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TUNIS AND ITS BEY.

ABOUT a year ago, the attention of the civilized world was drawn to Tunis, that corner of Africa which, in ancient times, was the pivot on which revolved Mediterranean history. At the beginning of the Tunisian troubles, little notice was taken of the rumors of the Arab insurrection on the Algerian frontier, or of the interference of France. Only those who were acquainted with the vicissitudes of European policy foresaw that the so-called intrusion of the savage Khoomir tribe into French territory would be taken as a pretext for the occupation of the regency of Tunis. Argus-eyed as is the European press, it succeeded in giving the public only scant information regarding the deliberations of the famous Berlin Congress, during which the fate of Tunis was sealed by an incident that was imparted to me by one of its leading members. France had long been casting covetous eyes upon the little state of Tunis, which nominally was under Turkish rule, but really was independent. It possessed the best, virtually the only, harbors of the northern coast of Africa. Lying immediately east of Algeria, it was an asylum for Algerian malcontents and the refuge of insurrectionary tribes. Algeria, since its first occupation by the French, has been a dangerous possession, and even at present it cannot be regarded as thoroughly conquered, especially in the southern districts bordering on the desert. The shortest and most practicable approach to these districts is by the Gulf of Gabes through Tunisian territory. Taking all these things into consideration, it was clear that France could not hold her African possessions in peace and security unless she could have full liberty of movement in Tunis. There was still another motive for the annexation. The French monarchy had added territory to

France and fresh laurels to her army by the conquest of Algeria; the Empire had given her Savoy and Nice; while the newly established Republic began its career by consenting to the loss of the two best and most fertile provinces of France. This reproach was an effective weapon in the hands of the monarchical factions. There was only one way to reestablish through the republic the lost prestige of France, and that was by conquest. Tunis, weak, poor, and misruled by an ignorant prince, and for many years an eye-sore to every Frenchman, was of course first thought of. But Italy and Turkey stood ready to protest. England and Spain were jealously watching every movement in north Africa, and, besides, France was in doubt as to the intentions of Bismarck. But at the Berlin Congress, when it was arranged that England, Austria, and Russia should each receive a part of the Ottoman Empire, Count St. Vallier, the French delegate, hinted the desire of his Government to have a share of the spoils, by opposing the dismemberment of Turkey. One day, while he was expressing his views to Bismarck in the presence of my informant, the chancellor shrugged his shoulders and said:

“Why not take Tunis for your share? —No one will oppose you.”

From that moment Count St. Vallier withdrew his opposition. A few months later, when I arrived in Tunis, preparations for the French expedition were being carried forward with energy and secrecy. The representatives of some of the great powers in Tunis had received instructions not to oppose any measures that the French Resident, M. Roustan, might be pleased to take. Work was hastened on the railroad connecting Algiers with the capital of Tunis. Telegraph lines were

extended to every important point in the regency. So-called consular agents were appointed in the interior towns, and provided with money to prepare the inhabitants for foreign rule, and to reconcile them to it. Sometimes common Arabs who could not speak a word of French except *monsieur* and *bon jour*, were called to important offices. Bedouin sheiks were bribed, and officers at the Tunisian Foreign Office were promised high rewards. At first everything went smoothly, and M. Roustan soon became the most important personage in the regency. He contracted secret relations with most of

finally the parade march toward the capital. But the glory of the expedition was meager, for Europe was surprised at the incapacity shown by the newly re-organized French troops, at their very defective commissariat, and at the large number of sick. M. Roustan had made a careful study of the inhabitants, but little thought seems to have been given to the climatic dangers which the troops were to encounter, and to the scarcity of food and water. After the first blush of success, everything seemed to militate against the French, who, before they could firmly establish themselves, were confronted by the fanatical part



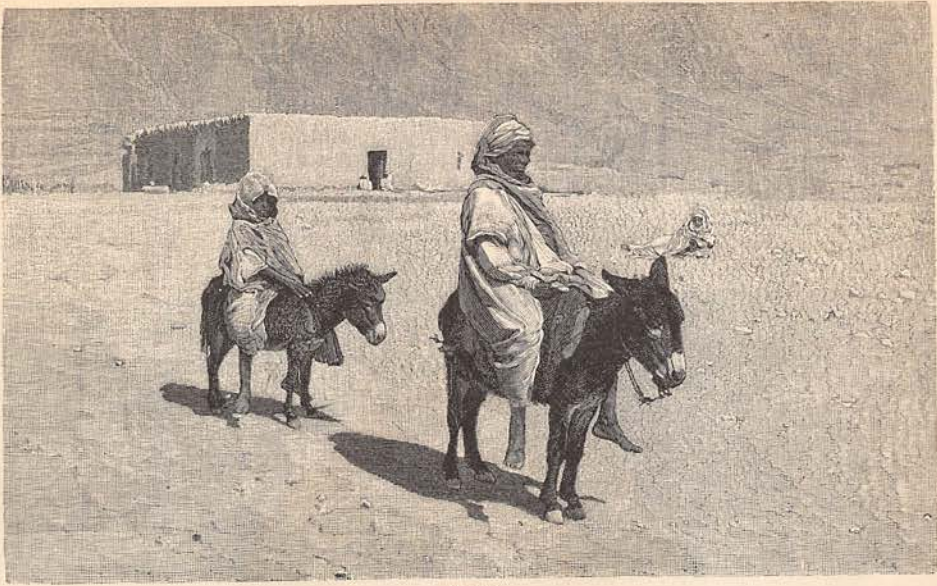
محمد الصادق باي تونس

PORTRAIT OF THE BEY, MOHAMMED ES-SADOCK, WITH HIS AUTOGRAPH.

the ruling Mamelukes, and was thus enabled to control the actions of the weak Bey and to prepare for the march of the French army toward the capital. No time was lost in massing a French army corps near the frontier; and, at an opportune moment, the curtain was lifted over the scene of the insurrection of the Khoomir tribe. On the pretext of chastising the Bedouins that had invaded Algiers, the French entered Tunisian territory. Then followed a series of so-called victories over the beggarly, unarmed, and half-starved Bedouin Arabs, the bombardment of the defenseless town of Tabarca, expeditions against an imaginary enemy, and

of the population of the interior, which hastened to arms to oppose the intruding unbelievers. A year has gone by without much change for the better, and many years will pass before the African possessions of France will be completely pacified.

