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Commander of the Order of the Crown of Siam.
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COMMANDER OF THE ORDER OF THE CROWN OF SIAM.

If I faults in friend discover,
   Find him not in acts the same,
I, by friendship moved, pass over
   What in him provoketh blame.
What a friend of evil doeth
I to him will never do;
Fault which unto him accrue
   I with grace indulgent view.
To a friend's defects the blindness
   Of a friend is friendship's part,
Friendship this preserves through kindness
   Worthy of a noble heart.

1 From an anonymous Arabic poem.—Kosegarten, p. 153.
GLEANINGS FROM THE ARABIC.

To a Tomb.

وَقَيلَ فِي قَبْرِ
يا تَنْهَرْيَا قَبْرُهُمَا زَالَتْ مَخَالِسَةٌ
أمَّ قَدْ تَنْعَمَ دَاكَ الْمَخَالِسَةُ النَّهَرِ
يا تَنْهَرْيَا أَنْتَ لَ رَوَىَ وَلَا قُلْتَ
فَكِّيَفَ يُجْمَعُ فِيْكَ الْعَطُسُ وَالْقُمْرَ

Translation.

O Tomb, hath beauty vanished from his brow?
Form young and fair, and hath it changed so soon?
Nor dewy mead, nor spangled vault art thou,
Yet covetest fair branch and radiant moon!

Latin reddatum.

O tumule! ingenuam frontem lux alma reliquit?
Deserit heu! nati mollia membra decus!
Non sunt prata tibi, neque coelum aut lumina caeli—
Fulgentem lunam tu salicemque cupis?

Auf Deutsch.

Du Grab, sind seine Blüthezeit und Jugend schon verschwunden,
Erbleicht die liebliche Gestalt in schweren Todes stunden?
Die Pracht des Himmels kannst du nicht, der Wies' auch nicht entfalten,
Willst gierig doch den Mondenglanz den grünen Zweig behalten.
"Εν τῷ Ἑλληνικῷ γλῶσσῃ.

"Αρ' οὖν τύμβε κάκιστ', ὑπὸ χώματι νηλεοποίῳ
Κάλλος ἐφυρε φίλον καὶ νεότητα κόνις.
Οὐρανὸς οὐ σοὶ ἐνεστ' οὐ λειμῶν· πῶς σοὶ σελήνῃ
Λαμπροτάτην, καὶ πῶς τὸν καλὸν ὄζον ἔχεις;

En Français.

Ses attraits et son front rayonnant et serein
Gisent-ils enloutis, O Tombeau, dans ton sein ?
Tu n'as pas le beau pré, la voûte lumineuse,
Veux-tu donc le rameau, la lune radieuse?

Tradotto in lingua Italiana.

Ahi tomba! Ahi! sono, sotto il triste velo,
Il suo sorriso e la belta svaniti;
Non sei tu il prato od il ridente cielo;
Son in te il ramo e l' alma luna uniti?
'Twixt Alka and Balakith we
On swift white camels borne, were riding;
But memory brought sweet dreams of thee
My wandering steps and absence chiding.

Nor farther might the wanderer stray,
Since Love, I cried, forbids to roam,
Quick! Camels on your homeward way!
The wanderer turns to love and home.

Hamasa, p. 550.

The name of the author of the preceding poem was Abubakr (Ibn Abdurrahman Ibn Almiswar Ibn Makhramat) of Medina, a poet of the family of the Kūraish. He had married Saliha, the daughter of Abu Ubaidah, to whom he was tenderly attached. On one occasion, when on his way to Syria, he was so overcome by his affection for his wife, and by his longings to rejoin her, that he struck his camels on the head, turned them round, and went back to Medina. On this occasion he composed the preceding verses. When his wife heard his verses, and saw that for her sake he had returned to Medina, she was naturally much gratified. She said that of all the objects of her regard he was most dear to her, and that in future she should withhold nothing from
him. She also made over to him her private property, with which she had not previously allowed him to interfere.

White camels of pure breed were held in high estimation by the Arabs.

The following lines, which are also taken from the Hamasa, p. 803, may remind us of the English proverb which tells us that when "Poverty comes in at the door Love flies out at the window":

Translation.
Bid camel stoop, descend, and dip,
If love torment thee, bread
Or cake in oil, 'twill serve thee in
The absent fair one's stead.
When hunger is with love combined,
Though love its tale be telling,
The lov'd one thou wilt soon forget,
And breasts in beauty swelling.

