tains seem to swim. Even camels are there, ready with long noiseless strides to plunge into the desert, and their young, "si pelés, si bossus, si gauches dans leur gaîté d'enfant."

The Kasbah, the fortified enclosure of which I have before spoken (the fortifications contain

Gate of Kasbah.

about thirty old-fashioned cannon and one revolving gun), is a splendid place for sketching. One of the most striking features is the gorgeous dresses of the numerous soldiery who are always lingering about the courtyard. Camels, magnificent Arab steeds from the

desert, and a tame gazelle form part of the scene, of which the appropriate background are walls of intensest white. Regnault the lamented French painter, was a great admirer of Tangier, and he built a studio here, going thence to the barricades in Paris where he died; Benjamin Constant has paid it more than one visit and intends to come again; and Fortuny also worked in sunny Morocco.

One of the gloomiest sights in Tangier is the prison in the Kasbah. The visitor is told to look through a hole in the wall, and in a dirty courtyard surrounded by an arcade, sees a number of men and women in chains, who are sentenced to remain there for periods varying from a few days to six years.

A traveller has thus described the objects that there met his view:—"A few heaps of foul straw by way of furniture, a group of emaciated human beings, ragged and unkempt to the last degree, and with about as much expression in their faces as cowed wild

beasts. It must not for a moment be supposed that these are criminals. The real evil-doer is usually strong enough and rich enough to defy justice."* The Government does not supply its prisoners with food, so they are dependent on what their friends bring them, or they can purchase with money obtained from the sale to visitors or merchants of the little baskets they make. Our old friend the soldier remarked that there were about "one hundred shentlemans" in there at the time of our visit.

In the busy streets of European cities the mueddin's frequent call to prayer would be in vain for several reasons, not the least among them being because his cry could not be heard above the din of traffic; here the sound is always distinct, and reaches a long distance from the city walls; it falls on the ears of the busy labourers in the fields, who lay aside their tools and bend their foreheads to

* *Sketches in Spain*, by John Lomas.

the earth in supplication to Allah, the All-Merciful. The cry is precisely like that of the Spanish *serenos*, who must have learned it, as they did so many things, from the Moors—a long chant on one note, sometimes shortened, sometimes prolonged. Being translated, the words are something like these:—"Come to prayers! Come to prayers! Come to the temple! Come to the temple! Prayer is better than sleep! Prayer is better than sleep! *La ilahah ila Allah!* There is no other God than God!"

A missionary who has been for six years working among the Moors, described their immorality as something impossible to conceive. Men will sell their own children as slaves; if a wife does not suit her husband, or for the most trifling cause, such, for example, as a dinner improperly cooked, he can divorce her by word of mouth, and that within a month of her marriage; she then marries another man, and thus wives are practically

interchangeable. Many Moors do not know who is their father. They have no idea of what truth is; though lying is forbidden by the Koràn, they have no scruple in doing it and confessing it. Murder is scarcely considered a crime; a man in Tangier is known to have committed three, but he has paid for them all, and the luxury is not costly.

A Moor who had an enemy asked a Jew (they generally get Jews to do their dirty work) to kill him, giving him one hundred dollars in payment. The assassin went to Tetouan, took lodgings in the house of the doomed man, and lived with him on the most friendly terms for a year; then one evening at supper he informed his host that he was commissioned to kill him, and saying so, shot him dead. Like most murderers in Morocco, he was never punished.

Travelling in the interior is still a little risky, and it is best to take a soldier. The country

between Tetouan and Oran cannot be traversed by Christians; the inhabitants are the most fanatical in Morocco.

Jews have a very bad time in most towns, and are not allowed to walk past a mosque without taking off their shoes, or enter a street in which a saint lives. Luckily the saints herd together.

Circumcision is made the occasion of a ceremony, gladly seized upon by a people who have no occupation, and whose life is so primitive and wants so small that a few hours' labour a day supplies them. The boy, gorgeously dressed, is mounted on his father's horse, and led round and round the house with flags flying and drums beating, followed by a crowd of spectators.

CHAPTER XV.

TANGIER (*continued*).

MANY times in the course of my "sketching scamper" I have paused to consider how best to convey to the reader's mind the impressions which afforded me such intense pleasure, and have come to the conclusion that it is better simply to *describe*, and trust to the simple description only, than attempt any sentimental or romantic comments. When an artist exchanges the brush or chisel for the pen, he cannot expect to produce polished sentences, nicely turned phrases, or particularly apt epithets; he can only, like Anthony, "speak right on." This must be an excuse for my "bald disjointed chat."