While the great powers were disposing of some of the Turkish provinces, the Bey of Tunis and his Government continued to rule the country in the old-fashioned way, knowing very little, and seemingly caring little, about the affairs of the outside world. Even when the French troops were invading his territory, the Bey did not seem to comprehend that the last hour of Tunisian independ-



ARABS.

ence had struck. Who should volunteer him that information? Every member of the diplomatic corps knew that the French minister was the actual Pasha of Tunis. There was no European newspaper in the regency, His Highness the Bey never having given his gracious consent to the publication of one. The small, insignificant printed slips in Arabic that occasionally appeared were simply a chronicle of official transactions, and took as little notice of the outer world as if the regency were a lone star in the universe, its sun Mecca, and its moon Constantinople. At the Tunisian court there were only two persons who could read and write a foreign language, and only four others who were able to decipher the contents of a European newspaper. Neither His Highness the Bey, nor his prime minister, nor any other member of his cabinet, was acquainted with any other language than Arabic. The transactions with foreign courts and ministers were carried on through a dragoman or interpreter, whose knowledge of French rendered his position at court one of great influence. But he would certainly be the last to reveal to his master the dangerous situation into which he had been drawn. So when the moment for action arrived, the Bey was wholly unprepared.

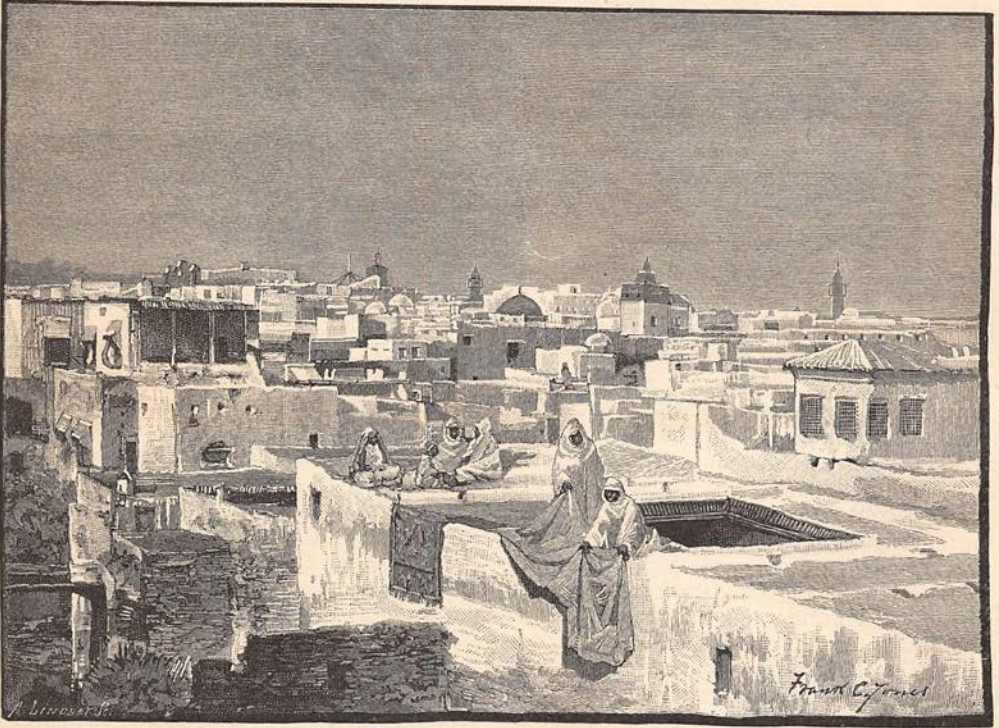
Up to the time of the French occupation, Tunis resembled an oriental state of the mediæval age. European customs had gained little recognition beyond the adoption of the European military uniform. No Mohammedan country is within easier reach of the center of Europe, yet the stream of modern civilization seems to have left Tunis in a sort

of eddy. The only Christian country with which it had relations was Italy, for the bulk of the commerce of the regency was carried on with Genoa and Palermo, with which two steam-ship lines kept up semi-weekly communication.

It was from the deck of one of the Genoan steamers that I first obtained a view of the beautiful Gulf of Carthage. The ruins of that ancient capital were scarcely perceptible on the headland that sloped gracefully to the waters of Lake Bahira. On the bare summit of the hill near Goletta, the present sea-port of the city of Tunis, once stood Birsas, the fortress of ancient Carthage, while the farther hill is now crowned with a chapel, in which lie buried the remains of King Louis IX. of France, who died here during his crusade against Islam. The present harbor of Tunis can be entered only by the smallest sailing-vessels, and passengers who arrive by steamer are transported to the *dogana* (custom-house) of Goletta in small boats. On passing through the *dogana*, our curiosity was first excited by a Tunisian sentinel on duty. The dark-faced warrior was sitting cross-legged in front of his sentry-box, and, like any old woman, was knitting socks. His rifle and a pair of slippers lay at his side. Near by stood an officer, also on duty, who was quietly puffing away at his cigarette. The black uniform of the sentinel was torn in several places, disclosing the fact that the Tunisian army does not wear under-clothing. His bare feet showed that the socks he was knitting were not intended for himself, and I afterward learned the reason for his

diligence. The poor population of the regency is taxed to the utmost to support the Government and army, and the Minister of War annually receives appropriations for maintaining the troops, but this money passes through the hands of so many generals, colonels, captains, and inferior officers that the poor, half-starved privates often do not get any pay for months. Their daily rations are a loaf of bread and half a pint of oil,—just

servants, and the entire court and army; even the state prisoners are brought to Goletta, and remain there so long as His Highness chooses to enjoy his sea-baths. A railroad connects Goletta with the city of Tunis, which lies at the other end of the marshy lake El Bahira. Almost in the center of the lake is a small island, covered with the ruins of an old Spanish castle, one of the few relics of Iberian domination. In



TUNIS FROM THE HOUSE-TOPS.

enough to keep them from starving,—and their uniforms are little more than rags. No wonder, then, that the poor fellows endeavor to earn a trifle by knitting, basket-making, and rope-making. The watch-room at the prison of Goletta, which I afterward visited, looked like a workshop or bazaar, the soldiers and sergeants on duty being busily at work at various trades.

