covered inmates. In filth it was a pig-sty, in smell a monkey-house, in ventilation another Black-hole of Calcutta. Turn to the next page, reader mine, if you are squeamish. Heaven be my witness, I have no desire to minister to morbid tastes; but I have an object in describing this dreadful *oubliette*, for it still exists—exists within thirty-two miles of British territory, and it is a scandal that some effort is not made to mitigate its horrors. Through the bars of a padlocked door, from which spurt blasts of mephitic heat, we can descry amid the steam of foul exhalations, as soon as our eyes become accustomed to the dimness, a mob of seething, sweating, sweltering captives, like in aspect as a whole to so many gaunt wild beasts. Some are gibbering like fiends, others jabbering like idiots. They are there young and old; a few—the maniacs those—are chained; all are crawled over by vermin, most are crusted with excretions. The sight made me feel faint at the time, the very recollection of it to this day makes my flesh creep. We were fascinated by this peep at the Inferno. The moment these caged wretches caught a glimpse of us they rushed

to the door, and on bended knees, or with hands uplifted, or with pinched cheeks pressed against the bars, raised a clamour of entreaty. We drew back as the rancid plague-current smote our faces, and questioned Mahomet by our looks as to what all this meant.

"They want food," he explained.

These prisoners are allowed two loaves a day out of the revenues of the Mosques; but two loaves, even if scrupulously given, which I doubt, are but irritating pittance. They may make cushions or baskets, but their remuneration is uncertain and slender. Those who are lucky get sustenance from relatives in the town, but the majority are half-starving, and are dependent for a full meal on the bounty of chance visitors. We poked a loaf through the bars. It was ravenously snapped at, torn into little bits, and devoured amid the howls of those who were disappointed. Then a loaf was cast over the door. What a savage scramble! The bread was caught, tossed in the air, jumped at, and finally the emaciated rivals fell upon one another as in a football scrimmage, and

there was a moving huddle of limbs and a diabolical chorus of shrieks and yells. That could not be done again; it was too painful in result. Mahomet undertook to distribute the remainder of our stock through an inlet in the wall, and we drew away sick in head and heart from that den of repulsive degradation, greed, brutality, cruelty, selfishness, and all infuriate and debased passion—that damnable magazine of disease physical and moral. It is undeniable that there were many there whose faces were passport to the Court of Lucifer—murderers, and dire malefactors; but better to have decapitated them than to have committed them to the slow torture of this citadel of woe. There were inmates who had been immured for years—inmates for debt whose hair had whitened in the fetid imprisonment, whose laugh had in it a harsh hollow-sounding jangle, and whose brows had fixed themselves into the puckers of a sullen, hopeless, apathetic submission to fate. Their lack of intelligence was a blessing. Had they been more sensitive they would have been goaded into raging lunacy.

Let us to the outer freshness and make bold endeavour to fling off this weight of nightmare which oppresses us. Passing by the ruinous gate yonder with its wild-looking sentry, we reach the open space where crouching hill-men are reposing on the stunted grass, and ungainly camels, kneeling in a circle, are chewing the cud in patience, or venting that uncanny half-whine, half-bellow, which is their only attempt at conversation. Let us take a long look at the country beyond with its gardens teeming with fruit and musical with bird-voices; walk up to the crown of that slant and survey the valleys, the plateaux, the brushwood, the flower-patches, spreading away to the hills that swell afar until the peaks of the Atlas, cool with everlasting snow, close the view. One is tempted to linger there lovingly, though darkness is falling. There is a gift of blandness and briskness in the very breathing of the air. When you have had your fill of the beauties on the land side, turn to the sea, meet the evening breeze that comes floating up with a flavour of iodine upon it, range round the sweeping vista, from giant Calpe away

over the Strait flecked with sails on to Trafalgar, smiling peacefully as if it had never been a bay of blood, and finish by the vision of the great globe of fire descending into the Atlantic billows.

Our stay in Tangier was most gratifying because of its variety and unending surprises. Existence there was out of the beaten track, and kept curiosity on the constant alert. It was a treat to pretend to be Legree, and to negotiate for a strong likely growing nigger-boy. I discovered I could have bought one for ten pounds sterling, a perfect bargain, warranted free from vice or blemish; but as I was not prepared to stop in Africa just then, I did not close with the offer. It may be a shocking admission to make, but if I were to settle down in Morocco, I confess, I should most certainly keep slaves. There is a deal of sentimental drivel spouted about the condition of slaves. Those I have seen seemed very happy. In Morocco they are well treated; and if desirous to change masters the law empowers them to make a demand to that effect. It is true that a slave's oath is not deemed

