



"A large brown goat stepped out from behind the bush."

CHINNA.

By MRS. HOBART-HAMPDEN,

Author of 'The Secret Valley,' etc., etc.

(Continued from page 23.)

CHAPTER II.

THEY all heard something in another moment. They all saw something distinctly. A dark, rustling, snorting something. And, step by step, they began to back away from the bush behind which that something hid. It was only when they realised that the next step would take them over the cliff edge into the river below that they came to a reluctant halt.

And then Brian called joyfully, 'Why, it's only a goat. Nothing but a goat. Look at its long ears. I can see them wagging.' And, as he spoke, a large brown goat stepped out from behind the bush, and stared with round eyes at the children. Her fur was wet and clung closely to her body, and she was breathing heavily.

'I do believe it's the goat that was swimming in the river,' said Nancy slowly. And, 'Baa!' the goat answered, and came trotting towards them, very pleased, it seemed, at the encounter. Perhaps she, too, had been frightened and lonely, and was glad to find that there were human beings in this desolate country. She rubbed her nose against each of them in turn, and followed closely when they walked on again. And there was something so cheering in her friendly presence that the children forgot their fears, and began to talk quite gaily. 'When we get to a village, we'll tell the people who we are,' said Nancy. 'And we'll ask them how far it is to the railway and the bungalow. And, if it's very far, we'll get them to lend us a cart in the morning.'

'I wonder if there are any of the wild tribe people near here,' said Brian. 'Daddy told me the other day that they live in very out-of-the-way places, and this seems out of the way enough for anything. They're small and dark, and they still use bows and arrows, and they're awfully clever at tracking animals. I wish we could catch one. A wild man, I mean, not an animal, and take him home with us, and make him teach us to track, too.'

And, talking thus, on they went through the night, following the course of the river. But presently, to their dismay, they came upon a smaller stream which flowed into the larger; and, since they could by no means cross this, they were forced to follow its course instead. And, next, one ravine after another cut across their path. The ravines were dry, luckily, but the children were obliged to scramble down and up the steep banks until they were so tired they could walk no further, but sat down perforce to rest.

'I don't know where we've got to,' said Nancy, looking round her anxiously. 'I can't see the big river at all. Everything seems so muddled up. I think we had better stop where we are until the morning. It's no good going further and further from the right way home.'

It was a warm night, and already their clothes, which had been wet in places, were dry, so that to sleep in the open was no hardship. The ground was soft and sandy, and it was easy to scoop out a hole big enough to hold all three of them, and the goat also. And almost immediately they were asleep, too tired to remember

even that they were hungry. They did not stir until the dawn, and then it was Nancy who woke first.

She could not understand where she was for a little, and lay staring at the sky and wondering what had happened to the ceiling of her bedroom. And then she raised herself on her elbow and looked out over the edge of the hole, and saw ravines, and everywhere ravines. And the breaking of the bridge, and the voyage down the river, and the walk in the night, all came back with a rush. And she stood up and looked round again hurriedly, but still nowhere could she see the river down which they had come, and also nowhere was there any sign of a village.

'We've lost, and we shall starve,' thought Nancy affrightedly. And at that very moment caught sight of a thin column of smoke rising from a ravine a short distance away. And quickly she woke Brian and Frederick to impart the good news to them, and they were all running towards the smoke, when suddenly they grew cautious. How could they be sure that the lighter of the fire would prove friendly? It might be as well to have a look at him first. And after that they crept to the edge of the ravine and, crouching down, peered into the depths below. The ravine was dry, and to its sandy sides clung a few bushes, some of which had lately been uprooted and were heaped together to feed a fire, which flamed and crackled loudly on the flat ground in the middle.

Beside the fire there crouched a man—a small dark man, very sturdily built. His skin was almost black, and he had a quantity of long, coarse black hair which was twisted into a knot at the back of his head; and in this knot were stuck little rolls of tobacco packed in green leaves. The man wore no clothes, save a cotton cloth twisted around him from waist to knee. Beside him on the ground lay a little axe and a small bow and a sheaf of iron-tipped arrows.

