



RAGGED BRIGADE.

and rub-a-dub of the French drum, alternating with the blare of the trumpet, which echoes and re-echoes through the mosque! It is a reminder, perhaps, of the '*infandum dolorem*' of other days. In fact, as we emerge to the street, we perceive a French regiment on the march, knapsack on back, and going to the seat of war. The conquest of Algiers is not consummated. Far down—ten days' journey to the Desert—there has been fighting. Some few months ago, one of the 200 desert tribes, which has never succumbed, broke out, got thrashed, moved over into Morocco, recruited its strength, and is (as our Consul tells us) on Algerian soil or sand, ready to renew the struggle. Hence this regiment is on the march! There is a little moral here, about military rule, which I would dilate on, but Hahmoud attracts me by rushing up to a venerable Arab! They embrace and kiss. He is a civil magistrate among Mussulmans—a Kadi! By this intimacy and salute I perceive that Hahmoud is well thought of. I am going to see the Kadi with him.

Our next entertainment was quite in contrast with these experiences. Towards evening we visited one of the squares. Here was a crowd of some 300, of all the motley costumes of this most motley city. The Kabyles and Bistri are most in number. These are the gentlemen from whom John Owens, the actor, must have copied his 'make up' of Caleb Plummer—I mean his dress, which consists of a piece of bagging with a diamond mark, and 'Right side up! *Glass!*' Coffee sacks are luxurious apparel—fit for the feast of Lucullus—compared with the ragged burnous of some of these children of the desert—the Bistri; and of the mountain—the Kabyles. In fact, come to Algiers if you would start a paper-mill! Rags are plenty. Come, if you would see rags in all their

picturesque perfection and multiformity of ghastriness, filth and variety—ragged at the top, ragged at the bottom, ragged in the middle, ragged in fringes, and ragged in texture; ragged behind and before, ragged in holes and in patches; the old rags adorned with new rags, and so stuck on, as to add aggravated graces of raggedness above the reach of art; a raggedness so elegant in its touch as to conceal still more elegant elements of raggedness; raggedness which has not merely resulted from the natural and acquired taste and condition of the ragamuffins themselves, but is inherited from ragged ancestors who wore and enhanced by their wearing and genius the ultra-raggedness of their habits, which they have handed down to children born with rags on them, and who have preserved, and enhanced with the lapse of time, their precious legacy of rags! Here we found this incarnate raggedness, sitting and standing, in black rags, white rags, and many-coloured rags—rags pinned, sewed and tied, and some neither; worn by negro and native, by young and old; and all happy, in beholding in the centre of the ragged circle, an African from Timbuctoo who had but one rag around his loins, and no other covering save a tuft of wool on the shaven apex of his lithe body and a serpent twining and writhing through it, and around his neck and down his back! This is the Snake-Charmer, Mumbo-Jumbo, by Gumbo!

The ragged battalion give way to allow Dr. Bennet and myself a place in front. We are careful of our contact. There lies within this circle—on his back—legs apart and body heaving—a passive lumpish fat body, hid in rags. He is a part of the charm; but as we do not know what he is, or does, except that the snake now and then creeps under *his* rags, we will let him lie. The other is the performer. He plays with the snake; mumbles his words; and then screams,

half-panting, his periods like a tired stump speaker in a high wind. Then he strikes his tom-tom, and with a wild dance—almost the counterpart of the plantation negro with a banjo in Alabama—he makes the circle wider as he moves. He stops, talks to his snake, twirls its shining folds into all sorts of forms, and begins again. The crowd understand his language. He calls on them to applaud, and they cheer after a strange method. Then he uses his head on a Kabyle head; having the advantage of skill and skull, he pushes his antagonist over. The crowd laughs. He then drops his snake, picks up a large piece of limestone, calls out of the crowd some one conspicuously ragged to test its soundness. Then, with a hideous face and cabalistic talk—his face made more horrible by a long wire running out of his mouth through a hole in his cheek—he slaps his naked abdomen with the stone, and finally breaks it in twain. Then we have some juggling; then he gouges out one of his eyes and puts it back, whereat all the rascally raggedness rages in rapture. He has an eye to his exchequer. He rests his lungs and limbs by passing round his tambourine. He obtains some sous. The least I had in my clothes was a silver half-franc. I thought of the recent decision of the Supreme Court. I knew there was an implied contract for specie. I felt that specie was the legal tender abroad, and I paid it. When I put it in, he made me quite a hero; danced round the ring with it, and proceeded with greater activity to discourse to his snake-ship, and prance about his prostrate companion in the ragged ring. What all this means, I leave to those versed in the lore of African Fetishism.