The Soko is the centre of Tangerine life, and

many and charming were the scenes we saw there; but why, oh why have the English been permitted to destroy the picturesqueness of the spot by erecting a vile tin church in the very midst? Would their prayers be of no avail offered up in another place? is ugliness a necessary ingredient of goodness? is it meritorious to spoil a view which Nature and the Moors had concurred to render so beautiful? And the English Consulate, so square, so uncompromising, so redolent of Pimlico and Kensington, was it necessary for the better displaying of the Union Jack to place this edifice near the Soko, to the destruction of one of the loveliest views in Tangier? The Americans, with taste which does them credit, have not desecrated the place with their Consulate, but have retired a short distance to the Monte, and there erected a suitable building in true Moorish style. Alas! our countrymen abroad are not distinguished for their good taste, and generally manage to de-

stroy the element of beauty in whatever they touch.

The camels which bring merchandise from the interior are to be seen on the Soko numbering at times so many as fifty and sixty. They are driven one by one to a certain spot, made to kneel down, unloaded, and the piled-up bales of goods covered with a tent till market-day. A good deal of recrimination takes place between themselves and their drivers, perhaps on account of their pack-saddles, which are hardly ever removed. A friend who chanced to see one taken off, described the back of the poor animal as absolutely raw.

The amount of grumbling a camel will go through while he is being loaded or unloaded, is equalled only by the Englishman's whose privilege he usurps; very lofty is his expression, as if from his superior height he looked down upon human beings with intense contempt. For their meals, a cloth is spread on the floor, sacks of corn and chopped hay are

emptied on to it, and the camels are brought up and made to kneel in rows on both sides as if they were at table; a good deal of quarrelling and biting at each other succeeds, and an impudent donkey will sometimes thrust his presence among the company, like the unwelcome guest we have all seen at times. It is singular that camels will tolerate donkeys, but they hate horses, which they will kick and bite. It is said camels cannot travel over muddy roads; their long limbs slide apart and their soft feet have no hold, so the legs literally split off. All the specimens we saw had but one hump, and varied in colour from nearly white to the deepest brown.

The Soko is also the scene of all the popular amusements. On fine days snake-charming is generally to be witnessed there, and never fails to attract a crowd of Arabs as well as strangers. A circle is cleared on the cleanest available spot; a man beating a drum, and another playing a pipe, seat themselves at one

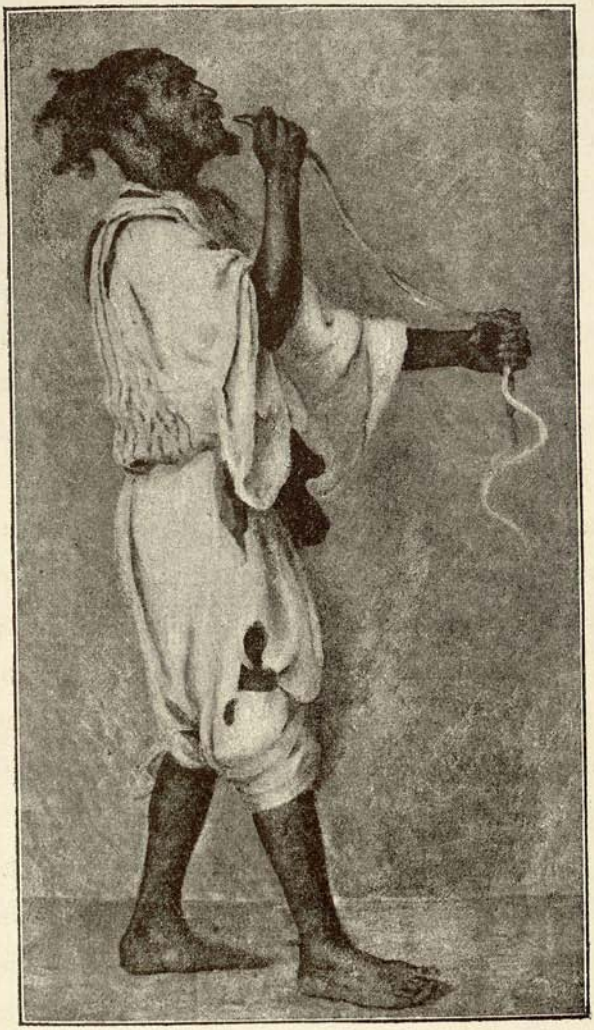
Camels on the Soko.

