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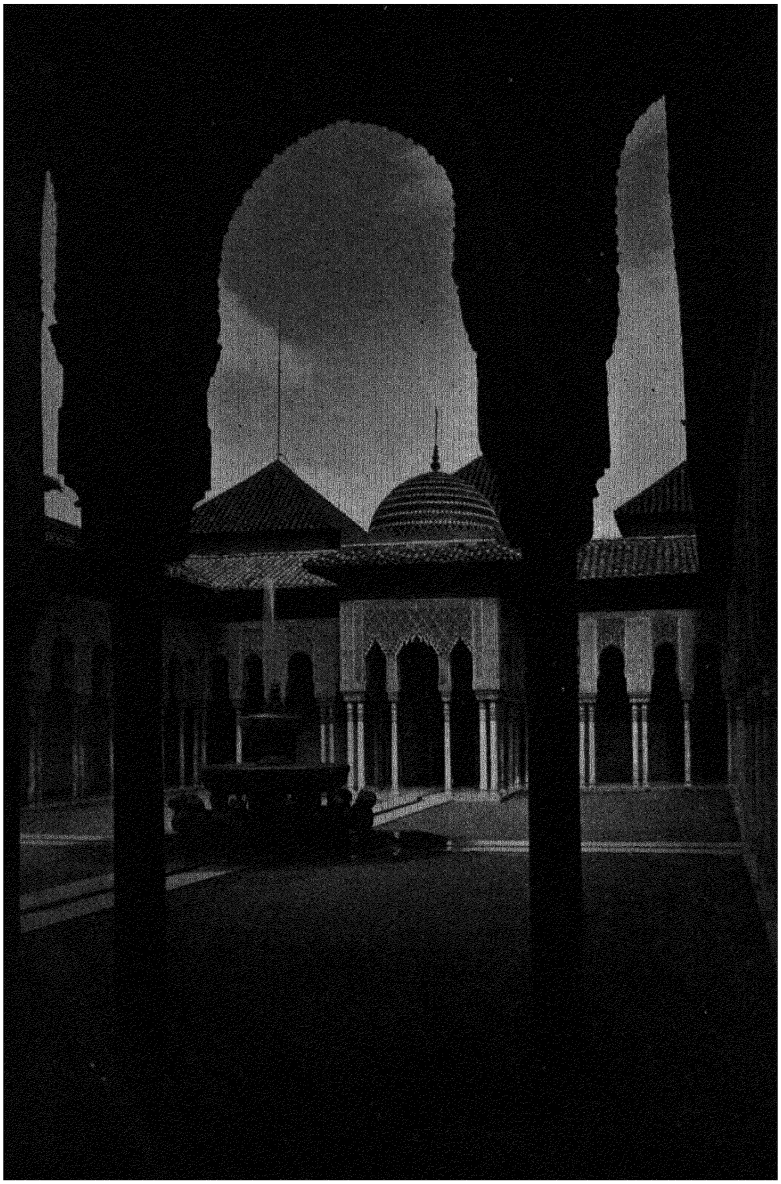

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Frontispiece to Volume II.

WORLD TRAVELS

A full descriptive narrative of personal travels in almost every land and sea, and among most of the peoples, both civilised and savage, of the entire world

BY

CHARLES W. DOMVILLE-FIFE

AUTHOR OF "AMONG WILD TRIBES OF THE AMAZONS," "SAVAGE LIFE IN THE BLACK SUDAN," "THROUGH CENTRAL AMERICA," "THE REAL SOUTH AMERICA," "THE UNITED STATES OF BRAZIL," "MODERN SOUTH AMERICA," ETC., ETC.

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Checked 1969

Made and Printed in Great Britain at THE DARIEN PRESS, *Edinburgh*

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WORLD TRAVELS

CHAPTER I

THE DANUBE, BUDAPEST, AND THE *PUSZTA*

A LITTLE white paddle-steamer, with a human cargo of many nationalities on both its first and second class decks, splashed its way out into the centre of the broad Danube, whistling fussily, for there was nothing to impede its progress. On this queer little river liner there were cabins with miniature balconies, giving a measure of privacy at a price by no means extortionate for the comparatively large amount of space one obtained on a small ship. It was from one of these verandas that I gazed back on a September afternoon into the haze which obscured Vienna.

Suddenly the immensity of this river stimulated the imagination. My thoughts turned to the number of times during the past quarter of a century that I had read its name and tried to understand its problems without realising the vital importance of its waters to the millions of people who live within its sphere of influence, and the strategic significance of this river, both political and economic, in the world we call Central Europe.

It is questionable whether the Danube, as a fluvial

highway across Europe, has received the recognition it deserves. Although its length is only 1,800 miles—compared with the 4,000 miles of the Amazon, the 3,600 miles of the Nile, the 3,400 miles of the Yangtze Kiang, the 3,300 miles of the Yenisei, the 3,160 miles of the Mississippi and the 3,000 miles of both the Congo and the Niger—other considerations besides mere length govern the value of rivers. The Danube forms a portion of many frontiers: it is the line which divides several of the nationalities in this crowded area of small and often antagonistic races. Yet it is the connecting link, economically, between these peoples, often causing one country to be dependent upon the actions of another and enforcing a measure of co-operation.

The Danube, like the Nile and the Mississippi, was an unruly river. Then Hungary, while a portion of the Austrian Empire, constructed several thousand miles of dykes and established hundreds of alarm stations, equipped with telephones and instruments, in order to control these waters, upon which over twenty millions of acres of the most fertile land in Central Europe depend for their agricultural needs. The whole system was controlled by Austria-Hungary. After the chaos of war, territorial possessions were re-arranged to coincide more closely with racial characteristics, and now Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Roumania have to get together to control the Danube floods.

This great river passes through some of the richest lands in the world, both from the agricultural and industrial standpoint. It has along its banks the fertile plains of Hungary and many great cities, such as Vienna, Budapest and Belgrade. This is not all,

COUNTRIES AND CAPITALS OF EASTERN EUROPE

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however: the Danube, during its passage through Bavaria, is connected by the Ludwig Canal with the Main and the Rhine, and projects have long been under way which, when completed, will join it also with the Elbe and the Oder, linking the North Sea and the Baltic with the Black Sea and the Mediterranean—a river highroad across Europe.

For mile after mile the Danube flowed serenely between broken, undulating country and green meadows. We were travelling with the stream, and the panorama, although not impressive, was a rapidly changing one. Bratislava, the new name for Pressburg and the chief town of Slovakia, is quite a progressive little place, and had a sample fair in progress at the time. Near to this town three frontiers meet, and the north bank of the Danube is in Czechoslovakian territory while the south is in Hungary. At Esztergom, the old name for which was Gran, the river curves to the south and circles half round this quaint town with its prominent basilica.