Many of the negroes here are not of our Congo-Guinea kind. They have straight noses, and other features regular and handsome. They are from Soudan, or Abyssinia. Especially is that the case with the dark

servants whom we see attending the Moorish women in the streets. But most of the negroes are like those in America; if possible, more black. I saw one yesterday in the café, where the Timbuctoo negroes congregate for coffee, who was so unctuously black that he actually shone. We have heard of objects 'dark with excess of light.' Light may blind. But some of these Timbuctoo people, fresh from the desert or beyond it, are light with excess of dark. But I do not perceive that, as a class, although they mingle with other classes, they hold relatively any better position, socially or otherwise, than the negro in America. The negro here of the Guinea type, is the American negro all over. He or she is vain, jolly, and subservient; likes gaudy colours, banjo-music, and a diabolical, mystical sort of religion, full of emotion and superstition.

But I must leave this topic until we visit the Desert, if, indeed, the wars down South permit the journey. Not that I expect to find the southern boundary of Algeria. That is as fickle and as faintly marked as the sands of Sahara, which are moved by every wind. Even the French itineraries, while they give metes and bounds to Algeria, on north, east, and west, naïvely say: '*Au sud, elle a pour limite, bien vague encore.*' So vague in fact is this southern country, and the rule over it, that one wonders why so many French lives have been given to the fortification and colonization of French power there, until he remembers the eventful history of Algeria. Then he would not wonder. It is hard to hold water in a sieve, or to chase and capture the wind. It is equally hard to conquer such a people, or such a number of tribes, independent and nomadic, as make up Algeria. The people, besides, are so un-European in habit, and so different in religion, that it will take years, if not ages, to crystallize the alien domination, and introduce the new rule. The Mussul-

mans alone number over 2,000,000, without counting the tribes of the Desert. The Kabyles, whose country on the east, in the mountains, we shall visit, number 700,000. They were the last to be conquered, and the reason was that they had and have a Democracy. They have local self-government, elect by majorities, and have a confederation. The Arabs number 1,391,812, and are divided into 1200 tribes, and these tribes are broken into 10,000 among themselves. The Sahara has a population living a nomadic life, or cultivating the oases, of 600,000—all Arabs, and numbering 200 tribes. Of course a great many tribes are so errant and belligerent, so free and so useless for commerce or conquest, that the French do not look after them. Still we have accounts of French officers and adventurous merchants, pushing their way over the deserts, making treaties or trades with tribes or caravans, and having in view the French domination. But it will be a long time before the Azguers, Hoggards, Airs, or, to include them all, the extreme Berbers, or Touaregs, acknowledge French power, or succumb to French arms. The French may tap the avenues of trade on the oases, and establish trading laws and interchanges with Soudan by caravans; and even, now and then, with a five months' journey over the desert, reach Timbuctoo; but there is no power, not sympathetic with these tribes by habitude and faith, which will ever hold them steadily in subserviency or in tribute.

The history of this country illustrates this statement. I need not go into it at length. Whoever first found Algeria, or Numidia, or Barbary, Libya, or Mauritania, or Africa, or what name or nation soever it is called in history, and undertook to hold its tribes in thrall, never succeeded except in a small measure, upon the coast, until the Arabs came. They had the nomadic habits and the same instincts, traditions, and blood.

They brought with them a religion which captured the Oriental imagination and held Algeria. What Carthage could not hold; what the Romans, with their colonizing genius, could not retain; what the Vandals, coming hither in thousands, did not control a hundred years; what the Greeks, by their pliancy and with able generalship, held only for 150 years—the Arabs captured easily under their common sympathy and religious zealotry. ‘Paradise before you! Hell behind!’ cried out the followers of the Faith, and under this shibboleth they held, as they had captured, Algiers, even Morocco, and even to the heart of the desert and beyond, where the Romans never ventured. The Arabs became the masters of North Africa. Indeed they never left Europe till the year Columbus discovered America. Had America been known to them, before 1492, New York might have had her ancient mosques and San Francisco her alhambras! Pilgrims, from the farthest East and West, might have—

“Trode with religious feet the burning sands  
Of Araby and Mecca’s stony soil.”

The Turks when they came to Algiers only continued the Mahomedan rule. When, in 1830, France landed her 38,000 men from her 25 ships in the Bay at Sidi Ferruch (whose black rocks we saw some ten miles west of Algiers, on the coast), and fought the battle of Staoueli, on the 19th of June, 1830—on the site of the Trappist monastery, where we spent a Sunday; and when she drove the 40,000 resisting Arabs from the field with the bayonet, and crowned the battle by a pursuit which took Fort l’Empereur and the Casbah, which commands Algiers—then and there ended the rule of the Deys, and then was begun for Algiers a new career! How long will it last, and



how far will it extend? These are not for the tourist's pen, but the politician's ken.