part of the circumference. The performer, when we saw it, was the lean small man almost black, who figures on the cover of this book; his head is shaven except at the back, where a long waving lock is left according to Mohammedan custom, by which he is to be drawn up into Paradise, and his features are refined and nearly European. He began by bowing to the ground, which he touched repeatedly with his forehead, and vociferating a prayer to his special saint to protect him from the poisonous effects of the snake bites. Two men who were sitting within the circle rose at his bidding, and the place on which they had been sitting was seen to be covered with writhing snakes. These he captured and put into a leathern bag; then selecting a very beautiful specimen, about five feet in length, whose striped skin changed in the sunlight from brightest pink to vivid green, raised it in his hands and carried it round the circle, collecting money as he did so. He repeated

his incantations, irritated the snake which was a little torpid at first, and finally put the head of the reptile in his mouth and allowed it to bite him many times on the tongue and lips. Blood flowed from his mouth, and mingled with foam which ran down his beard till he was a frightful spectacle, almost as bad as the Hawadji. The charmer danced round and round again, and allowed the snake to fasten on his wrists and bite vigorously; he rather seemed to enjoy being bitten than not. There was no mistake about the biting; I saw the fangs enter the flesh, and sometimes the snake held so firmly that it was difficult to pull off. Immediately after being bitten on the tongue he scraped the blood from it with a straw picked up on the spot, and I also noticed that, before he allowed the snake to touch him, he had been eating some green herb. The whole spectacle makes one shudder, and is dreadful—even admitting, as of course we must, that the poison gland had been extracted.

His next performance (I forgot to say a small fire of straw was lighted near what we will call the orchestral portion of the ring) was to blow into flame a handful of grass. He held this tightly over his mouth and blew and blew till at last a flame appeared. No one seemed to know how this trick was done, but on a subsequent occasion two Englishmen offered him a couple of dollars if he would do it without the fire in the ring being already kindled. He undertook to do the trick, but under pretence of not having enough straw, sent a confederate to procure more. This man must have managed to convey a small coal in the centre of the handful he so speedily brought. However, the snake-charmer soon blew it into flame, and got the two dollars.

I afterwards succeeded in engaging this man to pose for his picture—a savage from the remotest depths of Morocco, by religion of the sect of the Assowa, who tear living sheep to pieces, and snatching from each other the



Snake-charmer.

quivering fragments, devour them, even to the wool and entrails. Yet his behaviour indoors was always refined, even perfectly gentlemanly. It was difficult to recognise in our quiet, self-contained guest the apparently wild demoniac whom we had seen on the Soko wind wreathing serpents about his neck, and foaming and covered with blood, put one and sometimes two of their heads into his mouth, exciting them to bite him.

He used to come surreptitiously to our hotel, fearing the notice of his co-religionists, pose well, and at intervals smoke a cigarette and drink the glass of green tea with which we supplied him, with an air of dignity and composure that would have done credit to a prince. We gave him a certain sum every day, and promised a gratuity, or *favór*, at the conclusion of the sittings to keep him to his appointment, and he was punctual and perfectly honourable in his dealings. He always asserted that "Sidi Mahomet," the patron-

saint of the Assowa, granted him immunity from danger when the snakes bit him. For an Arab he earned a great deal of money by his profession, and beguiled his lengthened hours of leisure by extracting such music as was possible out of a sort of *gamba* with two strings, made of a piece of bamboo, over the split end of which a bladder stretched forms the sounding-board.

Among the most interesting sights on the Soko are the Story-tellers of the Desert, who are many and various. For hours at a time they relate their tales to an audience never weary of listening. Their voices are so perfectly modulated and gestures so eloquent that we could quite enter into their recitations. They stand in the midst of the serious Moors, who are seated on the ground, having faces indicative of the most profound interest. The story-tellers declaim their narrative with much gesticulation and facial expression, interrupting it occasionally, one to play a few chords with

a straw on his primitive guitar, another to strike together three little cymbals worn on his fingers, or a third to tap on the little painted drum placed in the hollow of his arm. These men are splendidly draped, recalling the cartoons of Raphael, or some of the noblest of the antique statues; their free, untutored actions are a perfect lesson in elocution. No dress in the world is so artistic as the Moorish.