Goletta is situated on the sandy shore of the Gulf of Carthage. It is not only the principal port of the regency, but also a much-frequented watering-place, where the Bey resides during the summer months. An imposing fortress bristles with heavy guns, near the charming spot where the ruler of Tunis has his villa. It is the custom in Tunis for the whole Government to accompany the Bey wherever he may go,—the ministers, the

olden times the lake was the harbor of Tunis. Now only the smallest boats can cross from Goletta to the capital, and even these are in constant danger of running aground. The fact is that Tunis, with more than a hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants, has no sewer system. The surface drainage empties into the lake, and the refuse of the city is dumped into it. By this filling process the lake has become a shallow, pestilential marsh, where thousands of flamingos and other birds find their food. The scenery is essentially African. Mountain-peaks encircle the valley of the lake on three sides. Groups of cypress and palm trees wave their graceful boughs in the breezes; cactus, almond-trees, and prickly-pear are seen in the fields; the air is clear and the sky dark blue. At the south end of the lake may be seen the white cupolas



A STREET IN THE SUBURBS OF TUNIS.

and slender minarets of the capital. The outlines of the picture are so graceful that the Arabs give to Tunis the name "Burnoose (white cloak) of the Prophet."

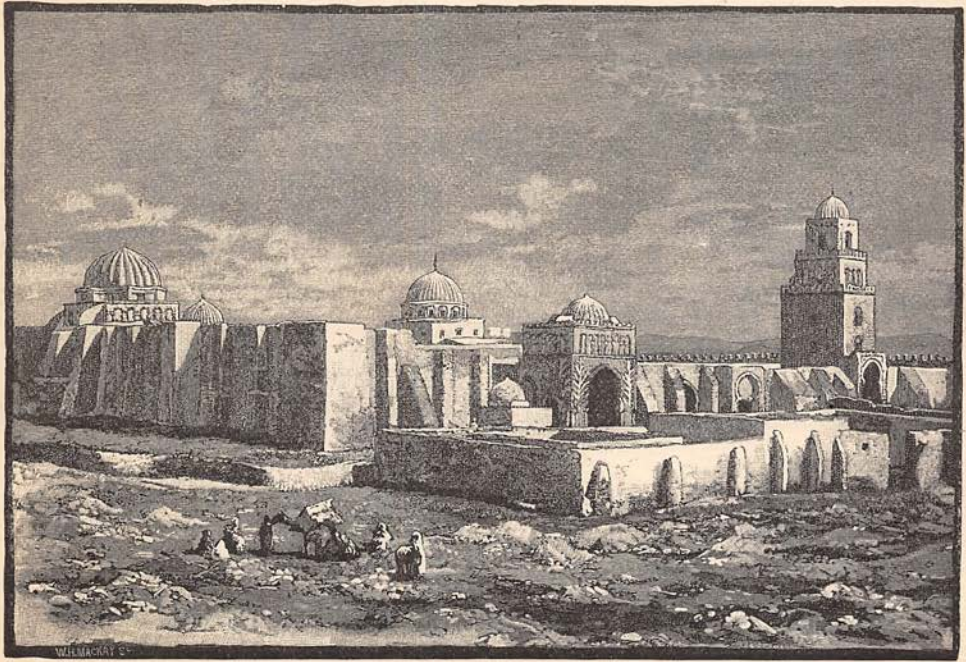
On first entering Tunis, the traveler would scarcely believe that he was in one of the centers of oriental life. The railway station is situated outside the walls of the Mohammedan city, in the heart of the European quarter. An Italian carriage carries him through European streets to a French hotel, where he finds everything just as he would in Marseilles or Genoa. But as soon as he enters one of the gates of the great wall encircling the ancient city, he is captivated by strange and interesting scenes. Until lately, no Christian was permitted to reside within the walls of the Arabian quarter. The Jews have a quarter by themselves, and a filthy, dark, disgusting labyrinth it is. However, the Arabian quarter is not much better. The streets are somewhat wider and lighter, and the houses, which are two or three stories high, are built in Mohammedan style. The walls are without windows, and closely barred doors add to the lonely, almost desolate, appearance of the streets. Occasionally, people are seen shuffling along in their slippers toward the mosques, of which there are about five hundred in Tunis. The visitor passes through crowded arch-ways and

arcades lined with bazaars. Now and then he finds himself in the court of some Arab inn or caravansary, where heavily laden camels and mules crowd upon each other. A few more steps may take the visitor into some deserted, silent street, where he may meet a heavily veiled woman, covered from head to foot in a winding-sheet or cloak. And on turning a corner he may again find himself in a narrow street, in which men and beasts of burden are so indiscriminately mixed up that he wonders how it is people are not run over or trampled to death by the camels, and how, in a street about eight feet wide, laden camels manage to pass each other. No system whatever seems to have been adopted in laying out the streets of Tunis, unless it was a system of irregularity. In my wanderings through the Arabian quarter I seldom saw an open door or window. Some houses were covered with the most primitive daubs, representing wild beasts and fruits. In a market-place I entered an Arab *café*. The light was dim, for, besides the door, there was only one small opening or window to admit the sun's rays. The roof and upper parts of the walls were blackened with smoke. A low divan ran along the wall, and on this were squatting turbaned Moors. Their slippers lay on the floor in front of them. Some of these stolid-looking orientals were sipping coffee and smoking their *chibouques*

(pipes); very few smoked the *narghile* (water-pipe), which is now little used in Tunis. Others were playing checkers or chess. In the meaner parts of the Arab quarter I saw encampments of Bedouins, who had come from districts bordering on the desert to buy and sell in the market of the capital. Here lived also the water-carriers, pastry-cooks, and men from the oases and towns of the interior, who had come on with the caravans.

fort, the Kasba. The ruins of ancient Carthage were plundered by the Tunisians. In almost every second house may be seen cut stones bearing ancient inscriptions, or fragments of columns and capitals. If Tunis were destroyed, its ruins would be in great part the ruins of Carthage.

The regency does not number more than two and a half million souls, one million of whom are roving Bedouins. All are very poor,