Latine redditum.
Siste et panem oleo descendens unge, levamen
Cordis, si miserum cor nimis angit amor.
Flamma guæ simul ac desevit et ardor edendi,
Cedit amor stomacho, cedit et alma Venus.

En Français.
Si tu n'as pas l'objet que l'amour cherche en vain,
Descends de ton chameau, mouille de l'huile un pain,
Ayant peur de la faim, qu'il voit à sa poursuite,
L'amour fait le poltron, et se sauve bien vite.
Love and Hunger.

When o'er one luckless wight love and hunger bear sway,
Death slips in close behind them and clutches his prey.

Hamasa, p. 805.

On the Rose.

Thy love is as the scent of blushing rose,
A few brief hours its life of sweetness close;
My love for thee is as the myrtle's sheen,
Through heat and cold it lives for ever green.

Translation.

Ün τῇ Ἑλληνικῇ γλώσσῃ
Σὰν μὲν ἑρωτα τὸ δόνος εἰκάζω Κύπριδος ἀμβροῖς,
Τῶν δὲ ρόδων βιώτης ἀκύμορος φθινόθεν
Μάλλον ἐμὸς μύρτοισιν ἑρως θαλεροῖσιν ἐδικε,
Οὕτε κρύος δεδώτω χείματος, οὕτ' ἀλέην.

Latine redditum.

Ut rosa cui vita spatium breve Fata dederunt
Sic levis in vestro pectore crescit amor;
Noster amor, myrto similis, viget omnibus horis,
Nec solem ardentem aut frigora dura timet.

Auf Deutsch.

Den Rosen deine liebe gleicht,
Die Rosen bald verblüh'n.
Den Myrthen gleich die meinige
Bleibt ewig jung und grün.

En Français.

La rose et sa beauté ne durent qu'un matin,
Tel est de ton amour la vie et le destin!
Mon amour plus constant, plus au myrte semblable,
Ni le froid glacial, ni la chaleur n'accable.
On the Rose.

The season of the roses had gone by,
The loved one with sweet gift, a rose, drew nigh.
The rose's birth-place was not far to seek,
For she had culled it from her blushing cheek.

Translation.

Tempore quo periere rosae, quas frigora terrent,
Attulit adveniens cara puella rosam,
In quo flos crevit patuit locus inde, rosaque
Passim in perpulchris enituere genis.

Auf Deutsch.

Die Zeit der Rosen war vorbei mein Liebchen kam und zeigte
Ein Röslein schön, und sich zu mir mit süsem lächeln neigte;
Ich fragte nicht in welchem land die Rose sei geboren,
Die wange zum geburtsort war und wohnsitz auserkoren.

En Français.

La Rose des jardins était déjà flétrie,
Une Rose en cadeau m'apporta ma chérie;
D'où venait ce cadeau, source de mon bonheur?
Je regardais sa joue, et j'y voyais la fleur.
GLEANINGS FROM THE ARABIC.

ON A DOVE IN A CAGE.


Translation.

Poor dove! when near her cage I heard
The tuneful plaint of captive bird:
“These twigs,” she cried, “which now to me
As cage-bars bring captivity,
Were branches once whose verdure spread
Its sheltering leaf-world o’er my head.”

Latine redditum.

Væ mihi, væ miseræ! tenerà sic voce columba
Florabat sylvæ gaudìa amissa suæ;
Rami qui nuper gratà me fronde tegebant,
Clathrorum formas, carceris instar, habent.

En Français.

La colombe disait, étant prisonnière,
“Les rameaux ombrageux qui me couvraient naguère,
En cage recourbés font ma triste prison,
Et bornent de mes jours le lugubre horizon.”

Auf Deutsch.