valid, but Cuffy bears the slight with praiseworthy equanimity. I am sure if Cuffy were in my service he would never ask to leave it, and I would teach him to appraise his word as much as any other man's oath (except his master's), by my patented plan for negro-training, based on Mr. Rarey's theories. As the land about Tangier was rated at prairie value—an acre could be had for a dollar—I might have been induced to invest in a holding of a couple of hundred thousands of acres, but that my ship had not yet come within hail of the port. What a healthy, free, aristocratic life, combining feudal dignity with educated zest, a wise man could lead there—if he had an establishment of, say, three hundred slaves, a private band, a bevy of dancing girls, Bruzeaud for *chef*, an extensive library, sixteen saddle-horses, and relays of jolly fellows from Gibraltar to help him chase the wild boar and tame bores, eat couscoussu, and drink green-tea well sweetened. He should Moorify himself, but he need not change his religion, and if he went about it rightly, I am sure, like the village pastor, he could make himself to all the country dear. Take the educational

question, for example. If he were diplomatic he would pay the school-fees of the urchins of Tangier. These are not extravagant—a few heads of barley daily, equivalent to the sod of turf formerly carried by the pupils to the hedge academies in dear Ireland, and a halfpenny on Friday. He should affect an interest in the Koran, and make it a point of applauding the Koran-learned boy when he is promenaded on horseback and named a bachelor. He might—indeed he should—follow the career of his *protégé* at the Mhersa, where he studies the principles of arithmetic, the rudiments of history, the elements of geometry, and the theology of Sidi-Khalil, until he emerges in a few years a Thaleb, or lettered man. Perhaps the Thaleb may go farther, and become an Adoul or notary, a Fekky or doctor, nay—who knows?—an Alem or sage. Ah! how pleasant that Moorish squire might be by his own ruddy fire of rushes, palm branches, and sun-dried leaves; and what a profit he might make by judicious speculation in jackal-skins, oil, pottery, carpets, and leather stained with the pomegranate bark! He would have his mills turned by water

or by horses; he would eat his bread with its liberal admixture of bran; he would rear his storks and rams. The professors who charm snakes and munch live-coals would all be hangers-on of his house; and he would have periodical concerts by those five musicians who played such desert lullabies for us—conspicuously one patriarch whose double-bass was made from an orange-tree—and would not forget to supplement their honorarium of five dollars with jorums of white wine. Sly special pleaders! They argue with the German playwright: "*Mahomet verbot den Wein, doch vom Champagner sprach er nicht.*"

From the Frenchman at the hotel, whose knowledge of Morocco was "extensive and peculiar," I acquired much of my information on the manners and customs of the people. Watches are only worn and looked at for amusement. Instead of by hours, time is thus noted: El Adhen, an hour before sunrise; Fetour (repast) el Hassoua, or sunrise; Dah el Aly, ten in the morning; El Only, a quarter past twelve; El Dhoor, half-past one; El Asser, from a quarter past three to a quarter to four; El Moghreb,

sunset; El Achâ, half-an-hour after sunset; and El Hameir, gun-shot. Meals are taken at Dah el Aly, El Asser, and El Moghreb. The houses are built with elevated lateral chambers, but there is a narrow staircase leading to the Doeria, a reception-room, where visitors can be welcomed without passing the ground-floor. The walls are plastered, and covered with arabesques or verses of the Koran incrusted in colours. The wells inside the houses are only used for cleansing linen; water for drinking purposes is sought outside.

Among many singular customs—singular to us—I noted that a popular remedy for illness is to play music and to recite prayers to scare away the devil. An enlightened Moor might think the practices of the Peculiar People quite as strange, and question the infallibility of cure-all pills at thirteen-pence-halfpenny the box. The dead in Morocco are hurried to their graves at a hand-gallop. That, I submit, is no more unreasonable than many English funeral usages, such as incurring debt for the pomp of mourning. At Moorish weddings the bride is carried in procession in a palanquin to her husband's

house amid a *fantasia* of gunpowder—the reckless rejoicing discharges of ancient muskets in the streets. Well, white favours, gala coaches, and *feux de joie* at marriages of the great are not entirely unknown among us. Nobody sees the Moorish wife for a year, not even her mother-in-law, which I consider a not wholly unkind dispensation. The Moorish wife paints her toe-nails, which, after all, is a harmless vanity, and less obtrusive than that of the ladies who impart artificial redness to their lips. And, lastly, the Moorish wife waits on her husband. Personally, I fail to discover anything blamable in that act, though I must concede that it is eccentric, very eccentric. These allusions to the Moorish wife in general lead up naturally to one in particular in whom I took a professional interest, for she was as remarkable in her way as Lady Ellenborough or Lady Hester Stanhope, or that strong-minded Irishwoman who married the Moslem, Prince Izid Aly, and whose son reigned after his father's death.

