CHAPTER XII.

Condition and Outlook of Morocco.

Difficulty of Obtaining Information—Government—The Sultan—Mohammedanism in Morocco—Decadence and Probable Fate of the Nation.

IN no country have I had more difficulty in ascertaining what I wished to know than in Morocco. An English gentleman who has transacted business with Moorish merchants for more than twenty years told me that upon no question relating to the administration of the government or to peculiar religious, social, or political Moorish questions would they say anything, though free to converse upon other subjects. He also said that nine tenths of what he read in the English papers about Morocco he knew to be false or distorted. About the time that we were there the London papers published a sensational account of the execution of two men by decapitation, in which the executioner is represented as sawing away for a long time with a dull knife, and then asking for another, crying out: "Give me another knife; mine doesn't cut." The circumstances and language were given in detail. A short time afterward the *Morocco Times*, published in Tangier, proved conclusively that what was alleged took place many years ago. What is here stated of the peculiarities and prospects of the country is either known by me or believed on the best information obtainable.

The government of Morocco is an absolute despotism. The emperor, or sultan, claims descent from Mohammed, and he belongs to the class *Ashraf*. He retains his court alternately in the three cities of Morocco, Fez, and Mequinez. The Mohammedan population believe him the lawful caliph, the spiritual chief of Islam. Notwithstanding his absolute character the mountain chiefs in the Atlas range defy him, and live in virtual independence of the government. Joseph Thompson, the explorer, arrived in London in November, 1888, and read an essay before the Royal Geographical

Moors on a Journey.

Society describing the utter inability of the sultan to protect him in the interior. He stated that a large part of the Atlas Mountain regions is as entirely unknown and unexplored as the interior of Africa. It has been only seven years since Dr. Foucauld made the first survey of those mountains, traveling in the guise of a Jew. Sir Joseph Hooker had done considerable for geography and botany, but it was not till this year that Mr. Thompson could obtain a passport from Sultan Muley Hassan, and that was strictly limited. I quote from his paper: "Though almost in touch with Europe, many parts of Morocco still remain as completely unexplored as many districts in the heart of Africa." Mr. Thompson and his companions being at Marakesh, and desiring to witness certain festivities, presented their credentials from the sultan and asked the governor for two soldiers to be placed at their disposal. As a reply they received an arbitrary order to remain indoors for the whole of that day. They went out alone, relying upon the letter of the sultan, but were mobbed and grossly insulted. Not long afterward a French explorer was treated in the same manner.

Within forty hours' mule ride of Tangier—that is, about one hundred and fifty miles—is a place called Sheshouan, where, until a year ago, only one Christian is supposed ever to have been. *Blackwood's Magazine* for December, 1888, contained an account of the adventures of Mr. Walter Harris in reaching that point, showing that numbers of the tribes and the inhabitants are as independent of the sultan, as lawless, fanatical, and murderous as any people whom Stanley has encountered. The Beni Hassan men are of all the most quarrelsome and thievish, divided into professional branches, as the corn, cattle, horse, or street thief. When the Italian embassy passed through that country on the way to the capital, after the governor had accompanied it a distance of about two miles, he asked leave to return, and when the Italian embassador demanded why, he answered: "Because my own house is not secure."

The government, being absolute so far as it goes, is corrupt. No rich Moor dares to reveal the fact that he has much money. Agricultural systems have not been improved; exportation is

discouraged; the rules of commerce are antiquated, and taxation is an organized system of extortion. In the courts no Christian's word or oath is taken; hence in 1880, at the convention of Madrid, the protection system was introduced. Fourteen nations are represented by diplomatic representatives. Each holds its court in every town for the trial of cases in which its citizens are involved, except that in three instances the same consul acts for more than one nation. In the legations the privilege is practically absolute. Employees of embassadors cannot be tried in any court of Morocco without due notice being given to their superiors. Foreigners engaged in commerce have protection, and are allowed two protected native agents, called *Semsars*, and the contracting powers may select twelve natives to be protected. While this peculiar system settles some difficulties, a great many abuses have grown up under it. The Moors, ever ready to bribe, find foreigners equally ready to be bribed, and endeavor to circumvent both the government of the sultan and the operation of the protection.

The principle upon which taxation is levied in Morocco is to pounce upon any unprotected citizen and make an arbitrary assessment. If he dresses better than others, educates his children, or builds a fine house, he is considered lawful prey.