Der Taube die gefangen war einst hört’ich den gesang,
Es lautete ganz kümmerlich der trauervolle klang:
“Die zweige die beschützten mich auf sonnigen gefildten
Einsperren mich, und, mitleidlos, ein vogelbauer bilden.”
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Muâwiya, the sixth Khalif in succession after Muhammad, was the first of the fourteen Khalifs of the family which presided during a period of nearly a century over the destinies of the Saracenic Empire. His father, Abu-Sufian, was of the tribe of the Kuraish, a tribe to which Muhammad also belonged. Muâwiya and his wife became followers of the Prophet on the same day as that on which the father of the former, who had previously commanded the forces of the enemy, announced his adherence to the new religion. By this conversion Muhammad received a great accession of strength, and was induced, in consideration of its importance, to grant two out of the three requests by which it was accompanied. The first was that Abu-Sufian might take the command of the army of the Faithful against the Infidels. The second, that his son, who afterwards became Khalif, might be appointed Secretary to the Prophet. The third, that Muhammad would vouchsafe to marry the second daughter of Abu-Sufian. The Prophet, however, who complied with the two former of these requests, refused to comply with the latter. Maisun, the Bedouin wife of Muâwiya, was the daughter of Jandal, of the tribe of Kalb. She was a poetess of no mean power, as the poem of which the following is a paraphrase goes far to prove. The original lines are given with some inaccuracy in Carlyle's specimens of Arabian poetry and in Adler's edition of the
Annals of Abulfeda, the great Arabian historian. There appear to be different readings of these celebrated verses, and I was indebted to Faris Shidiak, the translator of the Bible and Prayer Book into Arabic, for two verses which, he assured me, belong to the poem, though not found in either of the texts referred to. I have not hesitated to incorporate them in the text and in my paraphrase, for they are so completely in the spirit of the others, that I cannot but think they originally formed part of, and ought never to have been separated from, the rest of the poem. They are verses 5 and 6 in the Arabic text.

One day the Khalif chanced to hear his wife singing the verses, which were certainly by no means flattering to him, so he said to her: "Thou wast not content, O daughter of Jandal, until thou hadst called me a fat donkey. Get thee to thy family! Elhaki biahliki (literally, join thy family)." This was one of the forms of Mussulman divorce, and Maisun was divorced accordingly. So she went back to her desert and rejoined the Bani Kalb, and her son Yazid, who afterwards became Khalif, went with her.
PARAPHRASE.

The Lament of Maisun, the Bedouin wife of Mudwiya.

I give thee all the treacherous brightness
Of glittering robes which grace the fair,
Then give me back my young heart’s lightness
And simple vest of Camel’s hair.
The tent on which free winds are beating
Is dearer to the Desert’s child
Than Palaces and kingly greeting—
O bear me to my desert wild!
More dear than swift mule softly treading,
While gentlest hands his speed control,
Are camels rough their lone way threading
Where caravans through deserts roll.
On couch of silken ease reclining
I watch the kitten’s sportive play,
But feel the while my young heart pining
For desert guests and watch-dog’s bay.
The frugal desert’s banquet slender,
The simple crust which tents afford,
Are dearer than the courtly splendour
And sweets which grace a monarch’s board.
And dearer far the voices pealing
From winds which sweep the desert round
Than Pomp and Power their pride revealing
In noisy timbrel’s measur’d sound.
Then bear me far from kingly dwelling,
From Luxury’s cold and pamper’d child,
To seek a heart with freedom swelling,
A kindred heart in deserts wild.

Note.—Mr. Sabunjie informs me that in the Kamus, published at Beyrout under the auspices of competent Muhammadan and Christian scholars, and approved by the ‘Ulamá of the Azhar at Cairo, the name of the father of Maisun is given as Jandal and not Bahdal, which latter is the name given by some of the earlier authorities. Jandal is also the name given in Lane’s Arabic Dictionary.

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GLEANINGS FROM THE ARABIC.

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Sakâb.

The traditional affection of the Arab for his horse may be regarded as a branch of that traditional kindness to animals for which, not the Arabs only, but many Oriental races, are eminently and honourably distinguished. The dog, indeed, from his rare and valuable instincts, and his capacity for attachment and personal devotion, is admirably fitted to be the faithful friend and servant of man. The watch-dog of the Arabs, whose bay salutes the coming guest, or warns tent-dwellers of the approach of danger, receives, occasionally, tributes in Arabian song. The camel is, no doubt, the animal most useful to the Arabs, especially when of the breeds of Nejd or Oman. The camel is capable of enduring great fatigue, and of transporting very heavy burdens. It supplies its master with excellent milk, which is said to be equal to that of the she-ass, though neither butter nor cheese are made of it. The camel, too, yields a soft and fine wool, said to be superior to sheep’s wool, from which many articles of dress are manufactured; and its flesh, though said to be deficient in flavour, forms the principal animal food of the inhabitants of Arabia. The Arab horse, however, and especially the Arab mare, is more esteemed, and bears a higher value, than the camel, and is more peculiarly the favourite of the children of the Arabian desert. The purest breed is that of Nejd. A mare, or even a horse, of this breed, is never disposed of by sale. Gift, capture in war, or testamentary bequest, are said to be the only recognized
methods of transfer. Horse-pedigrees are carefully preserved and transmitted, sometimes orally, and sometimes even by written documents.1

