

[SPECIAL TRAVELLING CORRESPONDENT OF THE ALTA.]

[Number Three.]

## A New Sensation---A Thoroughly Foreign Land---Antiques and Ancients---Some Scraps of History---Tangiorean Legal Tenders---Arab Financiering---Dangers of Moorish Wealth.

TANGIER, AFRICA, July 1st.

### Out of the World at Last.

EDITORS ALTA: This is jolly! This is altogether the infernal place I have ever come across yet. Let those who went up through Spain make much of it—these dominions of the Emperor of Morocco suit me well enough. We have had enough of Spain at Gibraltar for the present. Tangier is the spot we have been longing for all the time. Everywhere else one finds foreign-looking things and foreign-looking people, but always with things and people intermixed that we were familiar with before, and so the novelty of the situation lost a deal of its force. We wanted something thoroughly and uncompromisingly foreign—foreign from top to bottom—foreign from centre to circumference—foreign inside and outside and all around—nothing anywhere about it to dilute its foreignness—nothing to remind us of any other people or any other land under the sun. And lo! in Tangier we have found it. Here is not the slightest thing that ever we have seen save in pictures—and we always mistrusted the pictures before. We cannot any more. The pictures used to seem lies—they seemed too

wierd and fanciful for reality. But behold, they were not wild enough—they were not fanciful enough—they have not told half the story. Tangier is a foreign land if ever there was one. And the true spirit of it can never be found in any book save the Arabian Nights. Here are no white men visible, yet swarms of humanity are all about me. Here is a packed and jammed city enclosed in a massive stone wall which is more than a thousand years old. All the houses nearly are one and two-story; made of thick walls of stone; plastered outside; square as a dry-goods box; flat as a floor on top; no cornices; whitewashed all over—a crowded city of snowy tombs! And the doors are arched with the peculiar arch we see in Moorish pictures; the floors are laid in vari-colored diamond-flags; in tassellated many-colored porcelain squares wrought in the furnaces of Fez; in red tiles and broad bricks that time cannot wear; there is no furniture in the rooms (of Jewish dwellings) save divans—what there is in Moorish ones no man may know; within their sacred walls no Christian dog can enter. And the streets are oriental—some of them three feet wide, some six, but only two that are over a dozen; a man can blockade the most of them by extending his body across them. Isn't it an oriental picture?

There are stalwart Bedouins of the desert here, and stately Moors, proud of a history that goes back to the night of time; and Jews, whose fathers fled hither centuries upon centuries ago; and swarthy Rifians from the mountains—born cut-throats—and original, genuine negroes, as black as Moses; and howling dervishes, and a hundred breeds of Arabs—all sorts and descriptions of people that are foreign and curious to look upon.

And their dresses are strange beyond all description. Here is a bronzed Moor in a prodigious white turban, curiously-embroidered jacket, gold and crimson sash, of many folds, wrapped round and round his waist, trousers that only come a little below his knee, and yet have twenty yards of stuff in them, ornamented scimeter, bare shins, bare feet, yellow slippers, and gun of preposterous length—a mere soldier—I thought he was the Emperor at least. And here are aged Moors with flowing white beards, and long white robes with vast cowls; and Bedouins with long, cowed, striped cloaks, and negroes and Rifians with heads clean-shaven, except a kinky scalp-lock back of the ear, or rather up on the after corner of the skull, and all sorts of barbarians in all sorts of wierd costumes, and all more or less ragged. And here are Moorish women who are enveloped from head to foot in coarse white robes, and whose sex can only be determined by the fact that they only leave one eye visible, and who never look at men of their own race, or are looked at by them in public. Here are five thousand Jews in blue gaberdines, sashes about their waists, slippers upon their feet, little skull-caps upon the backs of their heads, hair combed down on the forehead, and cut straight across the middle of it from side to side—the selfsame fashion their Tangier ancestors have worn for a thousand years. Their feet and ankles are bare. Their noses are all hooked, and hooked alike. They all resemble each other so much that one could almost believe they were of one family. Their women are plump and pretty, and do smile upon a Christian in a way which is in the last degree comforting.

### A Cradle of Antiquity.

What a funny old town it is! It seems like profanation to laugh, and jest, and bandy the frivolous chat of our day amid its hoary relics. Only the stately phraseology and the measured speech of the sons of the prophet are suited to a venerable antiquity like this. Here is a crumbling wall that was old when Columbus discovered America; was old when Peter the Hermit roused the knightly men of the Middle Ages to arm for the first Crusade; was old when Charlemagne and his paladins beleaguered enchanted castles and battled with giants and genii in the fabled days of the olden time; was old when Christ and his disciples walked the earth; stood where it stands to-day when the lips of Memnon were not silent, and men bought and sold in the streets of ancient Thebes!