'It's one of the wild tribe people. Look at the bow,' Brian whispered, very softly as he thought. But instantly the little man by the fire raised his head—he had been staring steadily at the flames—and looked straight at the children. And, though he did not move from where he crouched, yet all his muscles tightened, so that he was ready to spring at any moment in any direction that he pleased.

(Continued on page 34.)

THE DUCKS AND THE TURTLE.

A Fable from the French of GALLAND.

IN a warm Eastern land was a pretty little lake. Two wild ducks spent their days very happily swimming on its smooth waters. An old turtle lived there also. Though he had been longer there than the ducks, the three were good friends.

One very hot summer little rain fell, and the fierce heat of the sun dried up the water in the lake. Every day the mud on the bank was thicker. The water-lilies drooped, and the palms hung their heads sadly. At last the water grew so shallow that the two ducks looked at one another, and the elder one said: 'If no rain falls during the next two days, we shall have to fly away from here and seek a new home.'

'I shall be very sorry to leave our dear lake,' remarked the other duck sadly. 'We have been very happy here with our dear friend, the turtle.'

Two days passed and no rain fell, so the two ducks went to say good-bye to the turtle. They found him cozily curled up on a pile of dead rushes. He was too old now to go out in the heat. He welcomed his visitors very warmly, and cried joyfully: 'Oh, you have come to see me at last! I was beginning to think you had quite forgotten me. Though the lake is so tiny now, I am so weak that it seems a long journey to your end of it. It is very lonely to have no visitors.'

'My poor friend, we did not come to you lately because we have been very sad ourselves,' replied the elder duck in a low, pained voice, which did not sound the least like her usual hearty 'Quack, quack!'

'I am sorry to hear you have been in trouble,' answered the turtle politely.

'I am afraid the news we bring you is not cheering. Unless we want to die of thirst, we shall have to leave our dear lake, and seek another home. Nothing else could ever have parted us.'

For a moment the turtle was so shocked at the sad tidings that he could not utter a word. Then he forced back his tears, and said in a quivering voice: 'You have been my only friends for so many years that I cannot live without you. If you leave me, death will soon end my sorrows.'

'Our grief is as great as yours, dear Mr. Turtle,' said the younger duck, 'but what can my sister and I do? If we leave the lake there will be more water for you.'

'Yes, I need water as badly as you do, but more of it will not console me for your loss. Let me travel with you to your new home.'

The ducks felt very sorry for him, and they did not like to leave this old friend behind them. But how could they take him with them?

'You must remember, dear friend, that our bodies are heavy and our feet small,' answered the elder duck. 'We could not walk with you over hills and plains until we came to a cooler land. Before the first day of our journey was ended, we should all three be half dead from weariness and hunger. Our wings are our only hope, and you cannot fly.'

'I know I cannot fly, but you are both so wise and have travelled so much that you surely can think of some plan.'

Seeing that he was so bent on going with them, the two ducks looked wisely at one another, and the elder one answered: 'My sister and I would love to take you with us, Mr. Turtle, but we can't quite see how it can be managed. However, we will do our best to think of some plan.'

Then they swam out to the middle of the lake, and the turtle heard nothing but 'Quack, quack, quack!' for at least half an hour. He watched them sadly, and thought, 'What a long talk those two kind ducks are having about me!'

At last they swam back towards him, and he was almost faint from fear and excitement when they arrived.

'We have thought of a plan by which you can travel with us,' began the elder duck, 'but there will be some danger in it, if you don't do exactly as we tell you.'

'I will do anything you wish, as long as you do not leave me here behind you, dear Miss Duck,' cried the turtle in high glee. He was really quite eager to see a little of the world.

'While we are carrying you through the air you must keep as quiet as if you were dead. No matter how high

we fly, you need not be the least frightened, but on no account must you move your feet or open your mouth.'

'I will obey you to the letter, and I promise faithfully not to be afraid, or to move head or foot, or to utter a single word during the whole journey.'

The two ducks were pleased to see him so ready to carry out their wishes. Then they swam out to the middle of the lake, where they found a stout stick. They tied it fast to their necks with water-lily roots. This done, they went back to the turtle, and the elder duck explained, as she pushed the stick towards him, 'Take this stick firmly in your mouth, and don't let go of it until we have set you down on the ground once more.'

'I'll hold on like grim death,' answered the turtle, and he meant to keep his promise faithfully.

