

The Dalles Daily Chronicle.

The only Republican Daily Newspaper in Wasco County.

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SATURDAY, APRIL 3, 1897

THOUSAND AND SECOND TALE.

SCHEHEREZADE'S LAST, THAT SETTLED THE SULTAN.
(To the A. B. U. W.)
Concluded.

"Once upon a time—" "Chestnuts!" said the sultan. "Rats! Break away!" said the grand vizier. "Who's telling this story, anyhow?" replied Scheherezade, and fixing the concentrated gaze of her two eyes on the G. V., she remarked: "You got in pretty cheap, keep a back seat." "Once upon a time," she began again, "in a country the other side of the salt sea, there lived a good man." "Wonderful!" said the sultan. "Strange, if true," said the grand vizier. "Now, this good man," continued the story teller, "was the friend of the poor and the needy, and sympathized deeply with those whose daily toil but sufficed to meet the expenses of maintaining a family. This good man had observed that when sickness came to such as these that the man being cut off from his labors, either through being the victim, or from having to care for such member of his family as was sick, soon became distressed financially, and in a little while became unable to supply the barest necessities of life. He had observed also that when one of these men died, his life labors having been only sufficient to maintain his family, nothing was laid by, and soon the helpless widow and little orphans became dependent on their weak efforts for their support, or were thrown upon the charity of a too uncharitable world.

"His heart being moved by the contemplation of these sorrowful conditions, he sat himself to work to discover a remedy. He gathered his neighbors to the number of half-dozen or more, and after calling their attention to their helpless condition, he laid before them this plan: 'We are now all strong and well,' said this good man, 'let us therefore swear eternal friendship. Let us be as one family, so that each in turn shall take the burthen from the shoulders of the widows and the orphans, and as we each contribute a trifle each month, so long as we are in good health, so shall it be that when our time comes, each of those left shall contribute a trifle in turn for us, and thus these many mites shall make a goodly sum to maintain our children and our dear ones. The neighbors talked the matter over, and they saw that it was good, and they swore eternal friendship each to the other. These friends told what they had done, to their friends in the next village, and they likewise took the oath of friendship and were admitted into fellowship with the others. And so the news ran from village to village, and from city to city throughout that vast land, until the number of those who had taken the oath of friendship was as the sands on the seashore.

"And so it came to pass that when one of these friends was sick or in need, no matter where he was, he had but to make known by a sign that he had taken the oath of friendship, and he was cared for by his brethren, for all they that had taken this oath were as one family. When one of these brethren died, the other brethren buried him with due honors as one of their own household; and they gathered the mites from the other brethren, and to his widow and his children they brought and delivered two thousand shekels of gold and silver, or currency of the realm. And their shekels enabled the family to live, the children to attend the schools and to learn the wisdom of the Franks, and to grow up good and intelligent citizens."

"Wonderful!" said the sultan.

"Wonderful, if true!" said the grand vizier.

"And this brotherhood," continued Scheherezade, "was as a great tree, whose roots are in prolific soil, and which spread its branches far and wide, until it became famous throughout all the countries beyond the sea, for its deeds of Charity were as purple blossoms, and mingled with them were the red blooms of Hope, and all the breezes were laden with their perfume. And the strong limbs were emblematic of Protection.

But as the tree grew a tiny vine started at its roots, and entwined itself about it. And lo! as the tree was, so was the vine, for the brotherhood saw that their mothers, their sisters, their wives and their daughters were all benefited, not only by the care given them, but by acquaintance with the fraternity; and they, too, took the oath of friendship, and behold in a short time the vine had enwrapped the tree, giving to its blossoms a background of foliage, to its sturdy strength grace, and to its ruggedness beauty. And so throughout all the land the work of this one good man spread, and for every wounded heart there was a balm; for every sorrow, consolation; for every need, aid; for every trouble, sympathy.

"Allah is great!" said the sultan, "and next to Mohamet is the just man." "There is neither happiness nor misery on earth," said the grand vizier, "but only comparison of conditions; and blessed indeed is that land where the good and the ill of every life is shared by all." So saying he saluted profoundly to the sultan, again to Scheherezade, and withdrew to ponder on what he had heard. As for the sultan, he mused long and deeply, and saying "Scheherezade, if I thought that story were true, I would bowstring you ere daylight for not having put me in the right way long ago. As it is, I yield to your superb qualities as a prevaricator, and spare your life on condition that you never again tell me a tale."

Here, sayeth the ancient manuscript, the custom of talking the sultan to sleep ended, and since that time Scheherezade and all her descendants, and their name is legion, have sought a wider field for their talents, and have hired out to the lecture bureaus.



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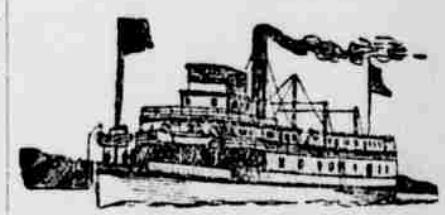
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