The climate is one of the most perfect in the world. It is never cold, and the heat of summer is tempered by the sea-breezes. The heavy rains begin to fall in October, and last till March. February and March are the coldest months, but the thermometer seldom or never falls below 49 degrees. The Christmas Day of 1891 was wet but mild; the day before it I was able to sketch out of doors; and the following days were beautifully warm and fine. We never had fires, and wore our usual summer clothing throughout December and

January. December the 13th the glass was 70 degrees in the sun.

It seems incredible that roses, acacias, and geraniums should be blooming in the open at this time of year, and ferns growing plentifully beneath the aloe and cactus hedges. The almond-tree was in blossom, peas and beans were a foot high, and the only sign of winter was that it grew dark about five o'clock. One gains years of daylight to work in in a climate like this.

If our fog-cursed, cold island could be loosed from its moorings in the north Atlantic Ocean, towed south, and anchored again three degrees nearer the equator, what an improvement it would be! But there is no accounting for taste. On the other hand, an English writer once said of Tangier:—"One constantly thinks how pleasant it would be to be out of it all, and even registers a silent vow never again to be tempted into the regions of romance." But he was not an artist.

CHAPTER XVI.

TANGIER (*continued*).

Douahs.

We were never tired of walking about Tangier. Every day was like turning over the pages of some superbly illustrated book. From one of the heights round it called the Marshan, may be seen that bay immortalised by Nelson's great victory, where on a certain day he as well as others did the duty

expected of them by England. The roads leading out of the town not being made, are in summer nothing but dust, and in winter nothing but mud. However, they are always very beautiful, lined with aloes, cactus, and bamboo-canes.

The streets are squalid and have no names, and the houses no numbers, so it is difficult to find your way to any particular abode.* English, French, and Spaniards have established separate post-offices, and if you expect a letter it is best to try them all before you are quite sure it has not arrived.

In Tangier people of every African and many European nationalities meet; Arabs, Moors, Reefians, Soudanese, Egyptians, &c., from the purest pink complexion to the oiliest black, may be seen there. Women with long white robes, hiding their faces, glide about like spectres; some, sitting in the street, display

* "On jette tout, on fait tout dans les rues, excepté de relever les murs écroulés et de nettoyer."

their wares, as well as a considerable amount of leg, but neither mouth nor nose. Savage-looking negroes, whose very appearance recalls all one has ever read of African horrors; water-bearers, naked from the feet to half way above the knees, carrying pigskins empty or full; grave merchants in many-hued *djelabes* and snowy turbans; wild-looking Arabs from the desert in all the dignity of ragged draperies which remind one of Greek and Roman heroes, as do also their features, mingle with the jaunty little Spaniard with sloping shoulders in broad sombrero, the Englishman who thinks the most ridiculous dress he can adopt the proper thing abroad, and the Frenchman as fresh and smart as if he were sauntering down his beloved boulevard—all these can be seen in the streets of Tangier, with quaint white houses and arches, piles of fruit, strange little shops full of rich stuffs, embroideries, curious knives, guns six feet long, and other Moorish specialities for a background.

Suddenly a flag is run up at the flagstaff on the minaret, the voice of the mueddin is heard, and the religious Mohammedans prostrate themselves in prayer. Then the night closes in, and the sky becomes radiant with the glorious afterglow, which lengthens out the day while clothing the distant hills and sea with purple more splendid than that of the robes of Eastern emperors; the hum of traffic, the eternal strife of bargaining, cease for a time; instead, the monotonous tones of the *gamba* fill the air, and the wild-dogs bay continuously in the distance.

Soon these pictures will only be reminiscences of the past, for even now parts of Tangier are lighted with electric light, and it is proposed to make an electric tramway from the Soko to the sea. I am glad to have seen it before the destructive hand of civilisation has seized this quaint little Moorish city entirely in its grasp.

Distasteful as it always is, we must pause

for a moment to consider the subject of the indispensable *floos*, as the Moors call money. The Spanish coinage is mostly in circulation, though English and French coins pass. In Spain we never saw a gold coin, neither did the bankers possess them. The exchange on English notes and cheques reached while we were here 14 and 16 per cent. Dollars, Spanish *duros*, or French five-franc pieces are the coins of highest value used, and a moderately large sum of these is so cumbersome that an extra big purse or bag is needful. The Moorish *floos* are worth about five a penny; their silver coins, shillings, and half-crowns, minted for them in Paris, are beautiful pieces of really artistic design.