In my next chapter, avoiding historic talk, I will venture to describe my visit to these battle-grounds, to the Trappists, to the Moorish cemeteries, and the tombs and marabouts. That chapter, at least, will be freshened by out-door country air and new experiences.

## CHAPTER IX.

*ALGIERS—GARDENS, TOMBS, CUSTOMS, ETC.*

"I sat down under His shadow with great delight, and His fruit was sweet to my taste."—CAN. ii. 3.



**T**PROMISED an out-door excursion, out of the heat and dust of Algiers, and into the hills and among the vegetable wonders and beauties which surround the city. Our first trip shall be to the Jardin d'Essai. This garden lies upon the east side of the bay, and is reached by a road along its shore. It is about three miles to the garden. The railroad clips off a palmy side of the garden next to the sea. The grounds now belong to a company, who are compelled to keep them open to the public, and who have turned their establishment into a commercial adventure. It was started by the Government, somewhat after the manner of similar gardens at Paris, London, and Washington, for the collection and acclimatization of all the rare grains, plants, trees, fruits, and flowers. It has within its domain six thousand different species, and has distributed three millions of plants. To this place we found many omnibuses running. As the day is Friday—the Mahomedan sabbath—these vehicles are filled in great part by the Moors of the city, who go out to the cemeteries and there have their picnics among the tombs. As one of the largest cemeteries is in this neighbourhood, the omnibuses are full. It is not a little significant to see the French peasant in his blue blouse, or the French woman in her plain frock,

elbow the wives of the Moors, who are dressed in their bundles of white muslin, and only their eyes visible through the lattices of white! The very names of the omnibuses are significant: 'A Mon Idée,' 'La Bien Aimée,' and 'Il Trovatore.' It looks as if Civilization, riding in an omnibus, were crowding the exclusive Orient out of its ancient customs. It seems as if the old mode of dressing here were kept up more for coquetry and affectation, than for the seclusion from vulgar eyes of those *houris* who are supposed to be within the folds of their ample mantles and trowsers. On our way to the garden we meet Arab horsemen dropped into *their* abundant clothes between their high saddles. They look rather soiled and dusty. These Arabs wear a high turban, banded with camel-hair ropes. Sometimes they have a gun neatly swung over their backs. If they happen to be *sheikhs* or other men of consequence, they have followers, or a cavalcade of them. It is quite romantic to see one of these devotees of Mahomet—as the engraving illustrates—fully armed and robed, suddenly stop, and turning toward Mecca, pray!

The road is a cloud of dust. The carouba trees which line the road need to be washed in a shower. They, too, are dusty. So are the dark legs of the Kabyles, trudging homeward to the mountains, on and behind their camels and donkeys. Occasionally we meet Kabyles mounted upon their donkeys. They generally sit as near the tail as possible. Having emptied their sacks of wheat, charcoal, sheepskins, or olives, they have a cute way of pushing their feet into their vacant sacks for stirrups. Some of the donkeys are smaller than the Kabyles themselves. The picture is very funny. It looks inverted; for the donkeys ought to be on the Kabyle back! Talking of the Kabyle back, I saw a curious instru-

ment which they used for scratching their backs. Why they scratch—whether it is the itch produced by the African sun, by the long woollen burnous or by the fleas, or what—yet they use a wooden instrument, shaped in size and form like a wooden salad spoon, called a '*gratte dos*;' and with it a deft Kabyle can reach over his shoulder or around his body, and give a good, honest 'old scratch.' This is much more economical (if not so satisfactory) than the Duke of Argyll's plan. He planted posts over the county which he owned in Scotland, against which the peasants relieved their itching bodies, and for which they said: 'God bless the Duke of Argyll!'