Then he caught the stick firmly in his mouth, and the two ducks soared up into the air with the stick fastened to their necks.

Over hills and dales, mountains and valleys, brooks and rivers they flew, but no lake was to be found. Yet the turtle did not feel the least frightened, but clung fast to the stick.

At last they came to a tiny village, and soon they were flying just over the roofs of the houses. Some little boys were playing on the green, and noticing the strange sight, they cried at the top of their voices: 'Look, look! there are two ducks carrying a turtle!'

The villagers all hurried out of their cottages, and stood gaping at the wonder. Even the very ploughmen stopped their work to gaze at the strange travelling companions.

The ducks flew on quietly, and troubled little about the stir they were causing in the village. But the turtle was pleased beyond measure that people stood gazing at him. At first he kept quite silent, as he had promised to do; but after a while he began to think that all these people were envying him because he was able to fly through the air.

Forgetting the ducks' warning, he thought he would make a little speech, and opening his mouth wider to do so, he lost his grip of the stick. In a second he fell down heavily through the air, and was dashed to pieces against the side of a house.

Then the ducks let the stick fall which had held up their friend, and winged their way onwards with sad hearts.

But the elder duck said wisely to her companion: 'I feared this journey would end badly. But perhaps the turtle was wise to come with us; he would have had a lonely end on the lake.'

Translated by M. FAX.

NICOTINE.

YOU will often hear people speak of the dirty black liquid that accumulates in the stem of a tobacco pipe as nicotine. This is not really correct, for although it contains a little nicotine, this liquid is mostly water, tar, and other substances formed by burning tobacco.

Pure nicotine is colourless, like clear water, though it is thicker, and does not run so easily. It is so exceedingly poisonous that one-tenth of a grain in weight is sufficient to kill a man. Fortunately a whole pound of tobacco only contains about half an ounce of nicotine, and nearly all this is destroyed when the tobacco is burnt.

THE HOME TOY-SHOP.

I.—GAMES FOR A RAINY DAY.



YOU mark out a square on a piece of stout cardboard seven inches by seven inches, and rule it into forty-nine equal squares of one inch. On twenty-five separate one-inch squares of card put the numbers one to twenty-five, and set these on the board in any way, the positions being changed after each game. In the illustration (fig. 1), the twenty-five numbered

pieces form a compact square in the twenty-five inner compartments.

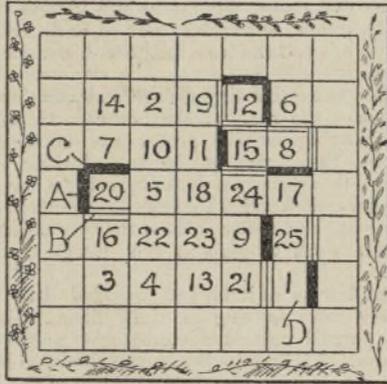


Fig. 1.—A Walling-off Game.

Two opponents are each provided with fifty-six strips of paper or thin card, about one inch long and a quarter of an inch wide. Two distinct colours, such as black and white, should be used for each set: a centre line running lengthways on the white strips to act as a guide when placing them on the divisional lines. The idea is



Fig. 2.—A Tiddleywinks Target.

to enclose the numbers by means of these short lengths, the player who completes the square being entitled to add the enclosed number to his score. For example: the numbers having been arranged as shown, Black

starts as at A, 20; White plays as at B; Black places C; White then fills in the remaining side and scores twenty.

Of course, in actual play such a simple method would be avoided. This is given merely to show that White, by putting the last side to that square, claims twenty

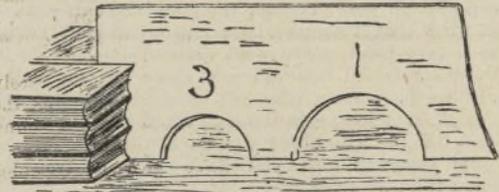


Fig. 3.—An Aiming Game.

points. To see a more complicated fight, glance at squares 1 and 25. Two sides of each have been closed, and it is Black's turn to play. His object is to let White have one point, while he himself takes twenty-five. He, therefore, puts his next strip on the line D. Then, if White closes in 1, Black at his next move captures 25. At 8 and 15, again, all sides are closed in except the central line. White has just scored twelve by closing in that square with the strip that lies along the top of 15. In so doing, he has caused the appearance of an uncovered division between two otherwise completed squares. Black supplies the necessary strip, and