The Phoenicians, the Carthaginians, the English, Moors, Romans, all have battled for Tangier—all have won it and lost it. Here is a ragged, Oriental-looking negro from some desert place in interior Africa, filling his goat-skin with water to sell in these streets from a ruined and battered fountain built by the Romans twelve hundred years ago. Yonder is a ruined arch of a bridge built by Julius Caesar nineteen hundred years ago. Men who had seen the infant Savior in the Virgin's arms have stood upon it, may be.

Near it are the ruins of a dock-yard where Caesar repaired his ships and loaded them with grain when he invaded Britain, fifty years before the Christian Era.

Here, under the quiet stars these old streets seem thronged with the phantoms of forgotten ages. My eyes are resting upon a spot where stood a monument which was seen and described by Roman historians less than two thousand years ago, whereon was inscribed:

"WE ARE THE CAANANITES. WE ARE THEY THAT HAVE BEEN DRIVEN OUT OF THE LAND OF CAANAN BY THE JEWISH ROBBER, JOSHUA."

Joshua drove them out and they came here. Not many leagues from here is a tribe of Jews whose ancestors fled thither after an unsuccessful revolt against King David, and these their descendants are still under a ban and keep to themselves.

Tangier has been mentioned in history for 3,000 years. And it was a town, though a queer one, when Hercules, clad in his lion-skin, landed here 4,000 years ago. In these streets he met Anitus, the King of the country, and caved his head in with his club. The people of Tangier (called Tingis, then,) lived in the rudest possible huts, and dressed in skins and carried clubs, and were as savage as the wild beasts they were constantly obliged to war with. But they were a gentlemanly race, and did no work. They lived on the natural products of the land. Their King's country residence was at the famous Garden of Hesperides, seventy miles down the coast from here. The garden with its golden apples (oranges) is gone, now—no vestige of it remains. Antiquarians concede that such a

it remains. Antiquarians concede that such a personage as Hercules did exist in ancient times, and agree that he was an enterprising and energetic man, but decline to believe him a good square out-and-out God.

Down here at Cape Spartel is the celebrated cave of Hercules, where that hero took refuge when he was vanquished and driven out of the Tangier country. It is full of inscriptions in the dead languages, which fact makes me think Hercules could not have travelled much, else he would not have kept a journal.

Five days' journey from here—say 200 miles—are the ruins of an ancient city, of whose history there is neither record nor tradition. And yet its arches, its columns and its statues proclaim it to have been built by an enlightened race.

### Concerning Finance, etc.

The general size of a store in Tangier is about that of an ordinary shower-bath in a civilized land. The Mohammedan merchant, tinman, shoemaker, or vendor of trifles, sits cross-legged on the floor, and reaches after any article you may want to buy. You can rent a whole block of these pigeon-holes for fifty dollars a month. The market people crowd the market place with their baskets of figs, dates, melons, apricots, etc., and among them the trains of laden jackasses, not much larger, if any, than a Newfoundland dog. The scene is lively, is picturesque, and smells like the San Francisco Police Court. The Jewish money-changers have their dens close at hand, and all day long are counting bronze coins and transferring them from one bushel basket to another. They don't coin much money nowadays, I think. I saw none but what was dated four or five hundred years back, and was badly worn and battered. These coins are not very valuable. Brown went out to get a Napoleon changed, so as to have money suited to the general cheapness of things, and came back and said he had "cleaned out the bank; had bought eleven gallons of coin, and the head of the firm had gone on the street to negotiate for the balance of the change." I bought nearly half a pint of their money for a shilling myself.

The Moors have some small silver coins, and also some silver slugs worth a dollar each. The latter are exceedingly scarce—so much so that when poor ragged Arabs see one they beg to be allowed to kiss it.

They have also a small gold coin worth two dollars. And that reminds me of something. When Morocco is in a state of war, Arab couriers carry letters through the country and charge a liberal postage. Every now and then they fall into the hands of marauding bands and get robbed. Therefore, warned by experience, as soon as they have collected two dollars' worth of money, they exchange it for one of those little gold pieces, and when robbers come upon them, swallow it. The dodge was good while it was unsuspected, but after that the marauders simply gave the courier a dose of physic and sat down to wait.

### Riches have their Little Drawbacks.

The Emperor of Morocco is a soulless despot, and the great officers under him are despots on a smaller scale. There is no regular system of taxation, but when the Emperor or the Bashaw want money they levy on some rich man and he has to furnish the cash or go to prison. So few men in Morocco dare to be rich. It is too dangerous a luxury. Vanity occasionally leads a man to display wealth; but sooner or later the Emperor trumps up a charge against him—any sort of one will do—and confiscates his property. Of course, there are many rich men in the Empire, but their money is buried and they dress in rags and counterfeit poverty. Every now and then the Emperor imprisons a man who is suspected of the crime of being rich, and makes things so uncomfortable for him that he is forced to discover where he has hidden his money.

Moors and Jews sometimes place themselves under the protection of the foreign Consuls, and then they can flout their riches in the Emperor's face with impunity.

MARK TWAIN.