to soak up the oil plant of Ali Baba; of the good Caliph Kar-Neg-Ghe, who gave away palaces; of the Seven Voyages of Sailbad, the Sinner, who frequented wooden excursion steamers among the islands; of the Fisherman and the Bottle; of the Barmecides’ Boarding house; of Aladdin’s rise to wealth by means of his Wonderful Gas-meter.

But now, there being ten sultans to one Sheherazade, she is held too valuable to be in fear of the bowstring. In consequence the art of narrative languishes. And, as the lesser caliphs are hunting the happy poor and the resigned unfortunate from cover to cover in order to heap upon them strange mercies and mysterious benefits, too often comes the report from Arabian headquarters that the captive refused “to talk.”

This reticence, then, in the actors who perform the sad comedies of their philanthropy-scourged world, must, in a degree, account for the shortcomings of this painfully gleaned tale, which shall be called

###### THE STORY OF THE CALIPH

###### WHO ALLEVIATED HIS CONSCIENCE

Old Jacob Spraggins mixed for himself some Scotch and lithia water at his $1,200 oak sideboard. Inspiration must have resulted from its imbibition, for immediately afterward he struck the quartered oak soundly with his fist and shouted to the empty dining room:

“By the coke ovens of hell, it must be that ten thousand dollars! If I can get that squared, it’ll do the trick.”

Thus, by the commonest artifice of the trade, having gained your interest, the action of the story will now be suspended, leaving you grumpily to consider a sort of dull biography beginning fifteen years before.

When old Jacob was young Jacob he was a breaker boy in a Pennsylvania coal mine. I don’t know what a breaker boy is; but his occupation seems to be standing by a coal dump with a wan look and a dinner-pail to have his picture taken for magazine articles. Anyhow, Jacob was one. But, instead of dying of overwork at nine, and leaving his helpless parents and brothers at the mercy of the union strikers’ reserve fund, he hitched up his galluses, put a dollar or two in a side proposition now and then, and at forty-five was worth $20,000,000.

There now! it’s over. Hardly had time to yawn, did you? I’ve seen biographies that—but let us dissemble.

I want you to consider Jacob Spraggins, Esq., after he had arrived at the seventh stage of his career. The stages meant are, first, humble origin; second, deserved promotion; third, stockholder; fourth, capitalist; fifth, trust magnate; sixth, rich malefactor; seventh, caliph; eighth, *x*. The eighth stage shall be left to the higher mathematics.

At fifty-five Jacob retired from active business. The income of a czar was still rolling in on him from coal, iron, real estate, oil, railroads, manufactories, and corporations, but none of it touched Jacob’s hands in a raw state. It was a sterilized increment, carefully cleaned and dusted and fumigated until it arrived at its ultimate stage of untainted, spotless checks in the white fingers of his private secretary. Jacob built a three-million-dollar palace on a corner lot fronting on Nabob Avenue, city of New Bagdad, and began to feel the mantle of the late H. A. Rashid descending upon him. Eventually Jacob slipped the mantle under his collar, tied it in a neat four-in-hand, and became a licensed harrier of our Mesopotamian proletariat.

When a man’s income becomes so large that the butcher actually sends him the kind of steak he orders, he begins to think about his soul’s salvation. Now, the various stages or classes of rich men must not be forgotten. The capitalist can tell you to a dollar the amount of his wealth. The trust magnate “estimates” it. The rich malefactor hands you a cigar and denies that he has bought the P. D. & Q. The caliph merely smiles and talks about Hammerstein and the musical lasses. There is a record of tremendous altercation at breakfast in a “Where-to-Dine-Well” tavern between a magnate and his wife, the rift within the loot being that the wife calculated their fortune at a figure $3,000,000 higher than did her future *divorcé*. Oh, well, I, myself, heard a similar quarrel between a man and his wife because he found fifty cents less in his pockets than he thought he had. After all, we are all human—Count Tolstoi, R. Fitzsimmons, Peter Pan, and the rest of us.

Don’t lose heart because the story seems to be degenerating into a sort of moral essay for intellectual readers.

There will be dialogue and stage business pretty soon.