Little can be learned of the proceedings of the sultan. At the time we were there contradictory reports about his health were afloat. Some said he would soon come down to the sea, others that he was too feeble to mount a horse, others that he was staying away for political reasons; but the last person to ask information from was any influential officer or Arab. Sultans in Morocco are elected, but it is necessary that they should be descendants of the Prophet Mohammed. As there are two lines, the Aliweein, to which the present sultan belongs, and Drissian, and as he may be selected from either line, peculiar developments often result. When the last sultan died there was a difference of opinion whether Muley Hassan, the present sultan, or Muley Abbas, the brother of the late sovereign, was preferable. Muley Hassan had the majority, and his uncle attempted to retreat into obscurity, but Muley Hassan "sent word to his uncle that he desired no family

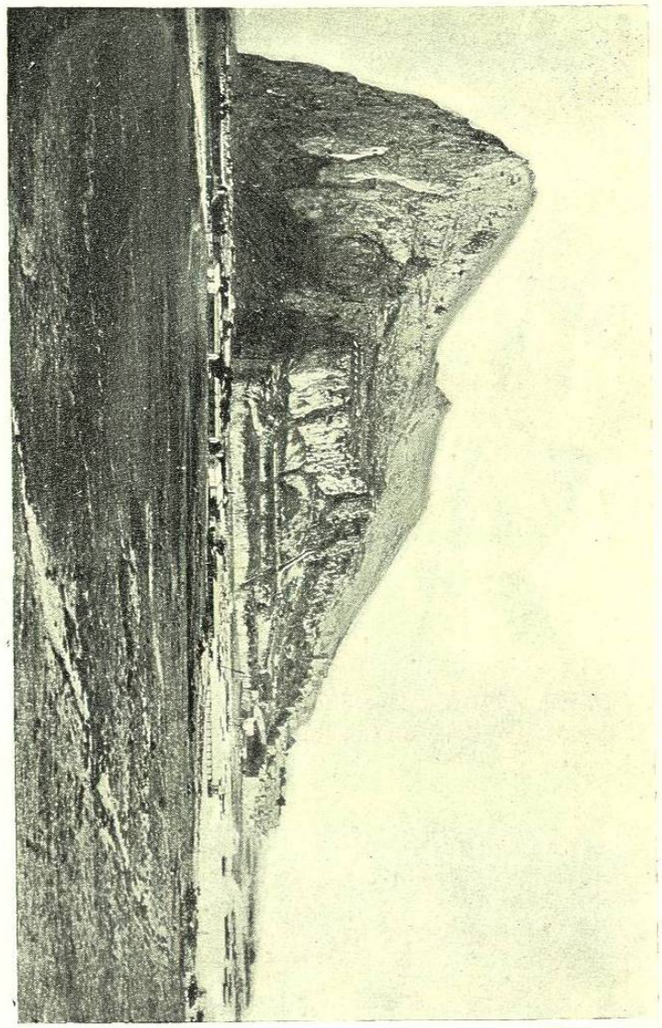
scandal, and as his speedy death was a state necessity he would perhaps arrange for it in any way which suited him best." Muley Abbas chose to drink himself to death, which took place in about three months. There was another uncle, Muley Ali. He was killed because some partisan cried out in the mosque: "May Allah render Muley Ali ever victorious!" The sultan presented him with a sum of money and a female slave, whom etiquette forced him to marry. Soon after "the beautiful slave prostrated herself before the sultan, and, with loud wailings, announced that the Angel of Death had unexpectedly smitten Ali in the night, so that she found him dead that very morning." Another relative, Muley Dris, was sent to quell a rebellion, but before the scene of battle was reached the tent pole fell and killed him. This left the present sultan in undisputed control.

Tangier, though so near Europe, is far from it in every particular. The Mohammedans are very superstitious, seek to escape the sterner requisitions imposed upon them by the Prophet, to enlarge their liberties in moral directions, and make up for it by intensifying their fanaticism and obstinate adherence to ceremonies. They display none of the qualities which gave their ancestors a glorious place in history. Of science they know nothing. Their own language is deteriorating because of indolence, and inherited institutions are crumbling. With a perfect climate and the most productive soil, they raise no more than necessity requires. To look at their plows carries the observer back several thousand years, and instead of the thrashing machines now used by civilized nations, or even the flail which our ancestors employed a short time ago, the wheat is separated from the chaff by making the animals tread over the grain which is thrown into the air with shovels. In trade the Moors cannot succeed except by borrowing money from the Jews, though they are the descendants of the men who formed an empire rivaling the glory of the best days of England, a power which made all Europe tremble, which led in learning, established universities, maintained great fleets, and made its prowess felt at "Vienna, Venice, and Warsaw."