After passing the old castle of Visegrad a curve of the river brings into view the beautiful city of Budapest. Perhaps the most surprising thing about the Hungarian capital is its two-faced character. Divided by the broad Danube, called locally the Duna, the town situated on the left bank of the river is that busy, economic centre of Hungarian life called *Pest*, which has developed from a mere collection of quaint but indifferent old houses into a gay city within the past fifty years. Opposite to modern, go-ahead Pest, stands equally as backward Buda, with an atmosphere redolent of bygone times. Both of these places have grown up in the valley of the great river, and are joined by many bridges; their frame-

work are the somewhat barren spurs of the Hungarian Ore Mountains.

Landing in the centre of the city, on the Pest side, I proceeded at once to get acquainted with this peculiarly fascinating capital, having over one million inhabitants. Although in Pest, especially on the fashionable promenade known as the Corso, one is surrounded by all the amenities and refinements of Western civilisation, it is on the opposite bank of the river that search must be made for both the historical and human interest of this city, where East meets West. The tide of invasion and retreat swayed backwards and forwards for many centuries across the Hungarian plains. Over 1,000 years ago the Magyars came from Asia and settled on this fertile prairie. Early in the eleventh century St Stephen received from the Pope a golden crown, and introduced German settlers in order to civilise his somewhat unruly subjects. This crown was used at the coronation of many of the later kings of Hungary. Into this congerie of races there came the war-like Turk, who conquered the country in the year 1526. For a century and a half the whole of this portion of Europe remained under Turkish dominion, being freed by the victory at Vienna in 1683. It was this great Austrian success which marked the real turning-point in the Asiatic invasion of Europe, and placed the Magyar crown of Hungary at the feet of the Habsburgs. All these movements of the peoples of the past can be traced in the city of to-day. On the lights and laughter of modern Pest, the grim ramparts, the castle and the old Coronation Church of Buda look down with the scars of many centuries of storm on their weather-beaten faces.

HUNGARIAN PEASANTS AT HOME

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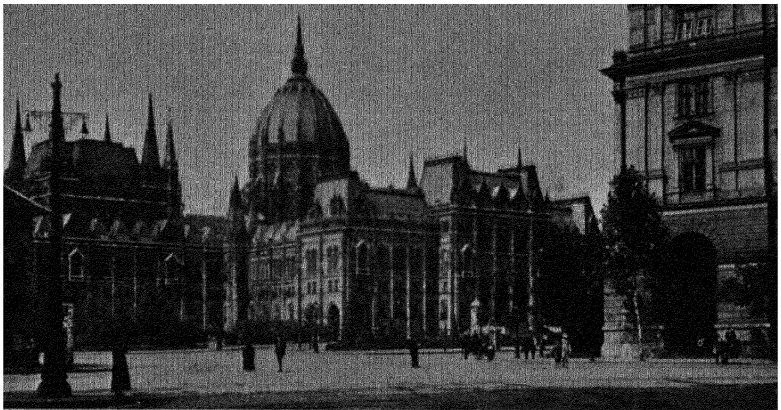


PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS—BUDAPEST

WEDDING CAKE AND FOWL
The Principal Features in a Hungarian Wedding.

I am in the gay city of Pest, and it is quite apparent that every one of its citizens is an adept in the art of enjoyment. Everywhere there are tables in the streets and squares with seated thousands taking their coffee, tea, wines or beer, with evident indifference to both time and business. Every now and again an officer, in a uniform brilliant but a trifle barbaric, passes by with a bevy of admirers, and a minute later a pale-faced Jew, a dark-eyed Magyar girl, a fair Prussian and a swarthy Turk stroll by the little table to which I, too, have succumbed this hot afternoon on the Francis Joseph Promenade facing the Danube.

I had set out to do the sights of modern Pest, but got no farther than the Parliament building, which is said to have taken twenty years to build and cost a fabulous sum. It is an immense structure, combining the characteristics of both East and West. An Oriental dome is surrounded by Gothic spires; statues, stained-glass windows, parquetry, marble and gold are all to be found in this magnificent building, which is so fit for a king and a chamber of nobles that the Hungarians are anxious to reinstate them both. There is a virility in this city which speaks well for the future. Everywhere there are well-dressed crowds of both men and women, and one suspects that its wealth comes largely from the broad and fertile acres of the great plains which surround it.

In Budapest no one dines much before nine or even ten in the evening. The meal often continues for two hours, and invariably includes the famous Hungarian dish *paprikahn*, or chicken and red pepper. The national wine is the well-known Tokay. Although after such a meal sleep for the normal

human being is out of the question, both food and cooking are excellent. Sallying forth with the million lights of Pest reflected in the still waters of the Danube, and the wild strains of gipsy music coming from the hundreds of cafés and night clubs, I toured the city, eventually arriving at about one in the morning on St Margaret Island, where there are amusements which last until the lemon-yellow streaks of dawn top the line of distant hills.

If Budapest is a city of night life it is also a town of magnificent public baths. My second day in the Hungarian capital was spent largely in old Buda. Passing over the Francis Joseph Bridge I discovered the St Gellért Wave Bath, a fine open-air swimming pool surrounded by a sun-bathing terrace and a café, with tables artistically arranged beneath coloured sunshades. The bathing hour is as popular and as fashionable here as it is at any continental seaside resort. In the bath itself a wave is produced mechanically, and causes endless amusement to both old and young as it surges from one side of the pool to the other, leaving behind the authentic trail of foam. The only disadvantage of this bathing place is its situation within a rather confined space which causes it to be overlooked by many houses. The St Gellért Bath is only one of the many to be found in Budapest, and it would seem that the people of this inland city and state seek in these establishments to find consolation for the absence of the sea.

On this bank of the Danube an entirely different town presents itself to that of Pest. In its narrow passages and zigzag streets one sees many relics of the city's past. Dominating the whole of Buda is the royal palace, a building of a size and magnificence

almost unbelievable in such a small country. Its many domes and squat little towers rise above its 900 rooms, which are arranged in three or four tiers with many Corinthian columns. Built by the Empress Maria Theresa, nearly a century ago, it is maintained in a perfect state of preservation by the Hungarian people in readiness for the king who, rich and poor alike, desire to welcome. Here, as elsewhere in Budapest, I could not help noticing the influence which the past has exercised on the city and people of the present day. Within and without this royal palace, one of the largest ever constructed, there is a bizarre mixture of Europe and the Orient. It is this aroma of the East which makes Budapest so different from other European cities. One sees as well as feels the approach of the Orient.