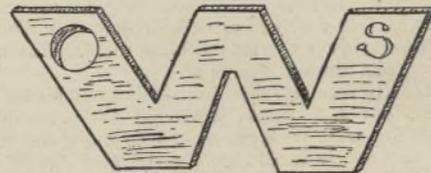


Fig. 4.—A Balancing Puzzle.

claims the value of *both* squares—twenty-three; seeing that he has enclosed the two. Needless to say, the player gaining the most points is the winner.

The same board can be used as a scoring-board for the well-known game of 'Tiddley-Winks,' the numbered squares being distributed in any uneven way.

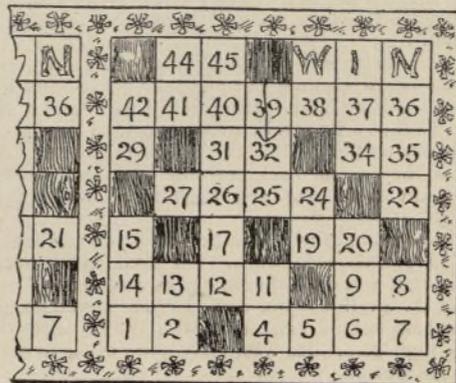


Fig. 5.—A Football Game.

A target can be set up as shown in fig. 2, for 'Tiddley-Wink' players to shoot at. Cut out some comical cardboard figure, about two inches long, and across the chest glue a strip of match-wood. A few books with a length of thread twisted tightly round the topmost make a suitable tight-rope on which the figure can be balanced by means of the short piece of match-wood. When

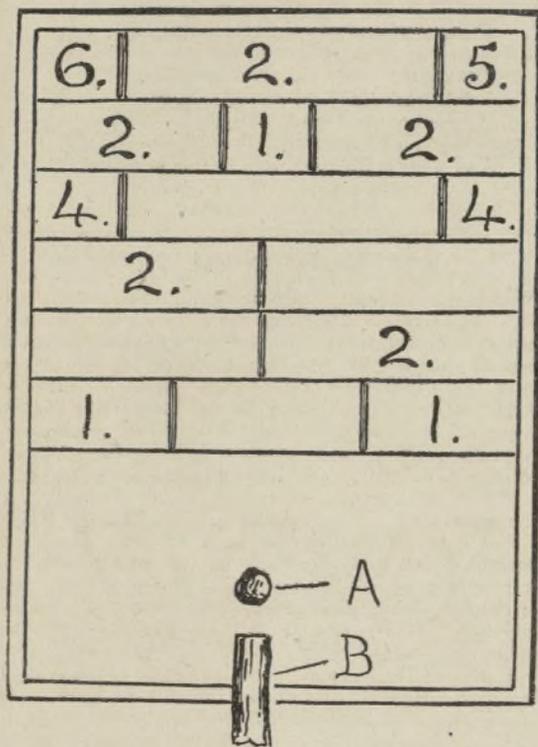


Fig. 6.—P's and Q's.

firing, the small counters should be placed on a double layer of cloth, and then chipped by the edge of a larger counter.

Another simple game can be invented with cardboard and marbles. Along one edge of a piece of cardboard about eighteen inches long, four inches wide, cut away two or more half-circles, as at fig. 3. Wedge the ends of the card between a few books, so that it stands quite firm. Now roll a small marble along the surface of the table, trying to send it straight through one of the openings. A larger number of points should be allowed for getting through a small hole than through a large one.

The notion shown in fig. 4 will help to give a pleasant half-hour. From a piece of thick cardboard about eight inches by four inches, cut out any letter of the alphabet. At one end or corner make a hole large enough to take a small marble without going through. Now place the marble as far away as possible—s shows the starting-point on w, fig. 4—and try to coax it along the shape of the letter and into the hole.