The importance attached to pedigree and purity of descent, the reluctance to sell, and the amount of family affection, which could be gathered round a favourite Arab mare, are touchingly illustrated in the poem of which a free rendering is given below. The poem was written by one of the tribe of the Banu Tamîm, whose favourite mare, named Sakâb, a king of Hira had threatened to take away from him. The tribe of the Banu Tamîm inhabited that part of Arabia which lies between Basra and Mecca. The original poem is preserved in the Hamāsa, a collection of old Arabic poems made by Abû Tamām, who was himself a poet, and, as such, held in high esteem among the Arabs.

Blessings on thee! 2 costliest treasure
Of our home Sakâb we hold;
Jewel without price or measure,
Never to be lent or sold.

1 See an interesting account of the breeds of Arabian horses by Mr. Palgrave in the Encyclopaedia Britannica.
2 Literally, let not imprecations be uttered against thee. Freytag mentions in a note that this form of addressing kings was only used in times preceding Muhammad. Ne dira tibi precentur! Gott schutze dich! Rückert.
With our all we would redeem her,  
And our children fasting go,¹  
That Sakâb— we so esteem her—  
May not thirst or hunger know.

They from whom Sakâb descended  
Shone victorious in the race;  
We their noble lineage blended  
In the far-famed Kurah trace.

Blessings on thee! may’st thou never  
From us wrest our trusty friend!  
We have loved her, and will ever  
To our dying hour defend.²

I am tempted, in illustration of the foregoing poem, and of those feelings of attachment which the Arabian breed of horses seems formed by nature to call forth, to refer to an interesting anecdote in the life of a distinguished Indian officer. In “My Indian Journal,” a work published in 1864 by Colonel Walter Campbell, and abounding in graphic sketches of Indian sport and life, he refers, in a few spirited and graceful words, to his favourite little Arab horse, called Turquoise, to whose instinctive qualities he pays a touching tribute in prose (p. 289). To that suggestive tribute and its natural associations I have endeavoured to give expression in the following stanzas—

**TURQUOISE.**

My Arab steed, my Arab steed,  
A trusty steed is he;  
With winged wind he shares its speed,  
And shares my sport with me.

¹ When Arab men gave camel’s milk to a horse, it is said to have caused frequently a little domestic disturbance, as the Arab mothers did not like to see their children robbed of even a portion of their meal for the sake of a quadruped.

² Literally, to prevent you from taking her from us will to us be possible.
When pitiless the rain descends,  
Within my tent he sleeps;  
His rug he to his master lends,  
And faithful vigil keeps.

So light his sleep, no watch-dog e'er  
Kept surer watch than he;  
Each voice that stirs the midnight air  
He catches wistfully.

He wakes me if he hears the drum  
Or morning's bugle sound;  
If stranger to my camp-tent come,  
A guardian there is found.

He sleeps beside me peacefully;  
He serves my every need;  
A comrade near and dear to me  
Is that fleet Arab steed.

I had hoped to find some Arabic poem illustrative of the life and character of the Bedouins, in which, relatively to his services in battle, as well as in the predatory excursions of his master, the Arab steed might naturally be expected to play no unimportant part. I was, however, only able to find a brief Bedouin fragment, which I have embodied in the two first stanzas of the following poem, while trusting to my imagination for filling up the no doubt imperfect sketch.

THE LAY OF THE BEDOUIN.

Ye children of the City,  
Soft sons of Luxury,  
Of a manly race the dwelling  
Is the Desert wild and free.

To us the swift horse flying  
Impetuous to the goal,  
Or in battle bravely dying—  
To you the ass's foal.
Unmatch'd in power and beauty
Is the steed of the Bedouin,
Not a cloud or a hoof-print telleth
Where his arrowy race hath been;

With his courage tried in battle,
And his limbs inur'd to toil,
Where the red flood round him floweth,
He bears us on to spoil.

Bright rays are o'er him beaming
From the steel of the quiv'ring lance;
But a nobler light is streaming
From his eyeballs' fiery glance.

When he champs the bit, the foam-flakes
Fly around him, thick and fast,
Like the snows in their drifted whiteness
On the wings of the mountain blast;

And the phrenzy of his nostrils,
And the snortings of his rage,
Are a terror gathering o'er him
Where the swords with swords engage.

To you the couch of splendour
And the garden's bower of green;
But the desert and its dangers
For the fearless Bedouin.

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