The Shereef has been mentioned. He is the great man of the district, with an authority only

second to that of the Sultan himself. Claiming to be a lineal descendant of Mahomet, he is entitled to wear the green turban. His name at full length is long, but not so long as that of most Spanish Infantes—Abd-es-Selam ben Hach el Arbi. He is a saint and a miracle-worker. He has been seen simultaneously at Morocco, Wazan, and Tangier, according to the belief of his co-religionists, wherein he beats the record of Sir Boyle Roche's bird, which was only in two places at once. Like Jacob, he has wrestled with angels. He is head of the Muley-Taib society, a powerful secret organization, which has its ramifications throughout the Islamitic world. He draws fees from the mosques, and has gifts bestowed upon him in profusion by his admirers, who feel honoured when he accepts them. Exalted and wide-spreading is his repute where the Moslem holds sway, and unassailable is his orthodoxy, yet he has had the temerity to take to himself a Christian wife. This lady had been a governess in an American family at Tangier. There the Shereef made her acquaintance, wooed and won her. They were married at the residence of the

British Minister Plenipotentiary; the officers of a British man-of-war were present at the ceremony, and slippers and a shower of rice, as at home, followed the bride on leaving the building. The Shereef and, if possible, the Shereefa were personages to be seen, and Mahomet Lamarty was the very man to help us to the favour. His Highness lived four miles away, and we formed a cavalcade one afternoon and set off for his garden, the ladies accompanying us. We passed through cultivated fields of barley and *dra* (a kind of millet), crossed the river Wadliahoodi, and ascended a road which faced abruptly towards the hills. An agreeable road it was, and not lonesome; we had the carol of birds and the piping of bull-frogs to lighten the way, and leafy branches made reverence overhead. There were abundance of fruit and such beautiful shrubs that I rail at myself for not being botanist enough to be able to enlarge upon them. There were orange-groves, yellow broom, dog-rose, and apples, pears, peaches, apricots, plums, pomegranates, figs, and vines. It was such an oasis as a very young Etonian in the warmth of a midsummer vaca-

tion might have likened to Heaven. The range of hills of El Jebel rose left and right, and at parts presented a steep cliff to the ocean. This ridge is about twelve miles in width, and its fertile slopes amply merit to be lauded as the best fruit-producers in the empire, "as bounteous as Paradise itself."

Mahomet Lamarty, who was our guide, entered the Shereef's grounds to prepare for our introduction; and now the ladies, who had insisted on coming with us, rebelled, and said point-blank they would not salute the Shereefa as "Your Highness." They were impatient to see her, but they declined to give countenance to a Christian who had demeaned herself by wedding a heathen.

"The visit was of your own seeking, ladies," I said; "if you are not willing to treat Her Highness with deference, better stay outside."

They were not equal to that sacrifice after riding four miles.

"Who'll start the conversation?" said Captain No. 1. "You start it" (to me) "like a good fellow, and I'll take up the running."

Captain No. 2 said he would hang about for us outside.

Mahomet beckoned to us and we ventured into the garden. Coming down a pathway we saw an austere, swarthy, obese man of the middle height. He was white-gloved, and wore a red fez, a sort of Zouave upper garment of blue, with burnous, baggy trousers, white stockings, and Turkish slippers. It was the Shereef. I had agreed to open the interview, but when it came to the trial my Arabic (I had been only studying it for two hours) abandoned me. Mahomet did the needful. I thanked His Highness for his kindness in admitting us to his demesne, and he smiled a modest, solemn smile, and looked greeting from his small eyes. When he discovered that I had been travelling in Spain, he asked me—always through Mahomet—what they were doing there. On having my reply—that they were tasting the miseries of civil war—translated to him, he shook his head, shrugged his shoulders, and slowly ejaculated:

"Unhappy Spain! Silly, unfortunate people! That is the way with them always. They are at perpetual strife one with another."

And then Mahomet interposed with a parenthesis of his own depreciatory of the Spaniards, whom he loathed and despised. He had fought against them in the war of 1859-60, and the Shereef had also headed his countrymen, and had shown great courage and coolness in action. His presence had infused a high spirit of enthusiasm into the undisciplined troops.

"Bismillah!" grunted Mahomet. "The Spaniard is beneath contempt. He was almost licked in one battle. He was four months here, and how far did he get into the interior?"