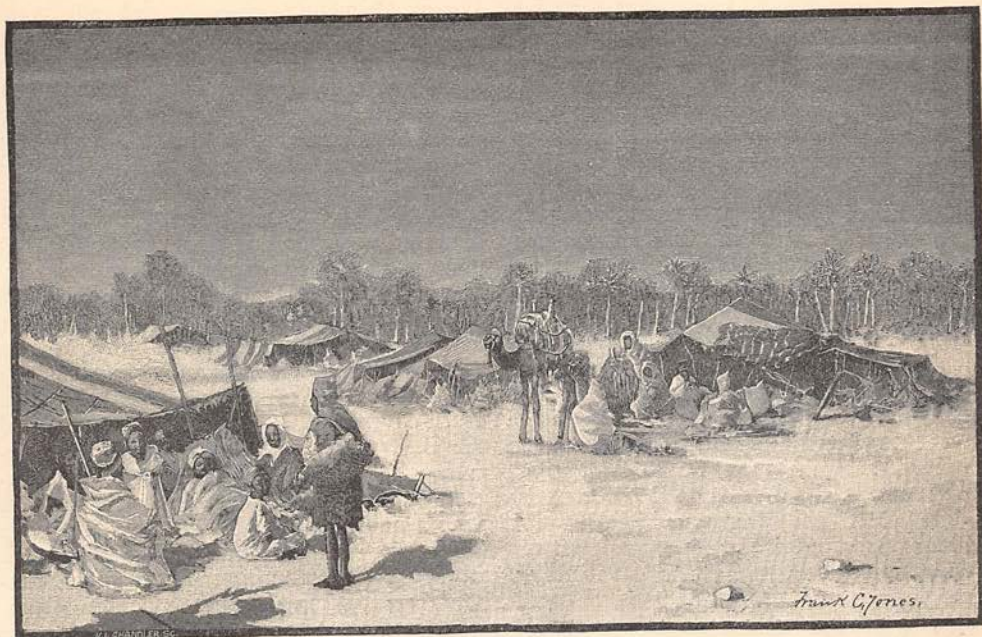


THE HOLY MOSQUE OF KAIRWAN.

Between the Saituna mosque and the old Turkish fort, the Kasba, lies the fashionable quarter of the city. There wide and, what is more remarkable, clean streets are a sure indication that the palace of some great officer is in the neighborhood. The oriental does not understand what taking a walk means. The wealthy drive out in their carriages only to visit each other or to have an audience with the Bey. The merchants and proprietors of the bazaars, as soon as their business is over for the day, return to their homes, which they do not leave until the next morning. Hence, the municipality cleans only those streets where the great and influential people live; it scatters sand in those thoroughfares, and keeps the pavement in repair. The filth and garbage which the sweepers gather here they dump in the poorer streets or into the lake. The finest buildings are found in the neighborhood of the Bey's palace, "Dar el Bey," and of the old Turkish

yet the Bey and the leading officers of the Government live in gorgeous palaces, and spend with a lavish hand the money extorted from the people. In the capital there are several royal palaces, monumental in their proportions, which have been abandoned, and in some cases are merely ruins. Tunisian etiquette requires that no Bey should reside in a palace where one of his predecessors has died. The English, American, French, and German representatives live in some of these abandoned edifices, whose striking Moorish architecture, spacious corridors, and gorgeous halls convey to the visitor a fair idea of their luxuriousness when they were furnished with carpets manufactured in the holy city of Kairwan,* with divans and gauze curtains, and other products of Moorish art. Almost immediately after the burial of a Bey,

* The Beard of the Prophet is preserved in the holy mosque of Kairwan, the city being regarded by the Arabs as one of the four gates of Paradise.



ENCAMPMENT OF BEDOUNS.

the furniture of his palace begins to disappear. Even the doors and windows are stolen. One palace, called the Mohamedia, which was built in the vicinity of Tunis only forty years ago, by Mohammed Bey, at a cost of twenty millions of francs, is now a complete ruin. The tiles that covered the floor and the walls, and the columns that supported the arches of the doors and the roof, were all taken away and used for other buildings. These ruins are larger than those of the Tuileries at Paris. The present Bey of Tunis, who is the most civilized prince of the Husseinite dynasty, was not contented with the Dar el Bey and the Bardo, the Hammam en Linf, and many other palaces which he inherited, but built a new palace near the Bardo, about an hour's walk from the city.

The Bey's domestic life is as simple and uninteresting as that of an old European bachelor. He is called a woman-hater, and has lived apart from his wife for many years. He is a very religious man, and says his prayers with great regularity. Having very little state business to transact, he has time to gratify his taste for photography, in which he has become an expert. I was presented to the Bey in his summer palace at Goletta. Ostriches roamed at will over the palace-grounds; aids-de-camp, many of them mere boys, were lounging on the divans of the broad veranda; while guards in red-and-gold uniform, armed with long halberds, solemnly paced up and down in front of

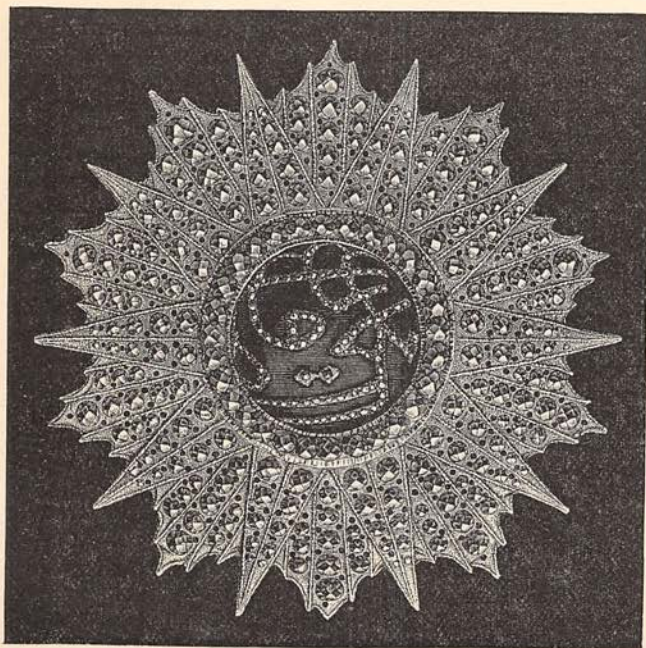
the gate. After waiting a few minutes, my companion, the Austrian consul-general, and myself were ushered into the presence of the Bey. The reception-room was furnished in Parisian style. His Highness, who was seated on a low throne near one of the windows, rose to receive us, made three steps forward, greeted the consul very cordially, and shook hands with me, and then invited us both to take seats. Although he is about sixty-seven years old, his beard and mustache were black. He wore the uniform of a Tunisian general—a dark, military coat with gold lace and heavy epaulettes; red trousers with gold stripes; a *shashia* (red fez) on which was fastened a heavily jeweled clasp, that sparkled with the arms of the Husseinites; and finally a cimier, with a very costly jeweled hilt, that hung suspended from the shoulder by a gold band. When in full uniform, as, for example, on the last day of Rhamadan, or on the occasion of the reception of newly accredited ambassadors, the Bey wears the insignias of about thirty grand crosses, among them those of the highest orders of England, France, and Germany, which his then prime minister, Mustapha ben Ismail, also possesses. The latter, the adopted son of the Bey, stood near the throne, for no Tunisian subject may sit in the presence of royalty. The dragoman stood between the Bey and us, the Bey speaking in Arabic and the dragoman interpreting in French. He asked me what I thought of his