To obtain a football game, prepare a board with forty-nine squares (seven by seven), each measuring one inch

by one inch, as shown in fig. 5. Begin at the left-hand lower corner and mark in the numbers, working backwards and forwards along the lines horizontally, as in the illustration (some of the squares are shaded, to show an imaginary arrangement of 'men'). Finish at 46, and fill the remaining squares with the word 'Win.' Two similar boards will be needed, being placed alongside each other, as shown. Both players are provided with eleven blank one-inch squares of card. They each have control of one board, and place the eleven men almost as they please—but not quite. One must occupy square 46. That represents the goal-keeper, and his powers will be explained presently. In placing the other squares, or men, it is not allowable to cover squares 39 and 32, which come immediately below 46, and there cannot be two in adjoining consecutive squares, such as 17 and 18, 21 and 22. But of course this rule does not apply to such figures as 22 and 35, which, although adjoining, are not consecutive.

Two dice, or teetotums, and two counters are required. The players provided with one of each throw turn about. Mr. A starts and throws, say, 6: he sets his counter on that square upon the board arranged by his opponent. Mr. B follows, and sets his counter on the board prepared by Mr. A. It goes without saying, the two boards need not necessarily be set out with men in exactly the same way.

When a player throws a number which brings him on to a square protected by a man, he must remain where he is until his opponent has thrown. Towards the end of the game, when a player throws 39 or 46 he goes back to 32, as indicated by the arrow. Anything over 46 gives him the game.

The lid of a cardboard box, a few dried peas, and a pen-holder are the only things necessary for the making of the game of 'P's and Q's' (fig. 6).



Fig. 7.—A Travel Game.

Across a piece of cardboard measuring about twelve-inches long, six inches wide, rule parallel lines about three-eighths of an inch apart, finishing four or five inches from one end. Then divide the spaces into several parts, making very thick dividing lines, and give each part a different value, as shown by the illustration.

A dried pea, A, is placed a short distance from the bottom line, and is driven by means of a pen-holder, B.

The players take one stroke each in rotation, and whoever scores fifty first is the winner. When the pea rolls into a numbered space the player adds that amount.

to his score. If the pea enters an unnumbered partition, the player is not entitled to any points. Should the pea settle on a horizontal line one is deducted, while two must be lost when the pea stops on one of the thick divisional lines.

Another game is played with a board made from a piece of card twenty-one inches long, two inches wide; but of course two, or more, pieces can be joined to make the required length. This is divided into twenty-eight spaces, each three-quarters of an inch wide, and then into fifty-six by means of a centre line running the whole length of the card. Mark the numbers 1 to 28 on one side of the board, and 29 to 54 on the other. Put 'Gate' on 55, and 'Home' on 56.

Cut ten pieces of card to fit the spaces. On these pieces either print the following words, or draw suitable objects to represent them: 'Motor,' 'Uncle,' 'Flowers,' 'House,' 'Penny,' 'Go Back' (two of these), 'Shop' (three pieces). The two 'Go Back' may be shown by swans on a pond, as at space 5 in the illustration (fig. 7).

These separate pieces are placed on any of the spaces, as agreed between the players before starting the game. It would be as well, however, to make certain restrictions. For instance, neither of the 'Go Back' pieces should be placed beyond space 28—that is, in the first half of the journey. The 'Motor' should be on the return stretch, somewhere between 29 and 40.

Each player is provided with a counter or a small piece of coloured card, and dice are thrown, or a teetotum spun, turn about, each player having the use of one. Then according to the number thrown, so they take up their positions on the board. Now, when the number thrown brings the player to a 'Go Back' space, a fresh start must be made; getting on to a space occupied by 'Shop' means that the player loses his next turn of throwing; 'Flowers' and 'House' also denote that the player reaching them must lose one throw. To meet 'Uncle' is rather fortunate, as the player goes forward to 'Shop,' wheresoever that happens to be placed. On the other hand, the finder of 'Penny' goes back till he comes to 'Shop.' It will therefore be clearly seen that some attention must be paid to the proper placing of 'Shop' and 'Uncle'; also 'Shop' and 'Penny.' A lucky throw to 'Motor' takes the player immediately on to 'Gate.' And unless taken to 'Gate' in this way each player must arrive there with an exact throw. Suppose, for instance, 51 is reached, 4 must be thrown to take 'Gate.' A throw of 5 or 6 means that the player stands still. Of course, any number under 4 can be made; for example, 3 lands the player on to 54, and then an exact throw of 1 is necessary. The 'Gate' having been reached, either by 'Motor' or by throwing, another exact number must be made to get 'Home.' In this case, however, the number need not be limited to 1, as any number can be decided upon by the players before starting the game.