Only a short distance from the palace stands the Coronation Church, which was commenced in the thirteenth century and finished in the fifteenth. It is a curious mixture of the Romanesque and the Gothic styles, and was used by the Turkish invaders for over a century as a mosque. The Fishermen's Bastion and the walls of the old fortress of Buda afford another glimpse of Magyar history.

One of my greatest difficulties throughout Hungary was to form an intelligent opinion on anything printed in the national language, and so far as understanding even the simplest words spoken, I found it just as difficult when leaving the country as when entering it. Happily I obtained the services of an excellent English-speaking guide, who became quite indispensable when visiting the small inns in old Buda, where, in picturesque courtyards, I learned much of the romance and almost melancholy sentiment

pervading the innermost life as well as the music of the Magyar people.

Leaving Budapest I travelled eastwards by motor car past Gödöllö, the summer residence of the old Hungarian kings, into the wine-producing district of Gyöngyös. Here, on Sunday evenings, the villagers go to church in the picturesque national costumes, which include elaborately embroidered skirts and jackets. Then the road ran out on to the Nagy-Hortobágy *Puszta*, or Great Plain, where the life of the Hungarian herdsman is the same as it was a century ago.

A vast sunlit prairie stretched away towards the Roumanian frontier. Herds of white cattle could be seen roaming over the vast plain, and as the car sped across its level surface more than one wild-looking *osikos*, or cowboy, raced his horse by our side. In the far distance a lake appeared above the normal level of dusty grass, but vanished later. It was the playful mirage, of which I was to see so much during later years in the Great Sahara, and also on the pampas of South America. We stopped at a little village on the road which crosses these Hungarian plains, and here I made my first acquaintance with the *puszta* inn and the interesting peasant types. A flight of wild geese passed overhead like a cloud as we approached, and in the little whitewashed room there were people of both the plains and the neighbouring wheatfields. They appeared a sturdy and proud race, with the unmistakable stamp of the fighter. Yet their manners were courteous in the extreme, and even conversation ceased awhile. An old man, who, I was told, had long been a centenarian, played some of the old tunes of the *puszta*, of which no one seems to know the origin. The whole scene had an atmosphere

difficult to describe. It was really barbaric—perhaps crudely romantic would describe it better.

In the opposite direction to the Great Hortobágy Plain, and about eighty miles from Budapest, lies Balaton, one of the largest lakes in Central Europe. About forty-eight miles long and from one to eight miles broad, it is known as the Hungarian Sea, and is of a beautiful jade-green colour. Although surrounded by forest and vine-covered hills, there are many fields of wheat, oats and rye, and several fine houses with picturesque gardens belonging to wealthy residents in the Hungarian capital. At Siofok there is an excellent bathing beach, and from the little town of Tihany on the western shore of this vast lake the ill-fated Charles VI., Emperor of Austria and King of Hungary, was banished from the country. After making one unsuccessful attempt while in exile to regain his throne, lost by the defeat of the Central Powers in the Great War, he obtained an aeroplane in Switzerland and, with the Empress Zita, flew back into Hungary, where he was welcomed by a small royalist army, which was defeated in the first engagement. The Government of the Regent, Admiral Horthy—who possesses sovereign powers—then asked Charles to abdicate for the second time. This he did, and surrendered to a British gunboat on the Danube. He died at Funchal, in the island of Madeira.

Although Hungary possesses only two really important towns besides Budapest—one of which is Szeged, with 120,000 inhabitants, and the other Debreczen, which shelters 105,000 people—there are some thirty-two smaller centres, with over 20,000 inhabitants. It is, however, more an agricultural

than an industrial nation. Hungary is still one of the large grain-producing countries of the world, notwithstanding the great sacrifices of territory she was compelled to make after the World War, especially in the mountainous and forest-covered areas where the mines added largely to the revenues of the state. A very considerable proportion of its present area of 36,179 square miles consists of the Alföld, or great plain, which has long proved itself to be one of the most fertile regions in the world. For centuries this country has been feeding the people of several of the Balkan states, and Budapest possesses some of the largest flour mills in the world. During the harvest season the Danube is filled with barges carrying wheat to the elevators of the capital. Some indication of the productive character of the Alföld will be gained from the fact that about 4,320 million pounds of wheat, 1,440 million pounds of rye, and 4,100 million pounds of maize are annually produced. This would seem quite a good record for a country containing only eight and a quarter million people—especially when it is remembered that horses, cattle and pigs are also largely reared on the Nagy-Hortobágy *Puszta*.

CHAPTER II

THE RISE OF A BALKAN STATE

SOUTHWARDS from Budapest the Danube passes through the Hungarian Lowlands, and the landscape is of a sameness which quickly becomes monotonous. Almost as soon as the little steamer —which was surprisingly comfortable in spite of its somewhat overcrowded state and the small restaurant aboard, which fed me amply and cheaply but with many highly peppered dishes that I often had great difficulty in recognising as fish, flesh or fowl—had crossed the frontier into Jugo-Slavian territory, however, there came a welcome change. First the wooded heights of the Fruska Gora and the junction with the old Franzens Canal, then the curious little town of Novi Sad, or Neusatz, the old fortress of Peterwardein, a few small towns and, finally, the city of Beograd, or Belgrade, as it was called before the upheaval of war rendered the world's geographical knowledge obsolete.

Every mile traversed on the broad Danube, and each capital city visited with its aid, increased my respect for this river. Its importance to all the countries having territory and docks along its banks gives rise to an annual crop of inter-state problems, which are settled by the International Danube Commission, having its headquarters in Vienna.

This authority was created by the Treaty of Versailles in 1919, and the countries represented include Austria, Bavaria, Württemburg, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Jugo-Slavia, Roumania, Bulgaria, France, Italy and Great Britain. One of the principal duties of the Commission is to maintain full liberty of navigation and the equal treatment of all flags on the Danube, from Ulm, in Württemburg, to Braila, in Roumania. A pilotage and river-improvement service is also operated from the Iron Gates at Orsava, Roumania. The necessary funds for administrative expenses are provided by the states represented. From Braila to the mouth of the Danube, navigation is entirely controlled by another Commission, created shortly after the Crimean War, and representation on this is confined to France, Italy, Roumania and Great Britain. It is called the European Commission of the Danube.