country, and wished to know what parts had made the greatest impression upon me. I doubt whether the dragoman correctly interpreted my replies, for the Bey nodded his head with an air of complete satisfaction. He had not seen much of his own country, the only long journey he had ever made being to Zaghuan, while he was yet a young man. The audience lasted a long time. Being accustomed to the manners of European courts, where the visitor remains in the presence of the monarch until he himself gives the sign to withdraw, I waited patiently. The Bey looked at me in a grave manner, and so did I at him. The situation seemed very embarrassing. The consul, who sat just behind me, at last succeeded in giving me a sign to rise, as people are not permitted to speak to each other in the presence of the Bey. I rose, and, at the same moment, the Bey came down from his throne. From the prime minister he took the star of his order and fastened it on my breast. At my request he also gave me his photograph, beneath which he wrote his autograph, remarking that I was the first who had ever obtained the latter favor. With that the audience terminated. Afterward, I learned that visitors may stay as long as they please at the Bey's court, and that the less they say the more fashionable they are considered. The foreign ministers and consuls may obtain audiences with the Bey whenever they choose. He has dispensed with etiquette so far as to permit them to come into his

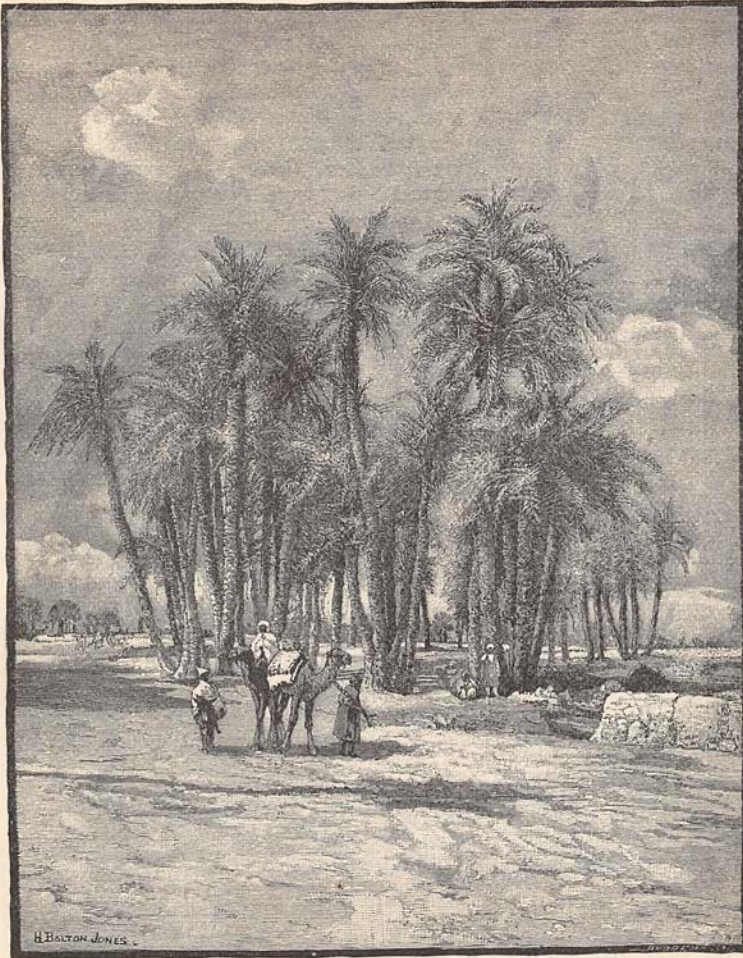
presence in plain frock-coats, and only at the great annual reception during the festival of the Beyram, or at the audience of a newly appointed consul, is the court dress required.

The great audience-chamber of the official palace is an immense hall, with lofty ceiling, and is furnished with carpets and fine tapestry. It would, indeed, be worthy of its name were it not for the half-dozen broken Parisian clocks, damaged vases, and crooked chandeliers that give it a half-dilapidated appearance. But this is an oriental palace, and one has only to open one of the doors that lead from this magnificent chamber to behold filthy passages and shabby, broken walls and pavements. At the farther end of the audience-hall, on a green-covered dais, stands the throne of the Bey, which is a large arm-chair, covered with gilt and embroidery, and surmounted by a baldachin with green curtains. Fine paintings adorn the walls. They are mostly life-size portraits of the European monarchs—including those of Napoleon, Emperor Francis Joseph, and Emperor William. I noticed among them the picture of a Christian saint, painted in the old Italian style, and wondered how it came to be hung in the palace of a Mohammedan prince. The history of the picture illustrates a curious feature of Tunisian life. Most Europeans who reside for any length of time in the Orient become infected with the vanity of decorations, titles, and other social distinctions. They make absurd efforts to obtain bits of

ribbon to fasten in their button-holes and the privilege of wearing a narrow gold border round the cap. Consuls in Tunis wear such caps as insignias of their office. It was principally on the solicitation of Europeans that the Bey's order, *Nishan Iftikhar*, was created; but what the European resident of Tunis chiefly aspires to is a consulship, of no matter how small and insignificant a government. The "Almanac de Gotha" and other year-books are carefully studied, and foreign visitors are besieged by these office-seekers. Even little Monaco, of gambling fame, is represented in Tunis by a consul-general, a consul, and a vice-consul, and there are also three or four *élèves consuls* (consular pupils), dragomans, and janizaries attached to the staff. Several years ago, one of the Italian resident physicians, a Doctor Lambroso,



THE DECORATION OF THE BEY.



AN OASIS IN TUNIS.