When Jacob first began to compare the eyes of needles with the camels in the Zoo he decided upon organized charity. He had his secretary send a check for one million to the Universal Benevolent Association of the Globe. You may have looked down through a grating in front of a decayed warehouse for a nickel that you had dropped through. But that is neither here nor there. The Association acknowledged receipt of his favor of the 24th ult. with enclosure as stated. Separated by a double line, but still mighty close to the matter under the caption of “Oddities of the Day’s News” in an evening paper, Jacob Spraggins read that one “Jasper Spargyous” had “donated $100,000 to the U. B. A. of G.” A camel may have a stomach for each day in the week; but I dare not venture to accord him whiskers, for fear of the Great Displeasure at Washington; but if he have whiskers, surely not one of them will seem to have been inserted in the eye of a needle by that effort of that rich man to enter the K. of H. The right is reserved to reject any and all bids; signed, S. Peter, secretary and gatekeeper.

Next, Jacob selected the best endowed college he could scare up and presented it with a $200,000 laboratory. The college did not maintain a scientific course, but it accepted the money and built an elaborate lavatory instead, which was no diversion of funds so far as Jacob ever discovered.

The faculty met and invited Jacob to come over and take his A B C degree. Before sending the invitation they smiled, cut out the C, added the proper punctuation marks, and all was well.

While walking on the campus before being capped and gowned, Jacob saw two professors strolling nearby. Their voices, long adapted to indoor acoustics, undesignedly reached his ear.

“There goes the latest *che* *va* *li* *er d’indus* *t* *rie* ,” said one of them, “to buy a sleeping powder from us. He gets his degree to-morrow.”

“*In fo* *ro conscientiæ* ,” said the other. “Let’s ‘eave ‘arf a brick at ‘im.”

Jacob ignored the Latin, but the brick pleasantry was not too hard for him. There was no mandragora in the honorary draught of learning that he had bought. That was before the passage of the Pure Food and Drugs Act.

Jacob wearied of philanthropy on a large scale.

“If I could see folks made happier,” he said to himself—“If I could see ’em myself and hear ’em express their gratitude for what I done for ’em it would make me feel better. This donatin’ funds to institutions and societies is about as satisfactory as dropping money into a broken slot machine.”

So Jacob followed his nose, which led him through unswept streets to the homes of the poorest.

“The very thing!” said Jacob. “I will charter two river steamboats, pack them full of these unfortunate children and—say ten thousand dolls and drums and a thousand freezers of ice cream, and give them a delightful outing up the Sound. The sea breezes on that trip ought to blow the taint off some of this money that keeps coming in faster than I can work it off my mind.”

Jacob must have leaked some of his benevolent intentions, for an immense person with a bald face and a mouth that looked as if it ought to have a “Drop Letters Here” sign over it hooked a finger around him and set him in a space between a barber’s pole and a stack of ash cans. Words came out of the post-office slit-smooth, husky words with gloves on ’em, but sounding as if they might turn to bare knuckles any moment.

“Say, Sport, do you know where you are at? Well, dis is Mike O’Grady’s district you’re buttin’ into—see? Mike’s got de stomach-ache privilege for every kid in dis neighborhood—see? And if dere’s any picnics or red balloons to be dealt out here, Mike’s money pays for ’em—see? Don’t you butt in, or something’ll be handed to you. Youse d- settlers and reformers with your social ologies and your millionaire detectives have got dis district in a hell of a fix, anyhow. With your college students and professors rough-housing de soda-water stands and dem rubber-neck coaches fillin’ de streets, de folks down here are ‘fraid to go out of de houses. Now, you leave ’em to Mike. Dey belongs to him, and he knows how to handle ’em. Keep on your own side of de town. Are you some wiser now, uncle, or do you want to scrap wit’ Mike O’Grady for de Santa Claus belt in dis district?”