On our way to the garden we cannot but remark the French appearance of the houses. Even in the cafés, frequented by the natives, where the cross-legged are sitting, sipping coffee and smoking, there is the French style. On the outside of the walls are painted the foaming cup, and the pipes crossed and tied with a ribbon, and some balls, indicating billiards. We perceive that the plane tree or sycamore and the mulberry are quite common; and lining the roads in the meadows are orchards of bananas. In fact, the banana is a great crop here. The leaves are a little brown and ragged from the harshness of the past winter. I notice that they have to be guarded, and are, like other tropical plants, screened from the north winds, by tall, stately rows of cypresses, especially on the sides of the Sahel Mountain, or between it and the sea. As far up as the beautiful temple which crowns the mountain—a white, Moorish-looking building, but, in fact, a theological seminary of the Catholic faith, you may see these evidences of tropical growth, but guarded by the cypress lines. My friend, Dr. Bennet, who is looking after sunbeams in winter, for his patients, and for his own satisfaction as a

savant, at once concludes that Algiers suffers from the north-west wind. The trees thus exposed, show by their inclination, as well as by their slow growth and imperfect development, what the Doctor desires to know about the Algerian climate. He observes few orange trees and no lemons; and everywhere—even where palms exist—the cypress is there to shelter. He compares, or rather contrasts Algiers with the Riviera. He notices that while his favourite health station at Mentone is comparatively free from the mistral and north winds, those winds pick up moisture in coming over the ocean hither. The Doctor will find many evidences, *a posteriori*, to strengthen his conclusions before he leaves. I refer those interested, to the new edition of his book, which will contain incidents of his search in the regions of Algiers after a better climate. Just now, under the hot sun, and with all the ardour of a lover of botany and horticulture, and with a view to perfect his garden at Mentone, he is absorbed in this garden at Algiers. I have already endeavoured to depict his garden. It is hung almost in the warm air of the Riviera. It is warmed by the geothermal as well as by the solar caloric, and irrigated plenteously from above. The Doctor, being thus interested, dashes into the merits and demerits of this African Paradise in a way that makes me wonder. Now he points out the bamboo and cork trees; now he astounds me with the declaration that those groups of flowers are the mesembryanthea. Now he drops his yellow umbrella; out comes his note-book. Eureka! he has found, not only one, but two, three, four—a whole colonnade of new palms—palms which to him heretofore were habitants of the conservatory and small in stature—lo! here are avenues of them; some native like the draccona; some from the Isle of Bourbon; some

date-palms in fruit and flower, and some so old they are—*without date*; every variety, and so arranged are they, that the tall green plumes with the golden blossom alternate for nearly a mile of avenue in a double row on each side—with the wide, waving leaves of the lesser kind. ‘Every variety,’ says the Doctor, ‘is here—proof that there is a hot summer rather than a warm winter.’ Their rough stalks and yellow flowers—as well as the little scrub-palms which we see all round Algiers, indigenous to this soil—are critically examined. Here are lofty brethren from Gabon, cultivated by the side of the timid palmetto from Carolina, the one as proud as Lucifer, the other as meek as Moses. In fact, the palms have taken the palm in the horticultural ‘essai.’ They thrive next to the cocoa and the banana, although trees from Bombay, Brazil, Australia—all those trees which, like the palm, love to have their heads hot and feet moist—thrive prodigiously; for here is irrigation and plenty of sun, even in April.

While the Doctor is making his observations, we perceive some ostriches through the bamboo avenues. They are enormous in size. They are running about in their wiry enclosures. We approach them. They *plume* themselves greatly on our admiration. They step off, lifting their wing in a most tragical way, with a long stride and swing, as if they had on buskins, and had Hamlet on the brain. They are priced in the catalogue for twelve hundred francs. A young one can be had for fifty dollars! M. C. Riviere, Director of the Garden, reports great success in rearing these ostriches. Within the palisade enclosure, containing a quantity of fine sand, the female ostrich deposits her eggs. She seems uneasy, and seeks a suitable place. She forms a small hillock of sand, slightly concave at the top, and lays one egg in it, to

which she afterwards adds others. She lays every two days, for two or three months, with an interval of repose. Incubation lasts forty days, during which time the male and female sit alternately. On 12th of March, before we were there, five were hatched, and three the day after. The male, like a gentleman as he is, takes great interest in the incubations, and only leaves the egg when pressed by hunger, and then the female takes the place, but not for such long periods. An extra circulation goes on in the uncovered portions of the male's body, to generate the heat necessary for the process.