There are not many capitals that have passed through such stormy and romantic times as Beograd, which stands at the confluence of the Rivers Save and Danube. During the Great War it was so often and so heavily shelled by the Austrians that very little of the old city was left standing; now, however, it has been largely rebuilt and is extending both outwards and upwards.

Old Belgrade was a mixture of Turkish and Slavonic buildings of either one or two storeys, but it was then only the chief city of the little kingdom of Servia. Now, five, six and seven storey buildings are going up everywhere, and it is the capital of Jugo-Slavia, the kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, one of the largest states in this part of Europe, with an area of 248,000 square miles and a population of over thirteen millions.

Beograd, as it is now called, means "White Fortress," and no more fitting name could well have been found for this war-scarred capital. Early in life it was a Celtic village which was captured by the Romans in the third century before Christ. When the Turks invaded the whole of south-eastern Europe, reaching as far north as Vienna, it became the key to the Danube and a fortified outpost of the Turkish Empire. The old defences still exist, and no doubt are largely responsible for the city's new name. For several centuries the Serbs were under Turkish rule, gaining their independence less than a century ago. Then came the World War and the gallant stand of this little nation against the mighty Austro-Hungarian Empire. Emerging triumphant, the country gained territory to the extent of many thousand square miles. In 1918 the little kingdom of Montenegro deposed its ruler, Nicholas I., and united with Servia, which also obtained Croatia and Dalmatia. These territories now form Jugo-Slavia, which has a considerable length of coast-line on the Adriatic.

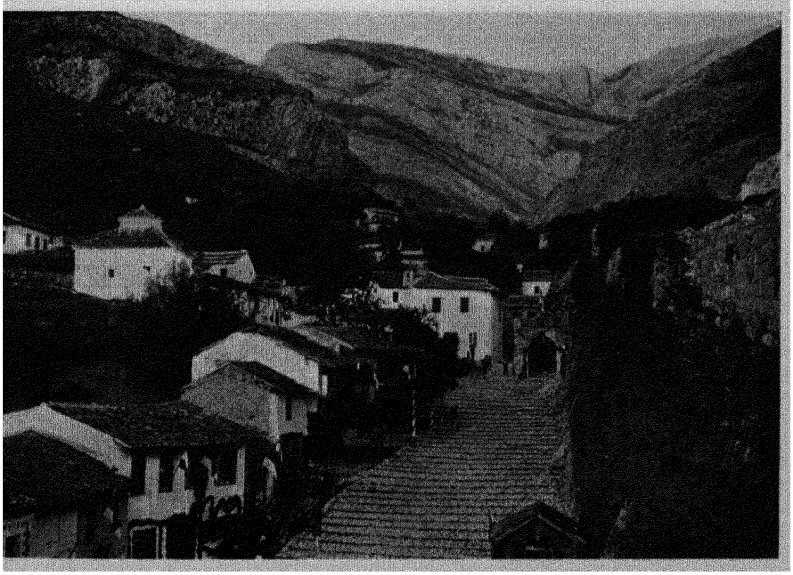
As a natural corollary of the rise of Servia from a little Balkan state to an important European power, its capital, Beograd, has also gone ahead, increasing its population from 100,000 in the epoch-making year 1914 to nearly a quarter of a million. Then a sleepy city of the old romantic, *opéra bouffe* variety, it is now a busy and modern capital, with wide thoroughfares, electric light and tramways, universities, national museums and libraries, at least one large and excellent hotel, and, in fact, all the amenities of civilisation. Marvellous as this rapid growth undoubtedly is, even more wonderful is the retention by the new city of the bizarre charm of old Belgrade, now due very

largely, however, to the mixture of races, creeds and costumes which adorn its streets.

Here is a picture of old Czaritsa Street—a sad reminder of the Russian tragedy, for the original wooden blocks with which it was paved were a gift from the ill-fated Empress. It is five o'clock on a summer afternoon, and all wheeled traffic making for this centre of the city's life has just been diverted by the police into other thoroughfares—for here, as in the *Calle Florida* in Buenos Aires, motor or horse vehicles at this hour of the day are not allowed to spoil the promenade of the youth and beauty of the city. The cafés along this boulevard soon fill up, and tables and chairs make their appearance on the pavement in front of these establishments. The buildings flanking this fine thoroughfare are of an ornate character, with much moulding in cement, stone and plaster. One of the features of this city is its gleaming white stone which, in the fierce light, is somewhat hurtful to the eyes.

Although the majority of passers-by are the better class of professional and business men, dressed in the usual habiliments of Western civilisation, and women in the latest creations of Bond Street and the Rue de la Paix, a distinct Oriental appearance is given by the men from Bosnia in the red *tarboosh*, embroidered jackets, and broad Turkish trousers. Then there are the Montenegrins, with little pill-box hats having bright red crowns crossed with gold braid and black bands round them. These mountaineers wear embroidered zouaves, and have trousers tied at the ankle and supported round the waist with a brilliantly coloured sash. I also noticed here and elsewhere in Beograd many priests of the Greek Orthodox Church,

PRINCIPAL STREET—BEOGRAD



TYPICAL VILLAGE—JUGO-SLAVIA

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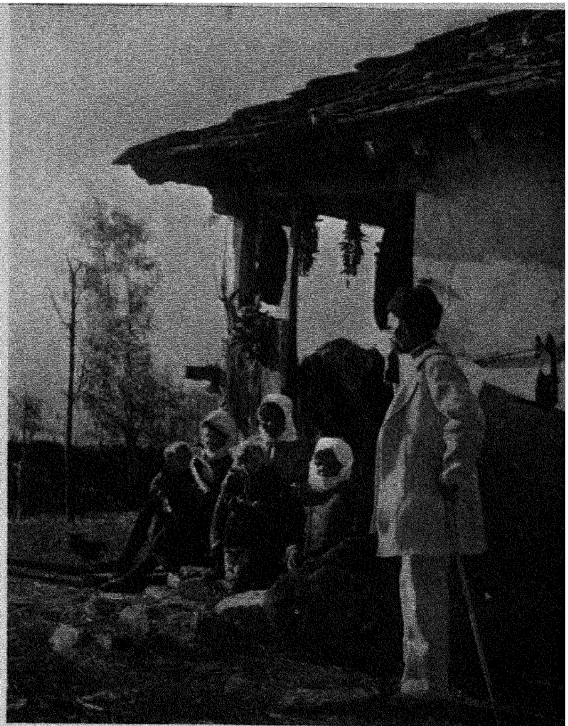
PEASANTS—JUGO-SLAVIA



VILLAGERS—JUGO-SLAVIA

with their long hair and beards, black gowns, red undersashes and big hats. Sitting at a table in front of the same café as myself there is a thin, elderly man, wearing the tall hat of the Cossack. He is probably a refugee, like many other Russians in this city.