Mahomet conveniently forgot the defeat of Guad-el-ras, the occupation of Tetuan, and the indemnity of four hundred millions of reals which was exacted as the price of peace; but he was literally correct, the victorious O'Donnell did not flaunt his flag beyond a very exiguous strip of the territory of Sidi-Muley-Mahomet.

We were walking as we talked, and by this time had reached the brow of a wooded rise which commanded an uninterrupted prospect of the ocean. The flowery cistus flourished on the eminence, and

cork-trees, chestnuts, and willows shielded us from the fierceness of the sun. Behind and around were a succession of richly-planted gardens. We halted, and the Shereef, scanning the horizon in the direction of the Rock, suddenly put a question to me which almost took my breath away:

"Do they buy commissions over the way still?"

"No; that system has been abolished."

"It is well," he remarked, with a scarcely suppressed sneer. "It was incredible that a great nation and a fighting nation should make a traffic of the command of men, as if a clump of spears were a kintal of maize," and as he relapsed into silence a soldierly fire gleamed in his irides, his frame seemed to straighten and swell, and the nature of the prophet retired before that of the warrior.

From where we stood we could ferret out a house with a veranda in front, built on a terrace and begirt with trees. That was the residence of His Highness; but we turned our eyes in another direction, lest we should be suspected of rude curiosity by this courteous African. I was trying

to divine the tally of years our host had numbered. No Arab knows his own age, and here it may be useful to tell the reader wherein the distinction lies between the Moor and the Arab. Virtually they are the same; but the name of Moor is given to those who dwell in cities, of Arab to those who roam the plains. Mahomet came to my aid. His Highness had whiskers when Tangier was bombarded by Prince de Joinville. That was in August, 1844, a good nine-and-twenty years before, so that Abd-es-Salem must have long doubled the cape of forty, which would leave him considerably the senior of his Frankish wife.

We turned at a noise—the creak of a rustic wooden gate on its hinges; a figure approached. And then it was given to me to gaze upon Her Highness the Shereefa of Wazan. She was not called Zuleika, but Emily—her maiden name had been Keene, and she came not from the rose-bordered bowers of Bendemeer's stream, nightingale-haunted, but from the prosaic levels of South London, where her father was governor of a gaol. Truly she was a vision of gratefulness in that

paynim tract—a rich brunette, with large black eyes, long black ringletted tresses, and a well-filled shape with goodly bust. Her attire was neat and graceful and not Oriental. She was clad in a riding-habit of ruby brocaded velvet, with jacket to match, had a cloud of lace round her throat, and an Alpine hat with cock's feather poised on her well-set head. She might serve as the model for a Spanish Ann Chute. Bracelets on her plump wrists and rings on her taper fingers caught the sunshine as she occasionally twirled her cutting-whip. Her voice was bell-like and melodious, with the faintest accent of decision, and her manner, after an opening flush of embarrassment, was cordial and debonair. The embarrassment was because of her inability to extend to us the hospitality she desired. She explained that she had to receive us in the garden as the house was undergoing repairs. After the customary commonplaces, she freely entered into conversation, and took opportunity at once to deny that she was a renegade; she wore European costume, as we saw, and attended the rites of the English Church, for it was one of the stipulations

of the marriage contract that she should have perfect liberty to follow her own faith.

"I wish every English girl were as happily married as I," she said, "and had as loving a husband."

It was gratifying, therefore, to note that she found herself as women wish to be who love their lords. She had been married on the 27th of January, and as the Shereef had entered into his present residence but recently, they were still at sixes and sevens. It was his habit to spend the winter in the country and the summer in town. She had been but two years in Morocco, and had not yet mastered Arabic.

"His Highness understands English?"

She shook her head, and quickly interpreting a lifting of my eyelids, she smilingly added,

"Spanish was the medium of our courtship."

And then, as we promenaded the garden path, she became communicative, and dwelt with pardonable expansion on the virtues of her lord and master, who followed behind side by side with the portly Yorkshireman. His charity, she said, was

unbounded. Slaves were frequently sent to him as presents, but he kept none. He was modest on his own merits, and yet he was the most enlightened of Moors. He had visited Marseilles, a war-ship having been put at his disposal by the French Government, and was most anxious to take a tour to Paris and Vienna, and above all to England. It was his desire that railways should be constructed in Morocco, and he was glad when he was told that there was some likelihood of a telegraph cable being laid to Tangier.

"Then," interrupted I, "with your Highness's influence on the tribes around, exercised through your husband, there should be a fair prospect of pushing civilization here."