Some energetic missionaries have established a hospital on the Marshan, and hope to get at the Moors' souls through healing their bodies. The greatest trouble they have is to keep the men and women apart, which problem they once solved by eliminating the feminine

element. When we visited the hospital most of the cases were skin diseases, from which the Moors suffer frightfully. The attempts to convert them seemed hopeless ; they come when they are ill, profess to become Christians, take the medicine and get cured, but thank Allah and the Prophet for their restoration to health.

The dexterity of the Moors in the use of the gun is proverbial. On the occasion of a wedding, the sending of presents from one chief to another, or other festivities, they come in procession accompanied by a band and perform the "powder-play." Their guns are very long, have most of them flintlocks, and the barrels are either bound with brass or silver, or inlaid. It is to be deplored that they are exchanging these picturesque weapons for the more useful but inartistic English rifle whenever possible.

Twirling these guns round their heads so rapidly that they look like wheels, they suddenly

bring them down with the butts resting on their breasts, and discharge them simultaneously over the heads of their horses. They toss their pieces high above their heads, catch them again, and fire—sometimes in the air, sometimes on the ground, while they are executing the wildest gyrations.

We had many opportunities of seeing this performance. One occasion was when the Shereef of Wazàn, a personage who can only be fitly compared to the Archbishop of Canterbury in rank and dignity, came to Tangier. His exalted position may be estimated by the fact of his having sixty wives, among them (one relates it with regret) an English lady. The Moors performed the powder-play before him as he was carried through the streets in a gaily-painted box open at one side, while the crowd rushed frantically to kiss his hands and feet.

It is also executed at weddings. A bride is borne to her husband's home in a kind of box

or tent on the back of a horse, accompanied by the same savage signals of rejoicing. Poor creature; if she manages to get a peep at the world through the chinks of her box then, it is probably her last!

It is as well to remember that Christians are rigorously interdicted from entering the mosques in Tangier, unlike the custom in Algiers. De Amicis relates that when, unaware of this fact, he attempted to follow a procession into one, an old Arab rushed towards him, uttering a savage exclamation, and pushed him back with a gesture one would use in snatching a child from the brink of a precipice. I looked in as far as possible; there is only to be seen a courtyard with white arcades, and fountains on either side, in which true believers are continually performing their ablutions, which seem to consist of washing their feet, legs, and faces with their hands. In the country roads the same fountain serves for drinking-water for camels, donkeys, and people, for ablution,

and for washing fish—the only thing they seem to wash except their clothes.

The insane are regarded as saints in Morocco, and very troublesome personages they are. They persecute the visitor with demands for charity on which they live, parade the streets most gorgeously attired (one rejoices in an orange-coloured *djelabe* and red tunic), and wear numberless chains, rings, and amulets. They may be distinguished by the spear which they carry, occasionally with a cork on the point to prevent mischief. In Fez they inhabit a special street near the mosque, through which no Christian is permitted to pass.

The native *douahs* (huts) are very rude, simply made of interlaced bushes and thatched; as there is no wood in the country, every contrivance is resorted to for a substitute. They have no windows or chimneys, and the doors are so low the inhabitants have to creep in and out; the only furniture, if they can be

dignified with the name, are a few mats and rude earthenware pots, which latter the women make. These huts are built in groups, surrounded with thick hedges of cactus and aloe.

The natives keep a number of wild-dogs, wretched looking animals, partly dog, partly jackal, and partly wolf, about their dwellings, which attack the stranger who approaches too closely. In daylight one can frighten them off as they are great cowards, by pretending to throw stones at them; at night and in packs they are dangerous, and will assault a man on horseback. The carcasses of dead horses and mules are deposited on a certain part of the beach; thither these wild beasts repair, and gorge and quarrel among themselves till the remains are finished.

The Moors' manner of playing at ball is curious; they throw the ball up in such a manner that it falls near one foot, with which they kick it into the air again.

There are few places in the Old World

where the ubiquitous Roman has not set his mark, strong and massive as the rock on which his mighty capitol was founded. So, as was to be expected in his favourite province of Mauritania, there are the ruins of two Roman bridges near Tangier; and old Tangier, on the opposite side of the bay, contains numerous remains; probably it is the site of the ancient Tingis. The saying is that the Moors began to build Tangier on that spot, but every night the stones were carried away by supernatural agency and placed on the site of the present town, which they took as an indication it was the proper place on which to erect it.