Clearly, that spot in the moral vineyard was preempted. So Caliph Spraggins menaced no more the people in the bazaars of the East Side. To keep down his growing surplus he doubled his donations to organized charity, presented the Y. M. C. A. of his native town with a $10,000 collection of butterflies, and sent a check to the famine sufferers in China big enough to buy new emerald eyes and diamond-filled teeth for all their gods. But none of these charitable acts seemed to bring peace to the caliph’s heart. He tried to get a personal note into his benefactions by tipping bellboys and waiters $10 and $20 bills. He got well snickered at and derided for that by the minions who accept with respect gratuities commensurate to the service performed. He sought out an ambitious and talented but poor young woman, and bought for her the star part in a new comedy. He might have gotten rid of $50,000 more of his cumbersome money in this philanthropy if he had not neglected to write letters to her. But she lost the suit for lack of evidence, while his capital still kept piling up, and his *op* *ti* *kos ne* *ed* *le* *orum ca* *me* *li* *bus*—or rich man’s disease—was unrelieved.

In Caliph Spraggins’s $3,000,000 home lived his sister Henrietta, who used to cook for the coal miners in a twenty-five-cent eating house in Coketown, Pa., and who now would have offered John Mitchell only two fingers of her hand to shake. And his daughter Celia, nineteen, back from boarding-school and from being polished off by private instructors in the restaurant languages and those études and things.

Celia is the heroine. Lest the artist’s delineation of her charms on this very page humbug your fancy, take from me her authorized description. She was a nice-looking, awkward, loud, rather bashful, brown-haired girl, with a sallow complexion, bright eyes, and a perpetual smile. She had a wholesome, Spraggins-inherited love for plain food, loose clothing, and the society of the lower classes. She had too much health and youth to feel the burden of wealth. She had a wide mouth that kept the peppermint-pepsin tablets rattling like hail from the slot-machine wherever she went, and she could whistle hornpipes. Keep this picture in mind; and let the artist do his worst.

Celia looked out of her window one day and gave her heart to the grocer’s young man. The receiver thereof was at that moment engaged in conceding immortality to his horse and calling down upon him the ultimate fate of the wicked; so he did not notice the transfer. A horse should stand still when you are lifting a crate of strictly new-laid eggs out of the wagon.

Young lady reader, you would have liked that grocer’s young man yourself. But you wouldn’t have given him your heart, because you are saving it for a riding-master, or a shoe-manufacturer with a torpid liver, or something quiet but rich in gray tweeds at Palm Beach. Oh, I know about it. So I am glad the grocer’s young man was for Celia, and not for you.

The grocer’s young man was slim and straight and as confident and easy in his movements as the man in the back of the magazines who wears the new frictionless roller suspenders. He wore a gray bicycle cap on the back of his head, and his hair was straw-colored and curly, and his sunburned face looked like one that smiled a good deal when he was not preaching the doctrine of everlasting punishment to delivery-wagon horses. He slung imported A1 fancy groceries about as though they were only the stuff he delivered at boarding-houses; and when he picked up his whip, your mind instantly recalled Mr. Tackett and his air with the buttonless foils.

Tradesmen delivered their goods at a side gate at the rear of the house. The grocer’s wagon came about ten in the morning. For three days Celia watched the driver when he came, finding something new each time to admire in the lofty and almost contemptuous way he had of tossing around the choicest gifts of Pomona, Ceres, and the canning factories. Then she consulted Annette.

To be explicit, Annette McCorkle, the second housemaid who deserves a paragraph herself. Annette Fletcherized large numbers of romantic novels which she obtained at a free public library branch (donated by one of the biggest caliphs in the business). She was Celia’s side-kicker and chum, though Aunt Henrietta didn’t know it, you may hazard a bean or two.

“Oh, canary-bird seed!” exclaimed Annette. “Ain’t it a corkin’ situation? You a heiress, and fallin’ in love with him on sight! He’s a sweet boy, too, and above his business. But he ain’t susceptible like the common run of grocer’s assistants. He never pays no attention to me.”

“He will to me,” said Celia.

“Riches—” began Annette, unsheathing the not unjustifiable feminine sting.

“Oh, you’re not so beautiful,” said Celia, with her wide, disarming smile. “Neither am I; but he sha’n’t know that there’s any money mixed up with my looks, such as they are. That’s fair. Now, I want you to lend me one of your caps and an apron, Annette.”

“Oh, marshmallows!” cried Annette. “I see. Ain’t it lovely? It’s just like ‘Lurline, the Left-Handed; or, A Buttonhole Maker’s Wrongs.’ I’ll bet he’ll turn out to be a count.”