During my travels in Spain, not the achievements of the

Christians, nor the scenery of the country, was the most impressive, but the ruins of the glory of the Moors. No more gloomy instance of the decadence of a nation can be found in modern history.

Tangier, it is said, is the eye of Africa looking into Europe, and the eye of Europe looking into Africa is Gibraltar; but Gibraltar is the glass in the hand of England, used at somewhat long range, it is true, but the arm of England has always been very long in proportion to its body, and its hand has never yet been too small to grasp what its interests required. Should the present sultan die, and the country fall into a state of discord, it would not be surprising to see England, under cover of protecting the property and lives of the British residents of Morocco, go down upon the scene and produce complications which would result in adding Morocco to her empire. That this would contribute to the civilization of the people there can be little doubt; what other Powers would do about it is a difficult problem. One thing is certain, that Tangier would be worth much more to England than Gibraltar can ever be for the purpose of preventing hostile vessels from passing in or out of the Mediterranean.



Gibraltar.

CHAPTER XIII.

Gibraltar.

Landing—Steamer Flying American Flag—Long Service of the Hon. Horatio J. Sprague—Famous Visitors to Gibraltar—Population—Military Aspect—Curious Spectacles—Markets—Tailless Monkeys.

A ROCK, unique in form and place, sublime, impressive as a center of historic movements, marking the confines of the ancient world, and for more than one hundred and eighty years an impregnable fortress and monument of the greatness of that nation whose vast possessions in every continent, as well as its unquestioned supremacy upon the sea, have made it for centuries the most influential power on the globe; this is Gibraltar. As we approached by sea it was enshrouded in mists, and barely discernible; but the vapors dispersed, and the stupendous mass, rising to a perpendicular height of fourteen hundred and thirty feet, came into view with a suddenness which produced the effect of a moving object, in comparison with which our vessel seemed a speck.

A writer has compared the rock to a "gigantic granite sphinx, with long, broad, loose, flowing, and undulating outlines, like those of a lion asleep, and whose head, somewhat truncated, is turned toward Africa, as if with a dreamy steadfast, deep attention." It is three miles long, of irregular width, six miles in circumference, rising from the ocean and from a level plain scarcely five feet above the sea, at the head of the Straits of Gibraltar. These straits are about forty miles long. Beyond them at the west, is the Atlantic; and at the east the Mediterranean. Landings are extremely difficult, and we descended from the vessel into a rowboat which conveyed us to the shore outside the gates. The gates are shut at sundown and not opened until sunrise, a gun from the fortress giving the signal. As the time of sunset changes, notice of the hour of closing is each day placed upon the outer gates. After this there is no admittance without special permission,

not easily secured. The first thing on landing was to secure a permit to enter, which was valid only for that afternoon. Having stated how long we intended to remain, a general permission to stay and to pass through the gates during the hours of the day was issued without charge. Formerly it was necessary for foreigners to exhibit their passports.

While upon the steamer the harbor, a scene of beauty, was stretched out before us, all the more attractive to the eye than it otherwise would be, because not being well protected and of variable depth the shipping could not be crowded, and so resembled huge swans at rest upon the waves. To us the most attractive object was a steamship flying the American flag, a rare spectacle in the harbors of Europe. It was one of our naval vessels, the *Enterprise*, an old wooden ship, belonging to the fleet kept cruising in the various waters of Europe to protect American interests, and to give the officers the opportunity of learning what is going on in the naval world. This fleet is so managed as to make the positions of the officers a prolonged and luxurious excursion to the finest ports and watering places of the Continent and adjacent islands. The *Enterprise* had just returned from a summer cruise in the vicinity of Norway, Sweden, and St. Petersburg, and after staying a few weeks at Gibraltar, was expected to repair to Villa Franca, near Nice, within a few minutes' ride of Monte Carlo, there to spend the rest of the winter. With such a naval armament as the United States possesses, were it not for the three thousand miles of stormy sea that roll between the Old and New Worlds, we should be beneath the contempt of the humblest maritime nation of Europe.

The elevation of the Rock of Gibraltar is so great that the town built upon its sides looks, at a short distance, much more like a painting than an actual assemblage of houses. They rise in steep terraces, and the direct approach to various streets is by stone steps.

