



### THE BERBERS OF KABYLIA.

WHEN I was living on the hills near Algiers, many and many a time have I awoke before the dawn, and seen the mists float away off valley and sun, and the sun break forth in all his glory from behind the mountains of Kabylia. The range of the Little Atlas stretched a long line of alp-like heights in the far distance, bounding the plain of the Metidja, their topmost peaks always crowned with snow, luring us towards them.

One day it was my happy fate to make one of a party to visit the extreme point of Kabylia in French possession; a small mountain stronghold—a very eyrie—called in old times Fort Napoléon, but now Fort National. Betimes in the early morning we were off, with four good horses to the carriage, to be changed every ten miles. Over hill, over dale, in the pale grey mist of the early morning, away we went! We passed the Arab shepherds driving their flocks of goats up the hill-side, to pasture them by shady grove or running brooks before the fierce heat of the African day came on. By-and-by we passed Arab villages—mud hovels, whitewashed of a dazzling whiteness, and fenced in with that most impregnable of all defences, a cactus hedge, each broad leaf so covered with prickly thorns that nothing could possibly penetrate past, the topmost leaves exchanging thorns for flowers, the small, brilliant yellow flower of the wild cactus, as bright in colour as our own gorse but considerably larger, and looking brighter still from the contrast with the intense blue of the sky beyond. By noon it became so hot that the sky changed to a





A KABYLE WOMAN.



sort of dusty grey, and the long road stretched on grey and dusty too, and the interminable ground palmetto, with its pointed fingers, told of the difficulties of the poor French farmers to uproot this obstinate possessor of the soil. On and on we went. Towards evening we stopped, and took out our baskets of provisions for dinner, settling ourselves beside a clear running stream overhung by high shrubs of oleander in full bloom, some pink, some white. A single star came out to see, and a quaint piping presently told us that Arab shepherd-boys were indulging in a slow and stately dance on the grass close by.

Presently the plain came to an end, and we began the ascent. The road was cut in a succession of zig-zags up the side of the mountain, between plantations of olive trees. The evening mists began to rise, and as our mounted guide rode on in front he appeared at each turn of the ascent to have ridden straight away into the void. The weird and gnarled old trees seemed to start into being and vanish again as we passed them, and now and again a white-robed Arab appeared and disappeared in the same ghostly manner. At last we gained the summit, and rolled into the fort under the dark gateway. Nothing was visible that night, but next morning we looked out on shining snow-peaks, apparently so near in the morning sunlight we felt we could touch them, if we only stretched out our hands, but for the valley between.

We were in Kabylia, the land of the Berbers, the Switzerland of Algeria; last conquered, and even now scarcely subdued.

The Kabyle people are in every way unlike the Arab; not only in person, character, and dress, but also in habits and laws. They pro-

cess to be Mahometans, but have only become so by conquest. Frequently one meets a woman tattooed with a cross on the forehead, a custom which they are themselves quite unable to account for. Although the women are generally black-haired and dark-eyed, it is very frequent to meet a man with red hair and sometimes blue eyes, whilst the shape of the face has a squareness about the jaw and forehead which is characteristic of the northern nations, but is never met with among the dark, long-visaged Arabs. The dress of their women consists of a large double square of home-spun wool or linen, according to the weather, brooched on each shoulder by most peculiar triangular-headed pins of an enormous size. This primitive dress is bound round the waist by a bright-coloured girdle. It is, in fact, the tunic of the ancient Romans, and hangs in the same long, straight, classical folds. The men wear a short, sleeveless shirt, with a second one of leather, and sometimes an Arab burnous over all, out of doors.

These people are believed to be a remnant of the Vandal invasion that surged over Europe, and flowed over all the Roman provinces, extending even into what was then called Numidia; they were long left in possession of their mountain fastnesses, but were conquered by the Mahometan Arabs when they, in their turn, ravaged the country, after the Roman Empire had succumbed to its conquerors. The men are frugal in their habits, and intensely fond of their wild and barren country. They leave their native mountains and go down for a while into the cities in the plain. They are to be seen in Algeria, among the bricklayers and common workmen of all kinds. But they only stay