J. C. NELSON.

WHEN SNOWFLAKES FALL.

WHEN snowflakes fall, the pine-trees tall
Are clad in winter's livery,
Like warrior giants, stern and brave,
They guard their monarch loyally;
The chestnut boughs are bare and brown,
The oak and beech are leafless all,
The willows shiver by the stream,
And sadly sigh—when snowflakes fall!

Then boldly on the chill hillside
The pine-trees lift their heads on high,
As, one by one, like pallid moths,
The whirling flakes flit swiftly by;
Or, if a sudden sunbeam dares
To pierce the cloudy leaden pall,
Their branches gleam with frost-gems bright—
When fleecy snowflakes cease to fall!

The north wind revels in their boughs,
And sings them martial melodies,
Ere rushing down the mountain-side,
He lingers 'mid the lofty trees,
Whose branches wear a beauty new
When hoar-frost glitters on them all,
And weaves for them rich chains of gems
At Christmas-tide—when snowflakes fall!

MAUD E. SARGENT.

HOW LANGUAGES GREW.

THE earliest human inhabitants of the earth had no language such as we have to-day. They spoke to one another largely in signs and gestures, pointing at a man or an object for want of a name. Children do the same thing to-day when they want to call attention to something of which they do not know the name. Exclamations like 'Oh! Ah! Eh!' have been used from the very-earliest times to express such varied feelings as surprise, pain, sorrow, interest, disgust, and contempt. And these words, or 'sound gestures,' are the same in all modern languages.

Not only were actions imitated in dumb-show, but natural sounds were also imitated, and the sounds made were used as names. For example, 'ka-ka' means crow, in Sanskrit, and 'pipit' means whistle in the Malay language. Words similar to these were probably the earliest words used.

The wonderfully complicated languages of the present day, that boys and girls find so difficult to learn, have all grown out of such small beginnings as these, just as a chicken comes out of an egg and an oak-tree from a tiny acorn.

BAGHDAD.

The Fairy City of the 'Arabian Nights.'

I.

IT was in a moonlight rush, we are told, that the Mesopotamian army, consisting of British and Indian troops, captured the city of Baghdad. A moonlight rush—how well it seems to fit in with our ideas, for is there any one who does not think of Baghdad as a fairy city? Its very name recalls to mind its one-time ruler, the Caliph Haroun Al-Raschid, and the *Arabian Nights*, whose pages record in fascinating, picturesque story the splendour of this greatest and (as it was then) most renowned city of the world. But since those days it has known many different masters and has passed through various ups and downs.

Baghdad must be one of the oldest cities in the world, for a place of some importance, called Bagh-da-du, existed near (if not actually on the same spot) as early as 2000 B.C., and there are proofs that even this was *not* the earliest city but was built on the site of a still older one.

However, all this belongs to a very dim and legendary past—the interest for us begins with the rise of the

historical city, as we may call it, so we will pass on to about the middle of the eighth century, when this, like the older one, was founded on a bank of the river Tigris. The name had evidently taken firm possession of the site, and was inherited by the new city in the slightly altered form of 'Baghdad.'

It was planned and built by the Arab caliph, El Mansur, who was the second of the 'Abbaside' rulers—a name they derived from Abbas, uncle of Mahomet the Prophet, and the founder of the dynasty, or line, who ruled as Caliphs* of Baghdad from that time onward for about five hundred years.

But before describing the place itself, let us see where it is to be found. We must look for it in the south-western part of Turkey in Asia, in the plain which lies between the two historic rivers, Euphrates and Tigris—Mesopotamia, as it is called (a word meaning 'between the rivers'), and, according to our Bible, the land which was the cradle of the human race and the first inhabited part of the world.