There was a long hallway (or “passageway,” as they call it in the land of the Colonels) with one side latticed, running along the rear of the house. The grocer’s young man went through this to deliver his goods. One morning he passed a girl in there with shining eyes, sallow complexion, and wide, smiling mouth, wearing a maid’s cap and apron. But as he was cumbered with a basket of Early Drumhead lettuce and Trophy tomatoes and three bunches of asparagus and six bottles of the most expensive Queen olives, he saw no more than that she was one of the maids.

But on his way out he came up behind her, and she was whistling “Fisher’s Hornpipe” so loudly and clearly that all the piccolos in the world should have disjointed themselves and crept into their cases for shame.

The grocer’s young man stopped and pushed back his cap until it hung on his collar button behind.

“That’s out o’ sight, Kid,” said he.

“My name is Celia, if you please,” said the whistler, dazzling him with a three-inch smile.

That’s all right. I’m Thomas McLeod. What part of the house do you work in?”

“I’m the—the second parlor maid.”

“Do you know the ‘Falling Waters’?”

“No,” said Celia, “we don’t know anybody. We got rich too quick—that is, Mr. Spraggins did.”

“I’ll make you acquainted,” said Thomas McLeod. “It’s a strathspey—the first cousin to a hornpipe.”

If Celia’s whistling put the piccolos out of commission, Thomas McLeod’s surely made the biggest flutes hunt their holes. He could actually whistle *bass*.

When he stopped Celia was ready to jump into his delivery wagon and ride with him clear to the end of the pier and on to the ferry-boat of the Charon line.

“I’ll be around to-morrow at 10:15,” said Thomas, “with some spinach and a case of carbonic.”

“I’ll practice that what-you-may-call-it,” said Celia. “I can whistle a fine second.”

The processes of courtship are personal, and do not belong to general literature. They should be chronicled in detail only in advertisements of iron tonics and in the secret by-laws of the Woman’s Auxiliary of the Ancient Order of the Rat Trap. But genteel writing may contain a description of certain stages of its progress without intruding upon the province of the X-ray or of park policemen.

A day came when Thomas McLeod and Celia lingered at the end of the latticed “passage.”

“Sixteen a week isn’t much,” said Thomas, letting his cap rest on his shoulder blades.

Celia looked through the lattice-work and whistled a dead march. Shopping with Aunt Henrietta the day before, she had paid that much for a dozen handkerchiefs.

“Maybe I’ll get a raise next month,” said Thomas. “I’ll be around to-morrow at the same time with a bag of flour and the laundry soap.”

“All right,” said Celia. “Annette’s married cousin pays only $20 a month for a flat in the Bronx.”

Never for a moment did she count on the Spraggins money. She knew Aunt Henrietta’s invincible pride of caste and pa’s mightiness as a Colossus of cash, and she understood that if she chose Thomas she and her grocer’s young man might go whistle for a living.

Another day came, Thomas violating the dignity of Nabob Avenue with “The Devil’s Dream,” whistled keenly between his teeth.

“Raised to eighteen a week yesterday,” he said. “Been pricing flats around Morningside. You want to start untying those apron strings and unpinning that cap, old girl.”

“Oh, Tommy!” said Celia, with her broadest smile. “Won’t that be enough? I got Betty to show me how to make a cottage pudding. I guess we could call it a flat pudding if we wanted to.”

“And tell no lie,” said Thomas.

“And I can sweep and polish and dust—of course, a parlor maid learns that. And we could whistle duets of evenings.”

“The old man said he’d raise me to twenty at Christmas if Bryan couldn’t think of any harder name to call a Republican than a ‘postponer,’” said the grocer’s young man.

“I can sew,” said Celia; “and I know that you must make the gas company’s man show his badge when he comes to look at the meter; and I know how to put up quince jam and window curtains.”

“Bully! you’re all right, Cele. Yes, I believe we can pull it off on eighteen.”

As he was jumping into the wagon the second parlor maid braved discovery by running swiftly to the gate.

“And, oh, Tommy, I forgot,” she called, softly. “I believe I could make your neckties.”

“Forget it,” said Thomas decisively.

“And another thing,” she continued. “Sliced cucumbers at night will drive away cockroaches.”