until they have saved the means to buy a cottage, a bit of ground, and a wife, and then they return home. Their houses are most primitive. Bare walls, a mud floor with a few large mats, perhaps a curtain dividing the one room in half, a huge jar as high as the room, containing the winter's supply of dried figs or dates, which, with bread, olives, and oil, is their chief food. The live stock, cows, goats, or fowls, share the one room with the human inhabitants. In some rooms an arched recess was appropriated to the four-footed, while a mat on the upper part of the recess above the arch allowed the human occupants to separate themselves luxuriously at night from the former. The women do not go veiled, and are in no way secluded like other Mahomedan women, but have the same freedom as the men. They share their labours at home and in the field. I have seen them toiling up the steep mountain paths from the fountain, with their immense heavy water-jars on their shoulders, and working in the olive harvest; they are treated in many ways with more respect and consideration than are the Arab women. Still it would be hardly reasonable to expect in a semi-barbarous people that the women should be considered as quite the equal of the men. The joy for the birth of a male child is expressed by double the number of shots fired as for that of a girl. And when a woman is the mother of a son, her husband presents her with the forehead brooch, which she wears from that time forth as a mark of honour, and as the highest and proudest distinction that a woman can have.

The Kabyle matron of our illustration was, as we see by her forehead ornament, the proud and happy mother of a boy.

## MIDST GRANITE HILLS.

### THE STORY OF A DARTMOOR HOLIDAY.

By EGLANTON THORNE, Author of "My Brother's Friend," "Aldyth's Inheritance," etc.

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### AN UNWARRANTABLE LIBERTY.



RACE and her brother had not long finished breakfast the next morning, when Arthur Seaton appeared.

"I have come to propose a picnic," he said, when greetings had been exchanged.

"Are you both equal to a good walk?"

"There is nothing I should like better," said Stanley, with all the pride of restored health, "and I think I can speak for Grace too. But before we say more, let us thank you for your kind present of last evening."

"Yes, indeed," said Grace, "though I really think we ought to scold you. You should not have done it. I felt ashamed of having mentioned our want."

"I hope not. I am afraid it was rather an impertinence on my part; but you will find that everyone indulges me at Trematon. I am a spoilt child, and always get my own way."

"Say, rather, a good fairy, one of your

Dartmoor pixies, showering on needy mortals the gifts they crave," said Erith.

"No, no; I am nothing so good as that," said Arthur, laughing. "But now, how soon can you be ready to start? The air is so fresh; it is just the morning for a walk, and I propose to take you across country to the top of Rocksbro' Cleave, and then by moor and fell and sweet woodland paths to our own falls, the grand show of this neighbourhood, which I was surprised to learn from Miss Erith yesterday you had not yet visited."

"You think it a serious omission," said Erith. "The truth is, the man who drove us here spoke so slightly of the falls, that we have felt in no hurry to visit them."

"Fancy suffering yourselves to be misled by the natural contempt of a native for the scenes amidst which he has been reared!" said Arthur Seaton. "But wait till you have seen the falls. If you approve of my programme, we shall reach them about mid-day, and Mrs. Brown, my uncle's housekeeper, has promised to send something in the way of luncheon to await us there."

"How good of you to arrange it all so thoroughly," said Grace. "It will be delightful! I love to spend the whole day out of doors."

"What is the time, Grace?" asked Stanley. "My watch has run down."

"I will ask Mrs. Sparks," she replied, rising hastily; but Arthur quickly supplied the information.

"Did you not bring your watch with you, Grace?" asked her brother, remembering

that he had not seen her wear it since they had been at Trematon.

"No, I did not," she answered with heightened colour. "I will be ready in five minutes, Mr. Seaton"—and she hurried from the room, as though to escape further questions.

Arthur Seaton understood it all. Grace had concealed from her brother the fact that she had sacrificed her watch, the one which had been their father's, in order to increase their dwindling funds. And that very watch, so familiar to them both, was now locked within a drawer of his at the Rectory. How he might venture to return it to Miss Erith was a problem on which Arthur was constantly exercising his ingenuity, but as yet without any satisfactory result.

In a few minutes they were on their way. It was indeed a lovely walk Arthur led them: through narrow lanes with ferny, flowery banks, through deep, steep woods, they descended to a spot where the river which came down from the moors was completely hidden under huge mossy boulders, blocking its bed for many yards. The water, invisible, could be heard flowing underneath. Crossing by this romantic natural bridge, they began the ascent of the opposite slope of the deep valley. The sun shone warmly on them as they climbed upwards; but the magnificent view which they obtained from the top of the ridge more than repaid them for the fatigue of the climb. The enormous rocks which crowned the summit of the Cleave, and were piled together with the wildest irregularity,