I found my knowledge of Gibraltar far too vague and general to be satisfactory, and determined to expend upon reading and exploration time and toil sufficient to leave a vivid and symmetrical impression of its relations to civilization in Europe and Africa. In addition to the study of various

works, I derived valuable assistance from the Hon. Horatio J. Sprague, American consul at Gibraltar. He had occupied that position for forty-one years; his father filled it before him, and he was born upon the rock. His knowledge is extraordinary, and he introduced us to the public library in whose rooms are the leading papers and periodicals of Europe, and more than forty thousand volumes. Mr. Sprague had translated from Spanish into English, and loaned to me, a noted work on Gibraltar by a Spanish author, Don Francisco Maria Montero. This translation, as yet unpublished, comprises six hundred pages of manuscript, and abounds with details not to be elsewhere obtained. Our consular service, subject to the mutations of political parties, has been so often changed that a traveler cannot be certain on a second visit of finding the representative whose acquaintance he made on the first. But Mr. Sprague, who received his first appointment from James K. Polk, has not been disturbed through all the administrations, including the period of the civil war. At every point visited before reaching Gibraltar, I was advised to call upon Mr. Sprague, and, having personal letters, was received with a hospitality which has never been surpassed in my experience. His wife had been removed by death within a few years; but the venerable consul is fortunate in the possession of sons and daughters who fill the mansion, which his private means enable him to maintain, with the atmosphere of youth and the charms of genuine refinement, the result of their education in France and association with distinguished visitors who, from their childhood, have sat at the table of their parents. Three ex-presidents have been the guests of Mr. Sprague—Franklin Pierce, Millard Fillmore, and Ulysses S. Grant; the railway magnates Vanderbilt and Gould, hundreds of travelers, merchants, students, authors, and artists. Nor is his hospitality confined to persons of note, but, as we learned—not from himself, but by general inquiries in Gibraltar—the humblest sailor, or the poorest wanderer overtaken by misfortune, receives the attention which his circumstances require.

Gibraltar contains twenty-five thousand inhabitants, of whom seven thousand are English soldiers; indeed, more than three

quarters of the entire population are connected with the garrison and military and other establishments of Great Britain. Many of the people were born on the rock; those who were not, among the commoner sort, apply to the natives the nickname of "scorpions." This is generally taken in good humor, and one citizen responded to our question concerning his birthplace, that he was a "scorpion."

Red-coated soldiers are seen constantly marching through the town; but when off duty they fill the cafés, pass in and out of liquor saloons, and are walking and standing in the streets and parks, lending a picturesque aspect to the place by the brightness of their uniforms and their erect, proud bearing; for among all the soldiers we have seen in Europe, none keep step so well or seem personally so proud as those of England. Whitewashed barracks are in different parts of the limited portions of Gibraltar suitable for building purposes, so that wherever one wanders he is likely to meet soldiers. The parade ground is at the entrance of the Alameda. There the regimental bands play in the evening, and the music being fine, the people resort to this magnificent garden, which is laid out in the English style and filled with trees and flowers. Elevated above the water, its background the stern face of the rock, it affords a view of the bay, the shipping, the barracks, the town, the opposite coast of Spain, and the boundless expanse of waters to the westward; and is itself an enchanting prospect when seen from the deck of a vessel.

The general trade of Gibraltar has declined, but in recent years it has come into importance as a coaling station. In 1886 four thousand seven hundred and six steamers entered the port, with an average tonnage of about a thousand. In 1887 a half million tons of coal were sold to them. As the coal is all brought over in ships, the harbor presents a lively and peculiar appearance. In every direction steamers are seen moored by the side of immense hulks loaded with coal. In the month preceding our visit four hundred and ninety-four steamers had touched at the port.

While few private gardens exist at Gibraltar, many plants common to the south of Europe, others to the north of Africa, some to Asia, and a few indigenous to the rock grow there,

and vegetation appears on the naked summits, and in the interstices of the rock which was once covered with forests.