“And sleep, too, you bet,” said Mr. McLeod. “Yes, I believe if I have a delivery to make on the West Side this afternoon I’ll look in at a furniture store I know over there.”

It was just as the wagon dashed away that old Jacob Spraggins struck the sideboard with his fist and made the mysterious remark about ten thousand dollars that you perhaps remember. Which justifies the reflection that some stories, as well as life, and puppies thrown into wells, move around in circles. Painfully but briefly we must shed light on Jacob’s words.

The foundation of his fortune was made when he was twenty. A poor coal-digger (ever hear of a rich one?) had saved a dollar or two and bought a small tract of land on a hillside on which he tried to raise corn. Not a nubbin. Jacob, whose nose was a divining-rod, told him there was a vein of coal beneath. He bought the land from the miner for $125 and sold it a month afterward for $10,000. Luckily the miner had enough left of his sale money to drink himself into a black coat opening in the back, as soon as he heard the news.

And so, for forty years afterward, we find Jacob illuminated with the sudden thought that if he could make restitution of this sum of money to the heirs or assigns of the unlucky miner, respite and Nepenthe might be his.

And now must come swift action, for we have here some four thousand words and not a tear shed and never a pistol, joke, safe, nor bottle cracked.

Old Jacob hired a dozen private detectives to find the heirs, if any existed, of the old miner, Hugh McLeod.

Get the point? Of course I know as well as you do that Thomas is going to be the heir. I might have concealed the name; but why always hold back your mystery till the end? I say, let it come near the middle so people can stop reading there if they want to.

After the detectives had trailed false clues about three thousand dollars—I mean miles—they cornered Thomas at the grocery and got his confession that Hugh McLeod had been his grandfather, and that there were no other heirs. They arranged a meeting for him and old Jacob one morning in one of their offices.

Jacob liked the young man very much. He liked the way he looked straight at him when he talked, and the way he threw his bicycle cap over the top of a rose-colored vase on the centre-table.

There was a slight flaw in Jacob’s system of restitution. He did not consider that the act, to be perfect, should include confession. So he represented himself to be the agent of the purchaser of the land who had sent him to refund the sale price for the ease of his conscience.

“Well, sir,” said Thomas, “this sounds to me like an illustrated post-card from South Boston with ‘We’re having a good time here’ written on it. I don’t know the game. Is this ten thousand dollars money, or do I have to save so many coupons to get it?”

Old Jacob counted out to him twenty five-hundred-dollar bills.

That was better, he thought, than a check. Thomas put them thoughtfully into his pocket.

“Grandfather’s best thanks,” he said, “to the party who sends it.”

Jacob talked on, asking him about his work, how he spent his leisure time, and what his ambitions were. The more he saw and heard of Thomas, the better he liked him. He had not met many young men in Bagdad so frank and wholesome.

“I would like to have you visit my house,” he said. “I might help you in investing or laying out your money. I am a very wealthy man. I have a daughter about grown, and I would like for you to know her. There are not many young men I would care to have call on her.”

“I’m obliged,” said Thomas. “I’m not much at making calls. It’s generally the side entrance for mine. And, besides, I’m engaged to a girl that has the Delaware peach crop killed in the blossom. She’s a parlor maid in a house where I deliver goods. She won’t be working there much longer, though. Say, don’t forget to give your friend my grandfather’s best regards. You’ll excuse me now; my wagon’s outside with a lot of green stuff that’s got to be delivered. See you again, sir.”

At eleven Thomas delivered some bunches of parsley and lettuce at the Spraggins mansion. Thomas was only twenty-two; so, as he came back, he took out the handful of five-hundred-dollar bills and waved them carelessly. Annette took a pair of eyes as big as creamed onion to the cook.

“I told you he was a count,” she said, after relating. “He never would carry on with me.”

“But you say he showed money,” said the cook.

“Hundreds of thousands,” said Annette. “Carried around loose in his pockets. And he never would look at me.”

“It was paid to me to-day,” Thomas was explaining to Celia outside. “It came from my grandfather’s estate. Say, Cele, what’s the use of waiting now? I’m going to quit the job to-night. Why can’t we get married next week?”