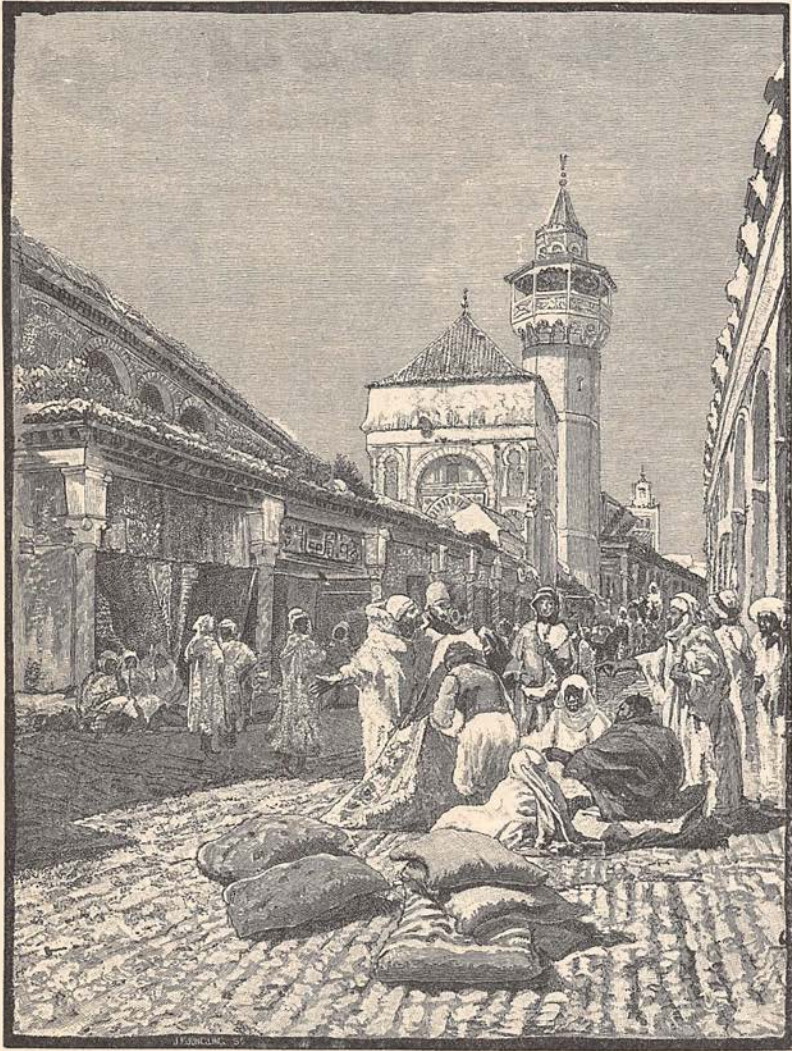
aspired greatly to become a consul, and as all the European states were already more or less worthily represented at the court of Mohammed es Sadock, Doctor Lambroso conceived the idea of becoming consul of the mountain republic of San Marino, the oldest state of Europe, but at the same time the smallest, as it contains not more than seven thousand inhabitants. The political and commercial relations existing between Tunis and San Marino may be easily imagined. Probably few people in either state knew of the existence of the other country. Nevertheless, Doctor Lambroso bought of the small Italian republic the title of consul at Tunis, and one day, accompanied by a glittering staff of vice-consuls, secretaries, and dragomans, he called at the palace and presented to the Bey his credentials. The Bey and his grand vizier received Doctor Lambroso in the same manner as they would have received the em-

bassador of France. The Bey inquired after the health of the chief of state, and expressed a desire to have his portrait. As San Marino has no such person, not even a president, Doctor Lambroso was somewhat embarrassed, but nevertheless communicated the Bey's request to his Government. The desired portrait soon arrived. It was evidently taken from an old church, and represented Saint Marino, the patron saint of the republic. Doctor Lambroso received a high decoration for himself and one for the chief of the republic. In exchange, San Marino sent the Bey the Grand Cross of St. Marino, and this exchange of civilities ended satisfactorily to all concerned.

Mustapha ben Ismail, the Bey's grand vizier at the time of my visit, was the constant companion of his master, and until the French occupation he was the most powerful man in the regency. In his youth he was a hair-

dresser's apprentice. The Bey took a fancy to the handsome youth, and made him his page. When the boy was sixteen years old, the Bey appointed him to a colonelcy; at twenty-two he was a general and commander of the guard, although Mustapha at that time could not read or write, and had never fired a gun or drawn a sword. At the age of thirty he was placed at the head

extensive one-story building, in Italian style, with large windows and green wooden blinds, situated in a large square, not far from the sea-shore. Round the palace were pitched the tents of the Bedouin life-guards of the Bey; the horses, saddled and bridled, were tethered to stakes; while the guards themselves, arrayed in picturesque costumes, with pistols and daggers bristling in their girdles,



BAZAAR AND MOSQUE IN TUNIS.

of the Government, as grand vizier and head treasurer. Upon such a man were conferred the highest orders of European potentates—the decorations which are worn by Bismarck and Andrassy. The impression which the grand vizier made upon me, when I first saw him at Goletta, was not an unfavorable one. His office was in the Government palace, an

lounge in the shade of their tents. The wide vestibule of the palace was crowded with Tunisian civil and military officers. A broad staircase led to the first story, where we entered the office of General Elias, one of the two Tunisian generals who could speak a foreign language, and here we awaited the arrival of the premier. Suddenly, a move-



A MUSICIAN.

ment among the assembled Bedouins and town Arabs indicated the arrival of His Excellency. A gorgeous state carriage, drawn by four mules in rich harness, and surrounded by officers mounted on mules, drove up in front of the governor's palace. A handsome young gentleman, dressed in European costume, alighted and answered the respectful salams of the crowd by a wave of the hand. It was the vizier. Had I met him in this attire on the Boulevards of Paris, or in the Ringstrasse in Vienna, I should have taken him for a banker's clerk. His appearance was improved immensely when he was dressed in oriental uniform, for thus I had occasion to see him later, during one of the religious festivals. As he ascended the spacious staircase, all the officers and high dignitaries humbled themselves before him.

Mustapha was vain, ignorant, and mercenary, and his rapacity was the talk of the whole regency. He sold high Government offices, and he sometimes appointed illiterate and ignorant Arabs to the most influential positions, which these men sought and held

only for the purpose of robbing their subordinates. He was at the same time the treasurer of the Bey's private income, as well as of the small revenues which the European powers had left to the Tunisian Government for conducting the administration. Most of the sources of revenue had been appropriated for the payment of the Tunisian state debt. How well Mustapha administered the revenue can be seen from the fact that, although his salary was only about thirty thousand francs a year, he had in his possession, on his retirement



SEAL OF THE BEY.

after ten years' service, nearly twenty-five millions of francs, and was regarded as the wealthiest man in the regency. The Bey's influence in the Government was limited almost to confirming the prime minister's orders, by affixing his seal to the documents which Mustapha submitted to him. Every oriental officer and man of business carries his own seal with him, and whenever his signature is required to any document, or even to a letter, this is made, not with a pen, but with a seal. Illiterate men, who do not possess a seal, mark their assent to a written agreement by dipping a finger into ink, and leaving an impress of it on the document. The Bey of Tunis never signs his name;

representatives of foreign governments may not visit the heir, and personally he is quite unknown to them. For a native to show him any mark of attention would be high treason, and such an act by a foreign consul would be regarded as evincing a want of respect for the Bey—every manifestation of regard for the heir being tantamount to an intentional allusion to the transitory power of the Regent, and to his eventual death.