Little necessary to support human life is produced in Gibraltar, so that the markets are of vital importance. Fruits and vegetables come from Spain and Africa; beef chiefly from Barbary. We passed through the Moorish market, which is devoted principally to poultry, and on entering were greeted by the Moors with signs of interest; but as soon as they discovered that we wanted none of their fowls they left us with a grunt similar to that uttered by an American Indian. In the general market were displayed all the fruits with which we are familiar at home, and many others; among them fine apples. The salesman, perceiving us, called out in as good English as he could command: "Apples! fine apples." As we passed on he exclaimed: "*American* apples!" This was simply the compliment paid all through Europe to American apples. We have seen in France and Spain apples more beautiful and symmetrical in shape than are often found in America, so finely polished and of such peculiar form that one would suspect that they were wax; but in flavor and juiciness they were far below any of a score of varieties which can be found distributed through New England and the Middle States.

In these markets the most curious spectacle is the crowd: "Moors, Turks, Greeks, Jews, the Spanish smuggler, the Catalan seller, the red coat of the English private, mingled together, bawling, disputing, bargaining, and cheating in their different tongues, ways, and gestures." A large number of Maltese have recently settled in Gibraltar, and are a somewhat disorderly and dangerous element. When in Malta, which is under British control and discipline, they are orderly enough, but away from that point their fiery, daring, and revengeful disposition shows itself. They mingle with the motley crowd in the markets, and add to the noise and confusion of tongues.

In the Alameda, which is the fashionable promenade, the contrast of populations is equally striking. One sees London bonnets and Paris hats side by side with the *mantilla de tiro;* ladies with blue eyes and rosy complexions next to those having melting black orbs and olive skins. The differences in

manner, toilet, and language noted, as we traversed the streets, markets, and public places, furnished us constant amusement.

Among the animals native to the rock are hares and rabbits. Monkeys of extraordinary size still exist in the inaccessible fastnesses. They have no tails, and are harmless, but frequently come down and rob the gardens. They live on the roots of the palmettos and the fruits of the prickly pear. They are of a species to be found in northern Africa, and there has been much speculation whether they originally existed in Gibraltar or were brought in by the Arabs. Those who hold that the rock was once connected with Africa draw an argument for that view from the existence of these Barbary apes on Gibraltar. Montero thinks either supposition possible. Andalusia was the Tarshish of the old times, and these are the descendants of the apes for which Solomon sent, as described in 1 Kings x, 22: "For the king had at sea a navy of Tarshish with the navy of Hiram: once in three years came the navy of Tarshish bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks." A native of Gibraltar told us that no dead body or skeleton of any of these apes has been found. Whether these manlike animals conceal them in caves, or throw them into the ocean, none can tell.

Of public buildings there are in Gibraltar none of importance. A thousand towns in Europe have more to exhibit in the way of architecture, monuments, and other works of art. Had the English cathedral been intended as a burlesque of some form of architecture it would be counted a successful attempt. Presbyterians, Wesleyans, and other dissenting bodies have chapels, and there is a Roman Catholic church, a structure which, without saying much for it, can be represented as the most attractive public building in Gibraltar.

CHAPTER XIV.

Gibraltar.—(Continued.)

Geological Formation—History—Tour of Exploration—View from the Highest Point—Gibraltar Compared with the North Cape—Power of England.

GEOLOGISTS describe the rock as composed of compact limestone, varied by beds of red sandstone, and fissures of bony breccia, resembling what is found in the limestone rocks of Nice, Pisa, and Dalmatia. In this they discover fossils, such as bones of antelope, deer, tigers, rabbits, rats, birds, shells. Fossil shellfish are found "with both valves adhering," from which it is concluded that the animals must have been alive at the time of the upheaval.

A convincing evidence of the catastrophic character of the formation is the existence of a marine beach nearly five hundred feet above the level of the sea. Some maintain that the rock was formed by four shocks. In the first was elevated the highest part, chiefly the northern crests; in the second, the middle or western declivities; and in the third and fourth, the crests at the southern point. All, so far as I can ascertain, agree that no general change has taken place in the historic period. The rock is so steep as to afford the best opportunities for studying its geology, as the strata, almost from sea level to summit, can be distinguished without the trouble of excavation.

As it rises from a flat surface, and there is no hill fifty feet high within several miles of it, Gibraltar presents an imposing, and, from some points of view, an appalling aspect. The Phœnicians either believed that this was the end of the world, or were determined to make others believe it, so that they could maintain a monopoly of the commerce of the region. The Pillars of Hercules are thought to have been Calpe, the Greek name for Gibraltar, and Abyla, a mountain opposite to it in Africa. It is supposed that with all their enterprise and curiosity, the Romans never went beyond the Pillars of Hercules until the time of Augustus. In ancient times no human