El Mansur built his city on the western bank of the Tigris. It was circular in form and enclosed by three walls and a ditch. Between the outer wall (which was about four miles round) and the second one, there was an open ring which could be patrolled, the object of this arrangement being, we are told, 'to prevent enemies or traitors outside from communicating with their friends within.' Between the second and third walls were the houses of the city, while inside the third was yet another space, sufficiently large for troops to manoeuvre in. The centre of all was occupied by the mosque and the caliph's palace, or 'Golden Gate.' There were four gates, looking to the four points of the compass; roads ran from these to the centre, dividing the city into four quarters. Upon the opposite, or east bank of the river, a suburb rapidly sprang up; this speedily developed such prosperity that soon it outrivalled in importance the round city on the western side.

The new Baghdad continued to grow and prosper, until by the time Haroun Al-Raschid became Caliph it not only contained something like two million inhabitants but, with the additional improvements made by him, became the greatest and most renowned city in the world, celebrated for its splendid mosques and palaces; its luxurious gardens; its flourishing colleges; its bazaars, or shops, thronged with merchants; its carpet looms, and its wonderful canals; while under Haroun Al-Raschid, as well as under his son and successor, it became the centre of Arabic learning and science, for here were gathered clever men in all branches of knowledge. Among the things they gave to the world were Algebra and the Arabic numerals (0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9); names of many of the groups of stars in the heavens; while to descend to something less important, though decidedly useful, it is to them we owe the gilding and silvering of pills. And Baghdad, the wonder city, had but one rival in the arts of literature and science—that was Cordova, which, however, it far surpassed in wealth.

But Haroun Al-Raschid conjures up also the Baghdad of the *Arabian Nights*, for numbers of the tales contained in it are supposed to belong to the times of the Caliphs, and especially to his reign. Indeed, he took an

* A title given to the successors of Mahomet. The Caliph, as well as being the head of the religion, was also supreme governor.

important part in many of the stories, for, we are told, it was the custom of the Caliph 'Alraschid the Just' to walk at night time through the city, attended by his grand vizier and his chief of household (all disguised as merchants), in order to see for himself the condition of his people and to hear what was reported of his court and government. Very familiar to most English children are most of the tales in which he figures, and perhaps none more so than 'Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves' and 'Sinbad the Sailor.' Although many of the stories of the *Arabian Nights* are purely fairy tales, those which relate to Haroun Al-Raschid are really historical and have the further value of helping, beneath their amusement, to give us some idea of Eastern manners and customs, and also of the splendour which once marked out the *Arabian Nights* city.

Baghdad not only continued to flourish, but also remained, from the time of its foundation in 763 (except for an interval of some fifty years) the seat of the Caliphate. As might be expected, however, so beautiful, wealthy, and famous a city was the envy of many nations, and about the middle of the thirteenth century a powerful enemy appeared at its gates—Hulaku Khan, the Mongol, who stormed and entered the city, taking prisoner the last Caliph and eventually putting him to death, thus bringing to an end the Abbaside dynasty.