Before the French stepped in, ministers of the regency were mere puppets, manipulated by Mustapha ben Ismail; they possessed no influence whatever, and had little to do. For instance, the Minister of Marine, whose fixed residence is at Goletta, had the assistance



WOMEN OF TUNIS.

his seal is made of a precious stone, and he wears it fastened to a long cord that is wound several times round his neck. When documents are presented to him for his signature, he unwinds the cord and hands the seal to the Keeper of the Great Seal.

The heir-apparent, Sidi Ali Bey, the brother of the reigning *Mushir* (Bey), is a portly person, with a full Turkish-trimmed beard, who possesses the esteem of the Arabs. But he is seldom seen. Oriental etiquette requires that the man who is to succeed the ruler should be completely ignored. No minister or state officer could visit him or communicate with him without running the risk of losing his office or of being exiled. Even the repre-

sentatives of foreign governments and several captains in administering the affairs of his country's navy. I found a gravity and a business-like expression depicted on the countenances of these high functionaries, that led me to suppose they were overwhelmed with the onerous duties and heavy responsibilities of their office. But, in fact, the entire navy of Tunis consists only of two old abandoned passenger steamers, that were purchased from an Italian steam-ship line. One of these men-of-war has been aground for several years in the harbor of Porto-Farina, and the other lies in the mud in the military harbor of Goletta. There is a large naval arsenal at Goletta, which contains a few old iron anchors, a quan-

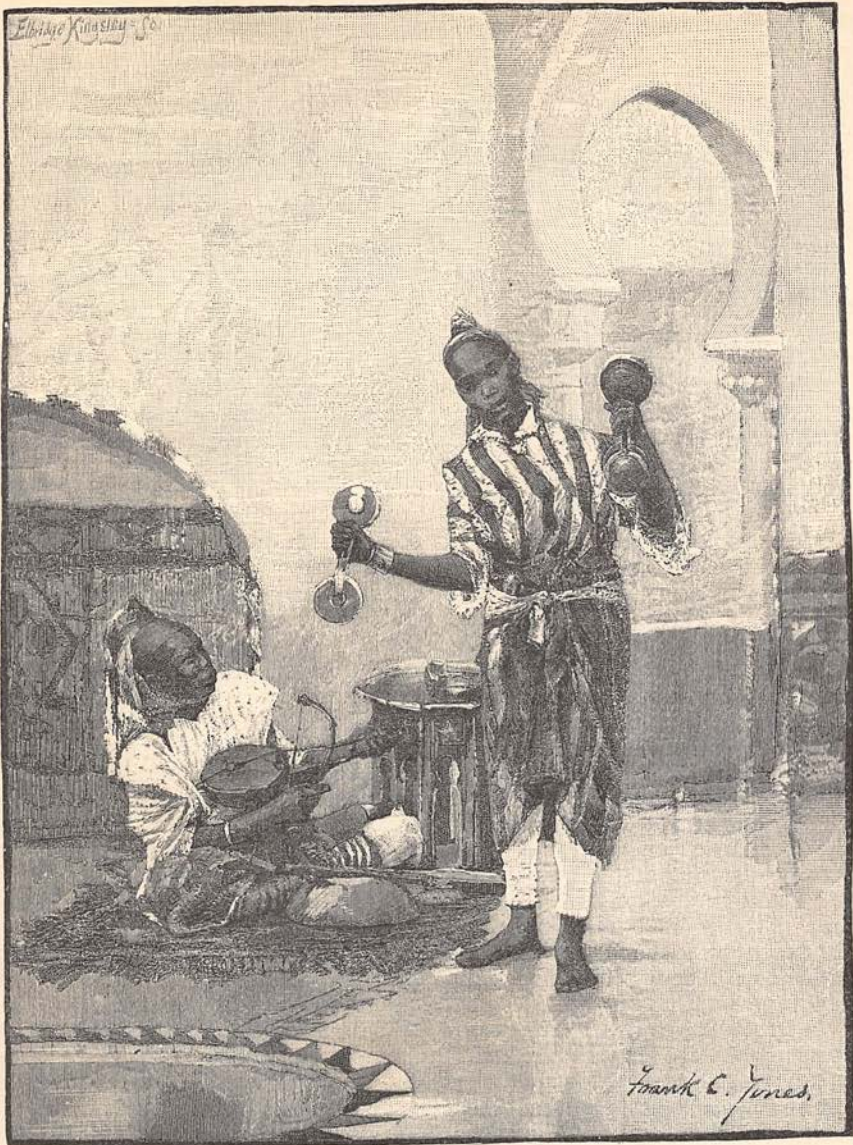
tity of rotten ropes, and three or four row-boats. Nevertheless, thousands of francs were annually appropriated for naval purposes! Half of this money, it is commonly believed, found its way into the pockets of the minister, the admirals, and the captains. A part was used in purchasing supplies, which, as soon as they were brought into the arsenal, were sold by the officers, who rarely received a penny of their salaries.

One of the most interesting places in Tunis is the public court of justice, held every Saturday under the presidency of the Bey himself. Thick palace-walls, barred windows, guards, and several cordons of court officers and ministers render it almost impossible for the ordinary Moslem to approach his sovereign, except at the weekly court of justice. In none of the oriental countries bordering on Europe have the mediæval methods of administering justice been so perfectly preserved as in Tunis. There are no regular judges, but the governors of provinces and the commanders of cities are judges within their respective districts. The highest judge in the land is the Bey in person, and an appeal can be made to him from the decision of any *cadi*, or provincial governor. Parties to any suit may refuse to have it adjudged by a bribe-taking *cadi*; they can go to Tunis, and submit their case to the Bey. I attended one of these sessions, and on my way to the palace saw crowds of people flocking thither. The crowd in the palace became a jam, and the broad staircase was thronged. At the stair-landing stood guardsmen in gold-and-red uniforms, armed with cimeters and Saracen lances. Even their fezes were bordered with gold, and instead of the usual blue tassels hanging from them, they wore bunches of white ostrich-feathers. At last the Bey arrived. The guards presented arms with the cimeters, the drummers beat a tattoo, and the waiting multitudes respectfully saluted, by placing the hand successively on the breast, lips, and forehead, while bowing low before their ruler, who with his ministers leisurely ascended the stairs, and entered the hall of justice. At one end of this hall was a platform, on which stood a throne covered with red velvet, bordered with gold. Here the Bey took his seat, while the princes of the house, with the exception of his brothers, ranged themselves on the left. The prime minister, the generals, ministers, heads of departments, the secretary of state, and the court clerks stood at the right of the throne. Back of them was stationed a detachment of the guards. After this medley of generals, Bedouin sheiks, guards, and courtiers had ranged themselves in proper order, a colossal colonel, who, I was afterward told, was the

chief of police, stepped forward into the open space before the throne, and exclaimed in stentorian tones:

"The Prince gives you his greeting, and is ready to administer justice."