"Ah, yes!" she exclaimed, with a glow on her cheeks, "that is one of my dearest hopes, that is my great ambition. I believe that my marriage, which has been cruelly commented upon in England, may effect good both for these poor misunderstood Moors and my own country people."

"Is the Shereef on friendly terms with the Sultan?"

"No, I am sorry to say there is a feud between them at the moment. The Sultan objects to my husband for using an English saddle."

"Hum!" (to myself mentally) "if the august Muley cannot brook an English saddle, what must he think of an English wife? Or do these Moslems, like some Christians I know, strain at a gnat and swallow a camel? Mayhap it is even so. The pigeon-prompted camel-driver, who built up his creed with plentiful blood-cement, saw fit to add a new chapter to the Koran, when he fell in love with the Coptic maiden, Mary."

The Shereefa told me that her father and mother had come out to see her. They were averse to the alliance at first, but were satisfied that she had done the right thing when she told them how content she was, and with what high-bred consideration for her wishes in the matter of religion her husband had behaved. Their intention was to stop for four days, but they extended their visit to fourteen. "And now," she continued, "I can use to my lord the words of Ruth to Naomi, 'Whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest I will

lodge; thy people shall be my people'"—a pause—"yes, and 'thy God my God,' for there is but one"—archly—"the matter of the Prophet we shall leave aside."

I admired the lady's pluck, and if I were that Moorish squire I have tried to sketch, I should esteem it an honour to have her on my visiting list. But I am a theological oddity, and my wallet of prejudices, it is to be feared, is sadly unfurnished. I never could rise to that sublimated self-sufficiency of intellect that I could consign any fellow-creature to everlasting pains for the audacity of differing in dogma with myself. I have met good and bad of every creed, Mahometans I could respect—whose word was their bond—and so-called Christians and Christian ministers with a most uncharitable spiritual pride, whom I could not respect. The liver of the persecutor was denied me. Were the fires of Smithfield to be rekindled, my prayers would be sent up for the floods of Heaven to quench them, and for the lightnings of Heaven to annihilate the fiends who had piled the faggots.

"By-the-bye," said the Shereefa, "do you know

any of those people who write for the papers in London ?"

I admitted that I had that misfortune.

"Some of them are fools as well as cowards," she went on. "They have written articles about me full of ignorance and malice. Have they no consideration for the feelings of others ?"

"I am afraid, your Highness, some of them are more brilliant than conscientious; they would rather point an epigram than sacrifice style to truth or good-nature."

"One of them in particular," she said, and there was an irritated ring in her voice, "has singled me out for attack, and given me in derision a name which he believes to be Mahometan, but which is really Jewish."

And with her cutting-whip she viciously snapped off the heads of some poppies. The episode of Tarquin's answer to the emissary of Sextus occurred to me, and I felt that if my colleague, Horace St. J——, were there, he would have passed a very bad quarter of an hour.

The females of our party joined us, and I formally

presented them, taking a malicious pleasure in emphasizing the "your Highness." The Shereefa received them right graciously, but it was easy to notice that a chill came over the conversation. They were careful never to use the title to their English sister. In fact, it was a tacit ladies' battle.

It was time to leave, and the Shereefa presented her visitors with two nosegays, gathered by her own hands. The act had in it something very royal, with the smallest trace of sly condescension. The Shereef accompanied us to the outer gate. On the way I motioned to Captain No. 1 to offer him a cigar. He did; his Highness accepted it, bowed, and gravely put it in his pocket. As we stood on the road at parting, a peasant was passing with a load of twigs on his shoulders. He cast them off, threw himself on his knees, kissed the hem of the holy man's garments, and the back of his proffered hand.

We were descending the hill when a rustle in the bushes attracted me, and a white face peeped out and a voice besought me in English to stop. It

was the Shereefa's London lady's-maid. She could not resist the temptation of enjoying a few sentences with one of her own race. From her I learned that there were twenty-seven Moorish women in her master's household; that there was a tank at Wazan large enough to float a ship; that her master had been married before, and had two sons and a lovely Mahometan child, a daughter, to whom the Shereefa was teaching English and the piano; "but remember, please," and here she grew important, and had all the dignity of a retainer, with a great sense of what was due to her caste and the proprieties, "that my mistress's children, if she have any, will be Europeans!"

As we got back to our hotel the muezzins were summoning the faithful to their vesper orisons, and Albert was moaning ruefully under the sideboard. Mrs. Captain had out her sweetly pretty pet at once, and covered him with caresses and endearments.

"Somebody has given him something that has disagreed with him. Was it you?" she said to me, and there was that in her tone which made me quake in my shoes.