The Serbs themselves are well built, and have dark and somewhat serious-looking faces. Coming originally from the Carpathian Mountains, they are members of that great Slavonic family which includes the Russians, the Poles and the Czechs. In their principal characteristics they resemble the Russians, and are by far the most independent of the three races composing this nation. The name Jugo-Slavia, which means "Land of the South Slavs," is an indication that of the thirteen millions of people inhabiting the country over 42 per cent. are Serbs.

The Croats and the Slovenes—of whom there are just over five millions inhabiting the lands bordering Austria, Hungary and the Adriatic Sea—coming more into contact with the people of Western Europe than those of the Eastern countries or the Orient, have assimilated many of the customs and characteristics of the West. They have adopted the Latin alphabet, while the Serbs still use Greek letters. In both cases, however, the words are the same. Another point of difference is, that whereas the Croats and Slovenes are mostly Roman Catholics, the Serbs, almost to a man, belong to the Greek Orthodox Church. In this country there are also a considerable number of Magyars, Albanians, Roumanians and a few Turks. While inspecting the Parliament building I was introduced to a Mohammedan member who was wearing the green turban—a sign that he had made the requisite pilgrimage to Mecca.

In the other portions of Beograd, especially in the great earth and brick fortress which adjoins the park, the influence of the Turkish occupation of the country is still noticeable. One must give credit where credit is due, however, and this certainly applies to the energetic rebuilding, on purely Western lines, of the capital of Jugo-Slavia. One thing I noticed was, that the two-horse vehicle which used to rattle over the cobbled stones of old Belgrade has succeeded in holding its own against the motor cars, even in the broad thoroughfares of the rebuilt city. One of the best views of Beograd is obtained in the Kalimegdan Park, looking towards the junction of the Rivers Sava and Danube. Outside the city there is Mount Avala, with its pyramid of granite dedicated to the Unknown Warrior, and this summit certainly offers the best position from which to survey the surrounding country.

On leaving the capital for a drive by motor car into the rural districts of old Serbia, there were two things which struck me forcibly. First that it is a land of small holdings. The hill and dale country resembles a patchwork quilt. There appears to be scarcely a single farm over twenty-five acres in area. The result of this subdivision of the land into peasant holdings is that farming is carried on by the most crude methods and with great manual labour. This brings me to the second most noticeable feature of the countryside, which is the work performed in the small fields by the women. These Amazons not only keep the home fires burning, as they were accustomed to do in the old days while their menfolk were on the warpath, but they also appear to keep the fields tilled, and yet have time to dress in the most picturesque costumes,

which include skirts with brilliant stripes and white coats embroidered in gay colours and sparkling with tinsel sequins. I met several parties of Slavonic peasants on their way into the towns and villages, and noticed that even the clothes of the men were a mass of coloured embroidery. Both sexes wear the *opantsis*, or home-made shoes with upturned toes, and the homespun clothes of bright colours.

CHAPTER III

AMONG THE SERBS, CROATS AND SLOVENES

FROM Beograd I journeyed north-west by train to Zagreb, the old capital of Croatia and still one of the most important towns in the whole country. The history of Zagreb can be traced as far back as A.D. 84, but the site of the present city is some little distance from the old one. Although this place possesses many relics of the past, including the massive walls built in 1266, and many quaint old houses, it was in the streets and squares of the city of to-day that I found the principal interest. The most beautiful building is the Opera House, and it is surprising to find a structure of such size and modern artistic design in an old-world atmosphere.

I spent a most interesting morning in the main square of Zagreb—for it is here that the market is held during the early hours of the day. Apart from the produce being sold, there were the sellers : peasants in such a variety of costumes that the whole square resembled a masquerade. Each village or valley, throughout Jugo-Slavia, possesses its own variation of costume, and it is possible to tell at a glance not only from what part of the country a man or woman comes but also in which valley they dwell. There were skirts finely pleated and

voluminous ; others just plain but gaily embroidered ; and many with stripes of different colours indicating the choice of the different villages. The head-dresses also varied from simple kerchiefs of vivid colour to flowing white veils and stiffened muslin. Bodices of filigree work and gay embroidery seemed to indicate the height of fashion ; while among the men a vest worked with gay colours, a pair of baggy trousers and a red fez stuck jauntily on the back of the head gave the whole scene that touch of Oriental life which is characteristic of the country.

Leaving the well-kept gardens of colourful Zagreb, I journeyed west by train along the valley of the River Sava and arrived in the early afternoon at the town of Ljubljana, the former capital of Slavonia. This city of fine streets and buildings is the ancient " Emona," and is overshadowed by a hill crowned by an ancient castle—which is seen to best advantage from the bridge which crosses the river. Ljubljana is proud of this fine relic of the Middle Ages, and still more of the Roman remains and the many beautiful churches, palaces and parks of this erstwhile capital of the Slovenes. This town, which, until the change of ownership from Austria to Jugo-Slavia was known as Laibach, is situated close to the Italian frontier. Travelling south, I passed out of Slavonia by way of the wild Tjesno Gorge and arrived at Banja Luka, a town in the heart of the mountains of Bosnia. Near by there is a remarkable Trappist monastery, with huge buildings which house a brewery, a cheese factory, an ice-making plant, sawmills, an electric-light plant, and a vast cattle farm with hundreds of beasts. Continuing by motor car along the valley of the River Yrbas I reached the semi-Turkish town

of Jajce. Anyone who takes an interest in Nature's pictures should not fail to visit this old town with its strong flavour of the Orient. Jajce is situated on a hill of the Bosnian mountains, and is surrounded and intersected by forests and waterfalls. It is seldom that one comes across a town possessing such outstanding beauty which has remained undisturbed by the passage of time, and in the quaint old streets of which the motor coach appears to be quite unknown. Jajce was the home town of the Bosnian kings, and is largely Turkish in character, with the minarets of a mosque rising above its winding streets and the gay costumes of its inhabitants. Its chief sights are, however, the royal castle, the Campanile, and the amazing series of waterfalls.