“Tommy,” said Celia. “I’m no parlor maid. I’ve been fooling you. I’m Miss Spraggins—Celia Spraggins. The newspapers say I’ll be worth forty million dollars some day.”

Thomas pulled his cap down straight on his head for the first time since we have known him.

“I suppose then,” said he, “I suppose then you’ll not be marrying me next week. But you *can* whistle.”

“No,” said Celia, “I’ll not be marrying you next week. My father would never let me marry a grocer’s clerk. But I’ll marry you to-night, Tommy, if you say so.”

Old Jacob Spraggins came home at 9:30 P. M., in his motor car. The make of it you will have to surmise sorrowfully; I am giving you unsubsidized fiction; had it been a street car I could have told you its voltage and the number of wheels it had. Jacob called for his daughter; he had bought a ruby necklace for her, and wanted to hear her say what a kind, thoughtful, dear old dad he was.

There was a brief search in the house for her, and then came Annette, glowing with the pure flame of truth and loyalty well mixed with envy and histrionics.

“Oh, sir,” said she, wondering if she should kneel, “Miss Celia’s just this minute running away out of the side gate with a young man to be married. I couldn’t stop her, sir. They went in a cab.”

“What young man?” roared old Jacob.

“A millionaire, if you please, sir—a rich nobleman in disguise. He carries his money with him, and the red peppers and the onions was only to blind us, sir. He never did seem to take to me.”

Jacob rushed out in time to catch his car. The chauffeur had been delayed by trying to light a cigarette in the wind.

“Here, Gaston, or Mike, or whatever you call yourself, scoot around the corner quicker than blazes and see if you can see a cab. If you do, run it down.”

There was a cab in sight a block away. Gaston, or Mike, with his eyes half shut and his mind on his cigarette, picked up the trail, neatly crowded the cab to the curb and pocketed it.

“What t’ell you doin’?” yelled the cabman.

“Pa!” shrieked Celia.

“Grandfather’s remorseful friend’s agent!” said Thomas. “Wonder what’s on his conscience now.”

“A thousand thunders,” said Gaston, or Mike. “I have no other match.”

“Young man,” said old Jacob, severely, “how about that parlor maid you were engaged to?”

A couple of years afterward old Jacob went into the office of his private secretary.

“The Amalgamated Missionary Society solicits a contribution of $30,000 toward the conversion of the Koreans,” said the secretary.

“Pass ’em up,” said Jacob.

“The University of Plumville writes that its yearly endowment fund of $50,000 that you bestowed upon it is past due.”

“Tell ’em it’s been cut out.”

“The Scientific Society of Clam Cove, Long Island, asks for $10,000 to buy alcohol to preserve specimens.”

“Waste basket.”

“The Society for Providing Healthful Recreation for Working Girls wants $20,000 from you to lay out a golf course.”

“Tell ’em to see an undertaker.”

“Cut ’em all out,” went on Jacob. “I’ve quit being a good thing. I need every dollar I can scrape or save. I want you to write to the directors of every company that I’m interested in and recommend a 10 per cent. cut in salaries. And say—I noticed half a cake of soap lying in a corner of the hall as I came in. I want you to speak to the scrubwoman about waste. I’ve got no money to throw away. And say—we’ve got vinegar pretty well in hand, haven’t we?’

“The Globe Spice & Seasons Company,” said secretary, “controls the market at present.”

“Raise vinegar two cents a gallon. Notify all our branches.”

Suddenly Jacob Spraggins’s plump red face relaxed into a pulpy grin. He walked over to the secretary’s desk and showed a small red mark on his thick forefinger.

“Bit it,” he said, “darned if he didn’t, and he ain’t had the tooth three weeks—Jaky McLeod, my Celia’s kid. He’ll be worth a hundred millions by the time he’s twenty-one if I can pile it up for him.”

As he was leaving, old Jacob turned at the door, and said:

“Better make that vinegar raise three cents instead of two. I’ll be back in an hour and sign the letters.”

The true history of the Caliph Harun Al Rashid relates that toward the end of his reign he wearied of philanthropy, and caused to be beheaded all his former favorites and companions of his “Arabian Nights” rambles. Happy are we in these days of enlightenment, when the only death warrant the caliphs can serve on us is in the form of a tradesman’s bill.