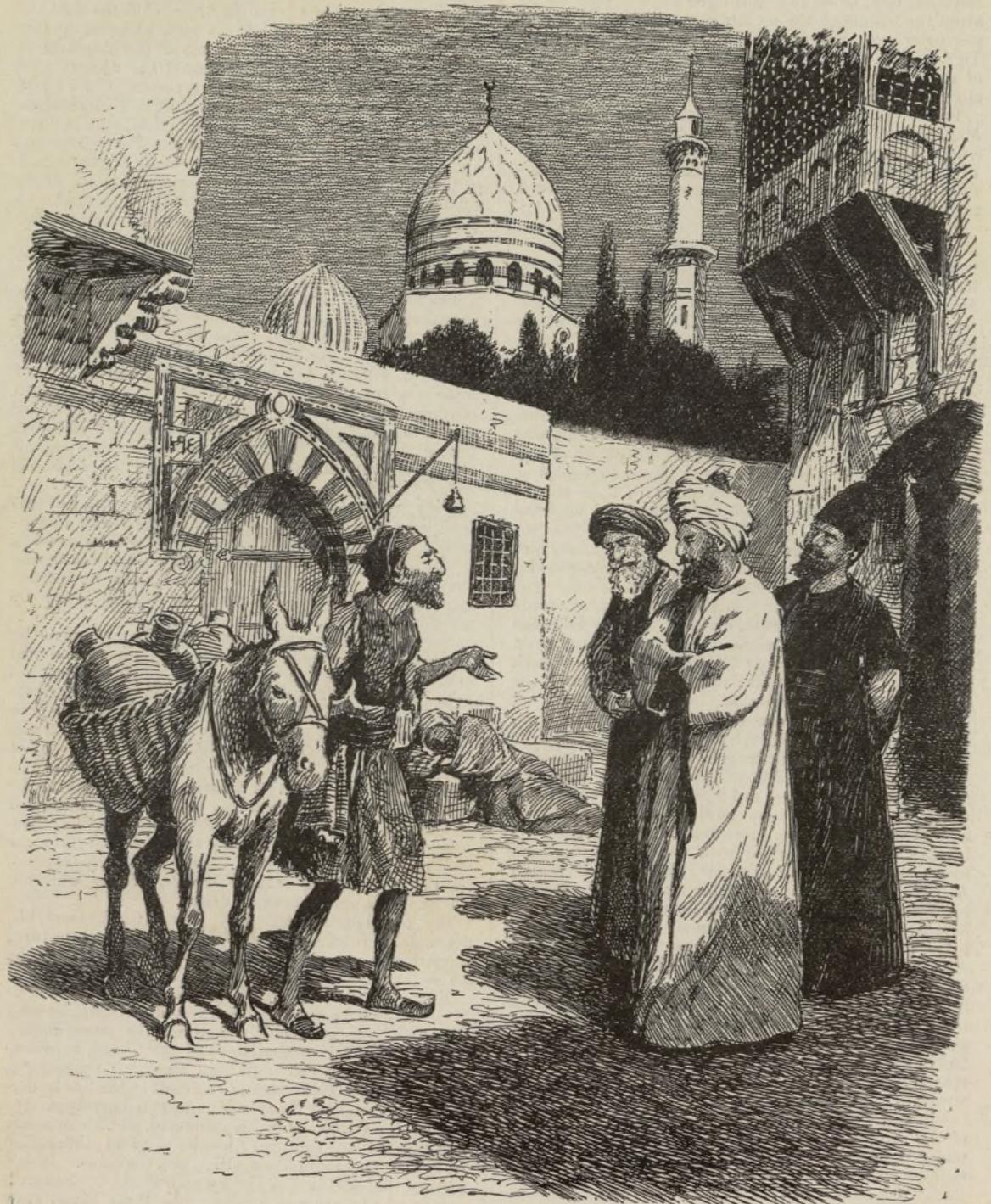
Very tragic too is the account of the city itself at this juncture when, in the height of its prosperity, it was attacked and pillaged by its fierce enemy, who demolished mosques and palaces, and after torturing and murdering thousands of its people—not even sparing its learned men and professors—destroyed or carried away its priceless treasures.

Nor was this by any means all the damage done by Hulaku—in one single year he ruined their wonderful artificial waterways, or canals, thus destroying, we are told, 'the work of three hundred generations.' As we have already seen, Mesopotamia is a large flat, treeless plain, to the level of which its rivers rise during the rainy season. Being a hot climate, the irrigation, or watering, of the soil is of supreme importance. In ancient days its irrigation systems (dating back to the time of Abraham) were not only most carefully attended to but were very perfect, with the result that this otherwise dry plain became so fertile that it gained the name of 'the granary of the world.' Owing to the destruction, by Hulaku and his Mongol hordes, of the watering systems, this again became a desert.

For one hundred and fifty years Hulaku and his descendants ruled over Baghdad, and then they, in turn, were driven out by a still stronger enemy—Timor the Lame (or Tamerlane).

From this time onwards Baghdad became a mere bone of contention between the Turks and Persians, owning sometimes one as master, sometimes the other, finally falling, in 1638, into the hands of the Turks, in whose possession it remained until that memorable moonlight night in March, 1917, when, as a result of the fine leadership of General Sir Stanley Maude, and bravery on the part of the troops under his command, the historic city of Baghdad was captured (in spite of great difficulties) from the Turks and their allies, the Germans. It is a victory that will live in history on account of the heroic valour of our army in crossing the Diala River, crew after crew pushing forward, without wavering, to certain death.

(Concluded on page 35.)



"It was the custom of the Caliph to walk at night-time through the city."



CHATTERBOX.

COMRADES IN ARMS.