A short journey by train through the wilds of Bosnia and the town which was fated to change the whole course of world history came into view. Perhaps it is the thrill one gets from the unexpected which largely constitutes the lure of travel. The tapering white spires, the terra-cotta cupolas, the bizarre minarets amid the cypress trees, and the brick-red fluted tiles of Oriental Sarajevo gave me the exquisite sensation of having discovered something directly the train entered the cup in the Bosnian hills which holds it. Here it was that the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, the heir to the throne of Austria, was murdered in 1914. This was the spark which ignited the wood pile of Europe, and the fire extended from the China Sea to the Pacific Ocean. I looked at the spot where the assassination occurred and tried to picture the consternation which prevailed in all the far-distant world capitals when the news was flashed over the wires which link the continents. I had stood in

SOUTH-EAST EUROPE AND EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

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Potsdam where the Emperor William held his famous council and decided upon war, in the desolate palace by the Neva, in the Champs Élysées, and my mind, reaching back over the years, pictured the scene in the British House of Commons when war became inevitable. Long months with the fleets and the armies of the Allies all came vividly back as I stood on the spot of the great tragedy which only a few short years before had set the world ablaze.

So this was Sarajevo. A beautiful little Oriental town over which there brooded the peace of bygone days. Its people are largely Mohammedan, and I walked through its quaint streets and up and down its narrow steps, gazed at its mosques and made trivial purchases of mementoes in the *Bascarsija*, or Turkish bazaar. Here, in their tiny booths, were silversmiths, carpet makers, potters, and leather workers producing the pointed-toed and heelless footgear of the Orient. In the great Begova mosque I gazed at the treasures of the past, and out in the streets trudged along beside Bosnian farmers with their laden donkeys and veiled Mohammedan women, all appearing to be bound for the market-square. The sun shone on bright colours and the city was gay. I had stepped out of the West into the East, but somehow I could not rid my mind of that fateful drive through these streets by an Austrian Duke.

Traversing rugged scenery I reached the coast at Dubrovnik, which will be better known under its old title of Ragusa, the pearl of the Adriatic. Up to the Napoleonic times it was a little maritime republic of merchants and pirates, and it is still a walled city over which there broods an atmosphere of mediæval romance. Towers, domes and white walls fringe the

shore of the bluest of blue seas, and behind the little town rises the lofty Petka Mountains. Everywhere palms, cypress, aloes and oleanders of deep crimson hue intersect the quaint old buildings of this beautiful seaport. To grow enthusiastic about the old palace, the quaint little harbour, the Dominican Cloister, the graceful Campanile, and the inimitable blue of the Dalmatian sky, not only here but along the whole of what has become known during recent years as the Jugo-Slav Riviera, would lead me to attempt pen-pictures of this old Adriatic city the charm of which has yet to be captured by the artist and the photographer.

Great was the joy of bathing in the warm salt water from Dubrovnik's little beach, after dusty weeks of travel across Hungary and Jugo-Slavia. It came to me, then, that anyone born and bred by the Northern sea needs only a sniff of salt air to suffer the intense nostalgia of sea-fever. I longed to get aboard a ship, to feel the cooling breeze and the heave of the deck beneath my feet. However, my plans demanded a quick return to Beograd and preparations for a journey into Roumania and Bulgaria, so I compromised, and took ship for a cruise along the Adriatic coast, visiting Split, or Spalato, built on the framework of Diocletian's Palace—one of the most famous of the architectural and historical monuments of Dalmatia. Here a labyrinth of quaint streets led me past ancient gates and walls, modern buildings, white towers, and always ended by the limpid waters of the Adriatic, gay with brightly painted little fishing craft. Sailing blue seas I landed for a few hours in Sihenik—at one time the refuge of the pirates who infested this almost land-locked sea. In

this little seaport I found a cathedral of wondrous beauty which dated from the golden age of the Venetian Renaissance. At Zara, a sunlit town of gleaming white, there were ruins of Roman and Venetian times, with everywhere predominant the Lion of St Mark.

Turning south again we came to Kotor, or Cattaro, with its encircling walls of rock, a Roman altar, and a cathedral dating from the eleventh century. From the bay I drove up the winding road which leads over the Lovcan Pass to Cettinje, once the capital of the little kingdom of Montenegro, and to-day a quaint town of decidedly Eastern appearance inhabited by tall and fierce-looking mountaineers in the bizarre dress of a past age.

With the call of the sea partially satisfied, I made my way back across the mountains of Bosnia to Beograd and the Danube.

CHAPTER IV

THINGS SEEN IN BULGARIA

THE Iron Gates of the Danube have so often played a leading rôle in the stormy history of the Balkans that the thought of seeing the famous gorge and " passage " more than compensated for a rather monotonous uniformity in the scenery along both banks of this fluvial highway after leaving Beograd. On the left bank, flat country, not unlike the Hungarian Steppes, extended away to the horizon, while on the opposite side the Servian Mountains followed every curve of the broad river.

Little of interest appeared for many miles except the tremendous walls and towers of the old fortress of Smederevo, partly destroyed by the Turks, and other evidence of the warlike past of this valley, up and down which armed forces have marched, with but few long intervals, since the days of the Cæsars. After passing the little town of Bazias, on the Roumanian frontier, the Transylvanian Mountains, coming from the north-east, begin to close in upon the stream. In the River Peck, a tributary of the Danube, gold was being washed from the waters and silt descending from these heights. A little farther on the main stream is divided into two branches by the broad island of Moldova, and then mountains approach close to both banks. It is the beginning of the

cataracts and canyons forming the historic Danube passage.

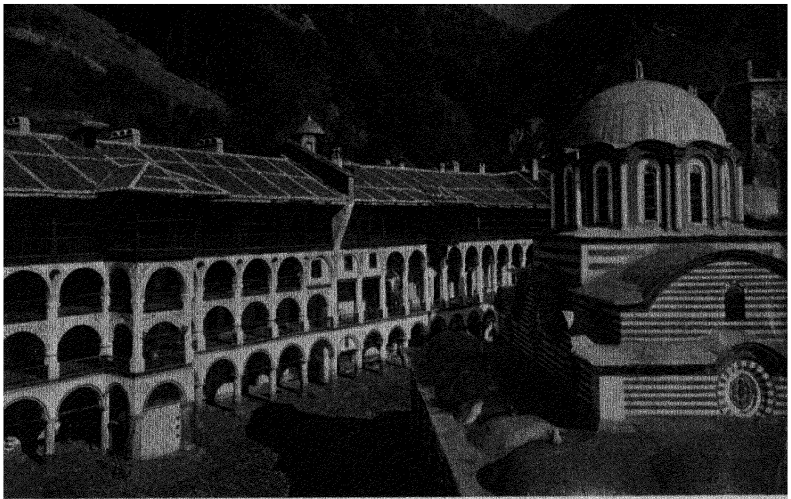
Lofty grey mountains rise up sheer from the river, which becomes a narrow ribbon of swiftly moving water. Here and there the ruins of an old castle, such as that of Golubac which marks the entrance to the narrows, can be seen among the chaos of rock. The scene has a bare rugged grandeur which, however, becomes really beautiful only at sunrise and sunset. Those who dominated this passage in the days gone by, levied toll upon all who attempted to pass, and, moreover, were masters of the country either to the north or to the south. Little wonder, therefore, that the tide of invasion has ebbed and flowed through this wild and aggressive-looking gorge. After passing Dobra and its coal mines we entered the Greben Defile, through which the waters surge between dangerous reefs. At one point, in the heart of the mountains, the river suddenly becomes wider; it is called the Basin of Milanovac. Equally as quickly, however, the waters are narrowed again, and obtain the velocity of a cataract in the magnificent Kazan Gorge. The rocky sides rise abruptly from the river, and here and there can be seen the road which was first hewn out of the cliff for the passage of a Roman army. A mighty tablet on the rock face forms an everlasting reminder of the conqueror of Dacia—the Emperor Trajan.