A European, in dress-coat and white cravat, immediately came forward and offered the prince a lighted *chibouque*, whose stem was six feet in length and tipped with a diamond-incrusted mouth-piece. The Bey took several whiffs, and was ready for business. Two litigants approached. When within eight paces of the throne they halted, crossed their arms on their breasts, and bowed low. Then the complainant stated his grievance briefly, and the respondent made his defense. The Bey rendered his decision in a few words. Many cases were disposed of in this brief and summary manner. The penalties of the court are fines, imprisonment, bastinado, and hanging, but the last-named punishment is now seldom inflicted. Until very recently, Turks and Koolooghis (descendants of Turks) condemned to death had the privilege of being strangled by means of a silk noose, while Moors were beheaded, Arabs were hanged, and Jews were drowned. But several years ago, the hangman's rope was adopted as a uniform method of capital punishment. Imprisonment is nearly as bad, for should the prisoner happen to be a poor man, he may never regain his freedom. The treatment in the Tunisian prisons is barbarous and cruel in the extreme. Wealthy or influential criminals easily get off with the payment of a fine; but the poverty-stricken offender is cast into jail. The prisoners in the capital are fed by the Government, but those in the provincial prisons have to subsist on the gifts of charitable persons. These prisons usually have windows opening upon the street, and food can be thrown in. But public charity in Tunis is a very uncertain source of livelihood, and if a prisoner has no relatives the chances are in favor of his starving to death. Since the officers and policemen receive no pay from the Government, they manage to get their dues from the prisoners themselves. They do not let the prisoners out of their hands until a certain sum is paid for the service of capturing them. But in Tunis it is not so easy to capture a criminal, owing to the large number of places of refuge made sacred by the grave of a saint or a marabout, where the criminal, and even the murderer, is entirely safe. No law, no command of the Bey, could invalidate this ancient custom, and as there are in the city of Tunis not alone houses and yards, but entire streets of refuge, a great many criminals escape the hands of justice. As a rule, the refugees do



FEMALE MUSICIANS.

not remain long at these places; their relatives usually arrange matters amicably with the family of the victim, and also with the police, by paying a certain amount of money.

The Bey sometimes entertains the foreign consular body, and as neither dramatic nor musical entertainments nor—in the complete absence of ladies—court-balls can be given, he resorts to the barbarous and disgusting contortions of the Aissawiah—a religious order instituted about three hundred years ago by Ben-Aissa, a religious maniac and saint of the city of Mequinez. These charlatans and the *almees*, or female dancers,

enliven the Bey's social entertainments. A similar class of entertainments, I was told, amused the wives of the Mamelukes and rich Moors in the harems of Tunis. The downfall of Mohammedan glory may be attributed in part to the exclusion of women from public and even private life, and to their extreme ignorance. The Moslem looks upon woman as an inferior being, unfit to advise him or to share in his pleasures and sorrows. The higher the rank of a Tunisian lady, the less she will be seen in the streets and bazaars. As a rule, only women of the lowest order, beggars, and the wives of the poor country Bedouins, are seen in the

streets, and even these cover their faces with their hands whenever they meet a European. There is a general belief among Europeans that the Koran prescribes that women should be veiled when they appear in public. This is not the fact. The custom is not a religious duty, but a fashion. The chamberlain of an ex-grand-vizier gave me some curious information on this subject. The Pasha's wife was taken sick with small-pox. A European physician was called; guarded by two eunuchs, he was permitted to enter the chamber of the lady. Curtains concealed the bed. The physician insisted upon seeing the face of the suffering woman, but the eunuch refused, giving to the doctor a description of her face. When the doctor asked to see her tongue, her face was covered with a cloth in which a small hole had been cut; through this opening the sick woman showed her tongue. When the physician felt her pulse, her hands and arms were covered, and the doctor was asked to close his eyes while counting the pulse. Witchcraft and the charlatanism of old, cunning women are generally resorted to when women of the harems are sick. Many of the ladies of higher rank live and die without setting foot in the streets, or changing their abode, except once, when they leave the paternal roof to go to the house of their husband and master. With the exception of the nearest relatives, no man ever enters the harem. This is the reason why Moorish houses possess large door-ways, furnished with carpets and divans, for these vesti-

bules serve as general reception-rooms, and all business with the master of the house is transacted there, or in an adjoining chamber. The term "Sublime Porte," in its application to the Turkish Government, grew probably out of this custom, since formerly all state affairs were transacted under the high portal leading to the governmental palace. Should a Moor desire to give an entertainment to his friends at his own house, the women of the harem would be locked up in a distant part of the house. On the contrary, should any of his women desire to pay a visit to the wife of a high dignitary, the carriage is drawn within the walls of the harem-court, all doors and windows are closed, and the women, thickly veiled, conducted to the carriage by eunuchs. The doors of the carriage would then be locked, and the key given to a eunuch to keep until they arrive at their destination. It is well known that an Arab husband first beholds the features of his wife after the marriage has taken place. His mother or a near female relative is generally intrusted with the duty of looking out for a bride beautiful and rich enough to be an ornament of the suitor's household. As a rule the girls possess regular features, deep black eyes with a melancholy expression, thick jet-black hair, and small hands and feet. At twelve and fourteen they are graceful and slender, but female beauty in Tunis is measured by weight, and soon after this age they are fattened for the matrimonial market.

TO IMOGEN AT THE HARP.

HAST thou seen ghosts? Hast thou at midnight heard
 In the wind's talking an articulate word?
 Or art thou in the secret of the sea,
 And have the twilight woods confessed to thee?
 So wild thy song, thy smile so faint, so far
 Thine absent eyes from earthly vision are.
 Thy song is done: why art thou listening?
 Spent is the last vibration of the string
 Along the waves of sound. Oh, doth thine ear
 Pursue the ebbing chord in some fine sphere,
 Where wraiths of vanished echoes live and roam,
 And where thy thoughts, here strangered, find a home?
 Teach me the path to that uncharted land;
 Discovery's keel hath never notched its strand,
 No passport may unbar its sealed frontier—
 Too far for utmost sight, for touch too near.
 Subtler than light, yet all opaque, the screen
 Which shuts us from that world, outspread between