What views there are over the Mediterranean to the Spanish hills, or far away to the spur of the snow-crowned Atlas and the Monkey Mountains! I cannot recall them without a thrill of pleasure. The little white villas nestling in the nearest hills must be charming residences, but how about getting furniture and provisions there in a country entirely

dependent on donkeys for conveyances? There are only two wheeled vehicles in Tangier—one is a dust-cart, the other a cab, whose excursions are confined to the beach, as the roads are so rough. It was long before a horse could be found that could be put in harness.

The most repulsive features in the Moorish character are cruelty and an utter disregard of truth. I should be sorry to relate all the instances of the former I have seen; it is quite enough for them to see a dog to throw a stone at it immediately, break its leg, or put out its eye; animals are made to work when they are only fit to spend their few remaining days in peace, or to be shot.

There is not a mule or working horse whose withers are not raw. A mule came under my observation one day, down whose legs blood was streaming freely from the friction of the harness which it still wore. I endeavoured to remonstrate with the sturdy Moor who was

calmly seated on its back, but he only looked at me with that apathetic and bland expression of countenance which their religion teaches them to cultivate.

The Moors are insensible to remonstrances; they do not value human life; how can they be expected to consider that of animals? I should be happy, indeed, if, by calling attention to these facts, any remedy might be attempted; what or how I am at a loss to imagine.

De Amicis minutely describes the women, walking with long steps slowly, covering their faces with the corner of a sort of mantle, under which they wear nothing but a chemise with large sleeves, having a cord round the waist like the robe of a nun. One can only see their eyes, the hand which covers the face, the nails tinted red with henna, and the naked feet thrust into large slippers of red or yellow leather. He omits to notice that they are tattooed on the chin, with a mark reaching from its base to the lower lip.

When no longer young they become simply beasts of burden. They walk long distances in from the country on market-days, bent double with the weight of bundles of faggots as large as themselves, huge baskets of charcoal or fruit, and often a child bound on their backs as well, whose solemn little head sticks out of its mother's garments. Supporting themselves with canes, barefooted, and sometimes carrying their slippers in their hands, they trudge the long distances, always good-humoured and apparently happy.

The Moors have only the most rudimentary ideas of medical science, and many die for want of ordinary assistance in their ailments. How those survive who live in the miserable tents on the Soko, in the midst of mud and manure heaps during the soaking tropical rains of winter, it is impossible to conceive.

Naturally abstemious, the principal meal of the Arab is taken at sunset; their usual food is the national dish of *cooscooscoo*—flour rolled

into fine grains, cooked in a steamer, and mixed with that rancid compound of peculiar flavour which is their only substitute for butter. I did not find it disagreeable, and it is said that no one who has once acquired the taste for it ever loses it again. When irritated by the long fast of Ramadan the Moors are particularly dangerous; night and day violent altercations take place in the streets, and four or five murders a week occur; at that time it is best not to go near a mosque or enter a cemetery. For a period of forty days the Mohammedan must rigorously abstain from food and even drink during the day. "The instant, however, the day closes, the hungry believer hastens to indemnify himself for his privations by an indulgence in food limited only by his pecuniary means and the capacity of his stomach. The slightest return of appetite is closely watched, and eagerly taken advantage of, and four or five times in the night do the wealthier disciples of the Prophet fortify the inner man

against the attacks of hunger during the coming day. That there may be no excuse for breaking fast in the daytime, trumpets are sounded by the mueddins at intervals during the night, to waken people to their meals, and, just before the first call to prayers, messengers from the mosques rush wildly through the streets uttering loud cries, and beating on the doors with heavy clubs. To the higher classes—those who can afford to sleep all day and eat all night—the Ramadan is not a very trying time, but to those who have to labour by daylight the fast is one of considerable severity."

Living as much *en artiste* as may be, it will still cost you, *at least*, six *pesetas* a day in Tangier. The purpose of this book is partly to show how to do this journey with the least possible expense. I think it will be acknowledged my friend and I accomplished it as cheaply as it was ever done when, having told how, I add that the whole expense of the tour

from St. Jean de Luz through Spain to Tangier and London was fifty pounds each.

We crossed the strait in company with the cattle used for victualling the garrison of Gibraltar, coming to London in the Peninsular and Oriental Steamship Company's huge vessel *Arcadia;* and, in passing, took our last look at fair Tangier, which now fades slowly in the distance, and ranges itself with other cherished visions of the past—

"Et ego in Arcadia."

THE END.

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