The Danube steamer calls at many of the small towns along the river banks. Some of these places offer little or nothing of interest to the ordinary traveller. At Orsova, however, there is a market largely attended by the gaily dressed peasants from the Roumanian villages around. In the immediate

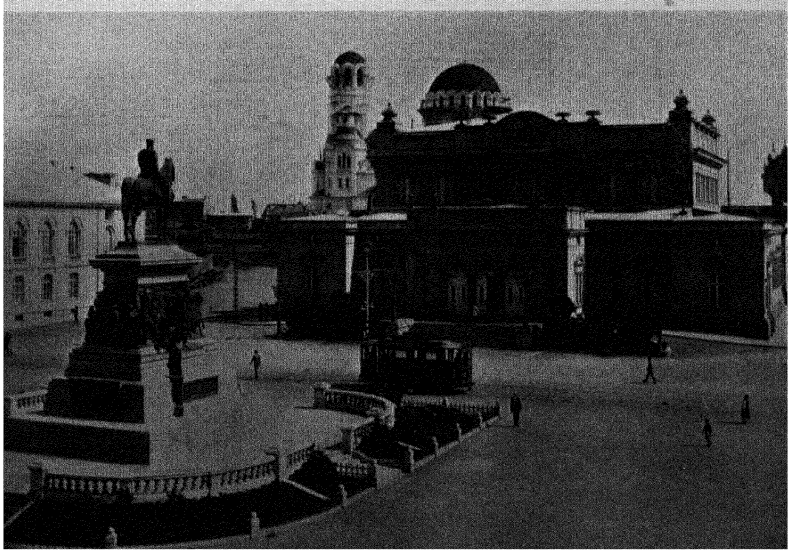
vicinity there are the Hercules Baths, which have been continuously in use since the Roman times. Then comes Ada Kaleh Island, with its buildings of Turkish appearance, the little town of Verciorova and the mighty barrier which blocks further progress down the main stream. The rocky ridge, known as the " Iron Gates," is circumnavigated by means of a canal along the Servian bank. The stream flows through this artificial channel with great force, and considerable power is necessary to propel vessels against the current.

After passing the Iron Gates the ridges of the bare mountains slowly recede from the river bank. Settlements begin to appear and other streams enter the broad Danube. The river continues to mark the frontier between Roumania, Jugo-Slavia and Bulgaria —the north being always in the first of these countries and the south bank in one of the other two. When the Bulgarian frontier is crossed, just before the little ship and railway junction of Vidin, a place of importance during the Russo-Turkish War, the surrounding country becomes very flat and uninteresting, with backwaters from the main stream extending far inland. At Lom I left the Danube and travelled southwards by train to Sofia.

The Bulgarian capital is a city of striking contrasts. It has several beautiful buildings and some fine thoroughfares, but it is surrounded by a mass of squalid huts sheltering people of many nationalities and creeds. Yet Bulgaria—the peasant kingdom—is developing rapidly and wisely in spite of the destitute condition in which it found itself at the termination of the Great War. Its capital presents one of the most interesting studies to be found anywhere in the Balkans.



THE OLD MONASTERY, RILA MOUNTAIN—BULGARIA



SOFIA—CAPITAL OF BULGARIA

Facing page 26—2.

THE KING OF BULGARIA
Publicly Kissing the Cross held by the Archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Church.

THE ALEXANDER NEVSKY CATHEDRAL, SOFIA—BULGARIA

My first wanderings in Sofia led me to the vast and really beautiful Alexander Nevsky Cathedral. From the middle of a square, adorned with small green trees, rises an immense pile of white stone, surmounted by a gold dome, with several small cupolas also capped by glittering metal clustered round the main structure. Erected at a cost of nearly one and a quarter million sterling, the interior is far more ornate than the white and gold beauty which it presents to passers-by, but it is also far more difficult to describe. Imagine a series of chapels, each divided from the other by a fretwork screen of marble. The central nave has a frescoed ceiling supported by columns of malachite. The walls glitter with inlaid stones of a semi-precious character. The pulpit is of alabaster and gold. There are steps of onyx, life-sized lions of spotless alabaster, ornaments of crystal, mosaics of intricate design and exquisitely coloured paintings. It can only be described as a jewel in a white casket.

This cathedral is the centre of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, which is really the Greek Church, separated from Roman Catholicism about 1,000 years ago. Although Catholic in its doctrine it follows more closely the teachings of the Bible, and does not acknowledge the authority of the Pope. In times past the Orthodox Church, of which there are national branches in Jugo-Slavia, Roumania, Albania, Greece and (until recently) in Russia, looked for leadership to the Greek Patriarch at Constantinople. Now, however, each country has its own form of supreme ecclesiastical government. It is interesting to record that one-quarter of the followers of Jesus Christ belong to the Greek Church.

Although I visited many buildings in the Bulgarian

capital it is one of those cities where the people themselves form the chief attraction. And this is especially the case every Friday morning in the market-place. Crude farm waggons, drawn by hump-backed oxen, bring the produce of the fields and orchards into the city's mart, which extends over a mile of streets. Rough stalls, supported by trestles, are used to display the profusion of wares, which vary from huge onions to home-made wooden ploughs and hay-forks. I realised how primitive must be the life of the Bulgarian peasant from the fact that fleece, in an unwashed state and just clipped from the little black and white sheep, is sold in this market for making the homespuns worn by the country people.