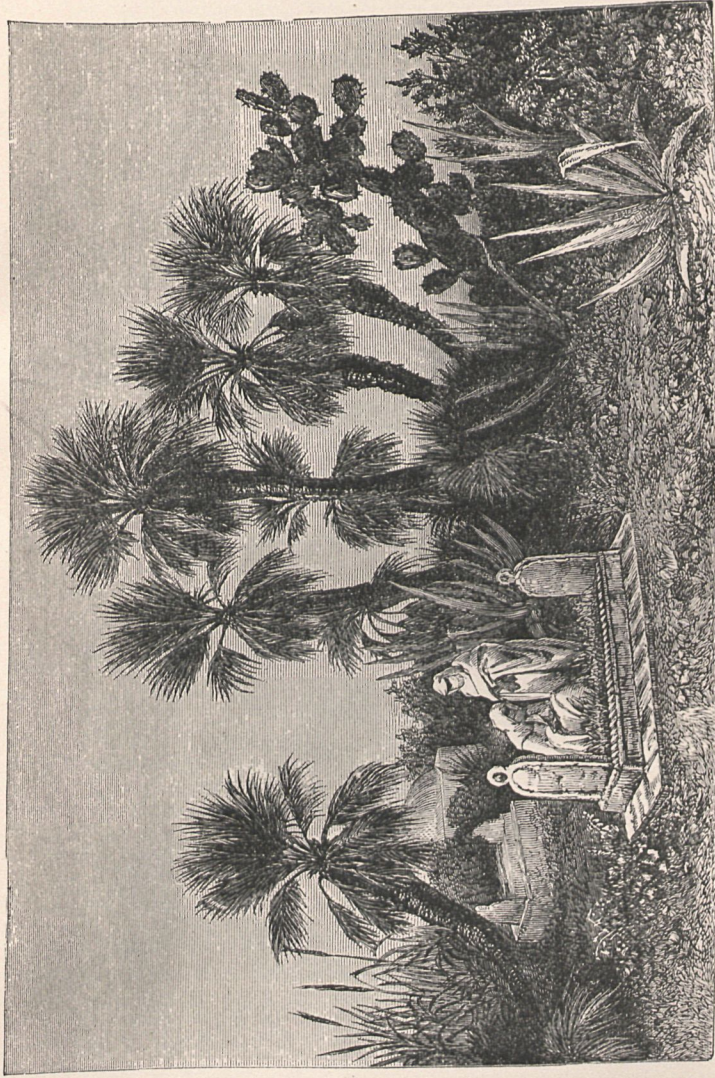
Leaving these pretty little birdlings to their laying of eggs, hatching of young, and digestion of brickbats and horse-shoes, we meet another illustration of the animal kingdom belonging to these shores—a man with his two veiled wives and two children. We see that the wives are young. They are painted between the eyebrows, so as to make the brows seem one brow. Their hands are red with henna, and their fingernails are black. They wear red socks. The children have their hair stained red. We hardly have time to admire before the Doctor bursts upon us, with a *magnolia grandiflora rotundifolia*! He has found it by the banks of the lake! We look his rotund majesty up; and a choir of blackbirds and nightingales sing a pleasant lyric from a grove, deep in shadow, in praise of the wonderful glories of this tropical garden! We find soldiers in red trousers, handling the mattock and spade, and digging up bananas for transplanting. The French soldier is here permitted to do work; quite a reform, and worth considering. Other rare plants we see; immense scarlet geraniums, the *fleur-de-lys*, the Arabian fig, climbing plants like the African ivy, some in flower, hanging on great palms forty feet high, and purple in bloom; jasmine

in trees, all blooming; Barbary figs in profusion; and, to crown our view, an olive of monstrous proportions, literally garlanded with the white rose; then we visit the hot-houses, a dozen or more, where every exotic the vegetable world produces is to be found.

At length we wend our way along paths where water-lilies are seen in lakes, and the air is heavy with odour, to the grand entrance. Here we find under the shade of a great plane-tree across the dusty road, at the Restaurant des Platanes, several Arabs playing draughts—not for strong liquor, for the Koran forbids it, but for coffee. An Alsatian—an old soldier—with two wooden legs and two crutches, is sitting at the gate. While waiting for the Doctor we learn that he was a soldier in the Algerian wars as early as 1847, and that he lost his legs by their freezing in the snows of Africa! He had been pursuing the Kabyles, in the Atlas, and we have had demonstration to the eye that the snows are there yet, although the sun is African and 80° Fahrenheit. We sit here observing the omnibuses go by, crowded with the motley loads. It is said that the railway in India is killing caste. The omnibus is doing the same here.

I spoke of the cemetery. On our return to the city we called in to see it. At the entrance we found some vendors of Algerian delicacies. Then lying upon the grass and lazing about the tombs we see some Maltese sailors anxious, like ourselves, to see the novelties. I have a pictorial illustration, better than my pen can do, of the scene. The ladies of our party are attracted to a little Jewess of ten, her jacket broided in gold, and her Greek cap set upon the side of her head jauntily. We go up the hill-side, among the faithful. We are met by a turbaned white-





MOORISH TOMBS.