Surrounding me on all sides as I passed along the line of booths were people who might have stepped out of a Gilbert and Sullivan opera. Fierce-looking men with astrakhan hats, long coats, and their legs encased in rough cloth bindings, rubbed shoulders with Moslems in black coats and the inevitable red tarboosh. Peasant girls, in elaborately embroidered dresses of many colours, with their heads adorned with yellow and blue kerchiefs, laughed and chatted with Macedonian men in full-shaped breeches, short jackets and flat caps. Everywhere there was colour and contrast. Soldiers in brown homespun tunics, and officers with white caps and red-striped trousers, passed sombre-looking priests with tall black hats.

Most of the buying and selling appeared to be done by women, while the men idled around or squatted in small groups talking politics or business. Had the clothes of these people been a little less worn, dusty, and in keeping with their whole appearance, I should have expected at any moment to see a cinema

camera and to hear the raucous shouts of a director coming from a megaphone. As it was, however, the scene held me entranced for several hours, until at last I wandered away to the great mineral water swimming bath in the centre of the city.

Facing a pretty park and rising above the lesser growth of buildings around, the great bath of Sofia is unique in more ways than one. The water is obtained from a hot mineral spring, and the great square structure, which houses not only a swimming pool with many dressing boxes but also hundreds of private bathrooms, gives the impression of being a great palace of red and white stripes. The interior is of such magnificence that at the first glance it brings to mind all that one has read and seen of similar establishments in ancient Rome. The tiled swimming pool is filled from morning to night. Thousands bathe in it daily, especially after the working hours, and it is no unusual thing to see a long queue of people awaiting their turn to enter at eleven o'clock in the evening. There is something in the water, which is of an emerald-green colour, that takes all the tired feeling and the aches and pains out of one's bones. My only regret was that I had not discovered the joys of a bathe in it on my first arrival in Sofia.

Although the Bulgarian capital has grown very considerably since the World War, having added many thousands of Russian refugees to its population, it is still a curious mixture of old and new buildings spread out over the plain on which the city lies. The old Turkish mosque and the streets of modern shops, which have replaced the Oriental bazaars, afford an instructive glimpse, however, of the change which is

taking place. The proximity and influence of the old Turkish Empire was not without its effect on pre-war Sofia. Now, the East has receded and Sofia, which still lies on the frontier of the Orient, is fast becoming westernised.

The royal palace, in which lives the king of this peasant state, is not a very grand affair as royal palaces go. If I read the signs aright, it is not the wish of its sovereign to live surrounded by great pomp and circumstance, but rather to build up a city and state economically sound and possessing all the appurtenances of commerce and civilisation. Bulgaria has made great strides during recent times with such essentials as roads and railways.

One interesting afternoon I spent in the National Costumes' Museum. Here is displayed all the handwork of the Bulgarian peasant. Although costumes, rugs, clothes and embroideries play a prominent part among the exhibits, there are also examples of farm implements, pottery, and, in fact, everything pertaining to the past and present life of this Balkan people who are only just emerging from the Middle Ages.

Bulgaria is a land of small villages and farms. It has not yet become industrialised, and consequently has only two or three cities of importance, one of which is Philippopolis, an old Turkish town with a few modern buildings among its tortuous and stone-flagged streets. Something of its character may be gathered from its trade, which is principally confined to the sale of silk cocoons, attar of roses, rice, and agricultural produce. Then there is Varna, the Black Sea port of Bulgaria, where improvements have been effected through the instrumentality of the

National Labour Army, wherein all young men must serve for several months if they do not elect to be trained as soldiers. This labour force, at the time of my sojourn in the country, was divided into squads, and was employed in the creation of necessary public works.

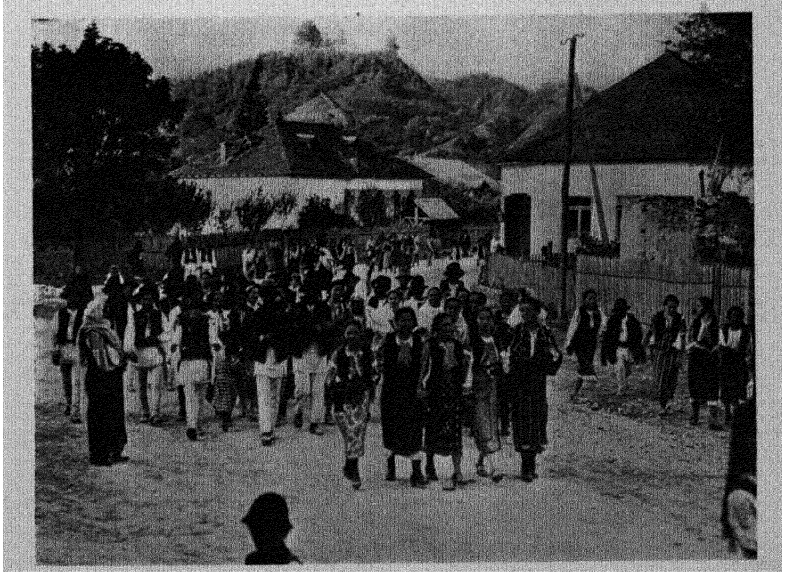
CHAPTER V

GREATER ROUMANIA

INSTEAD of leaving Varna by sea for Constantinople I crossed Bulgaria to the town of Russe—better known by its old name of Ruschuk. Here the Danube again came into view. No longer a narrow cataract-broken and swiftly flowing stream, as at the Iron Gates, but a broad and imposing waterway—a fitting picture for my last view of the river on which I had travelled for about 1,500 miles through South-Eastern Europe. Opposite to the town of Russe, which is situated on the Bulgarian bank, stands the little Roumanian port of Giurgiu, and from here I travelled by train, in less than two hours, to the city of Bucharest, the capital of Roumania.

During my journeys across the world—almost from Pole to Pole—the element of surprise has been ever present. It is, in fact, the new and the interesting which greet the eye at every turn of the long trail which provide the thrill of foreign travel; and Bucharest, "The Paris of the Balkans," was no disappointment in this respect. It is a city of amazing contrasts. Gleaming white palaces bordering leafy boulevards, statues, fountains and asphalt roads add a tone of refinement which is sadly lacking in the colourful but somewhat crude Balkan capitals of Belgrade and Sofia.

STROLLING PLAYERS—ROUMANIA



VILLAGE FESTIVAL—ROUMANIA

Facing page 32—2.

ROUMANIAN PEASANTS IN NATIONAL COSTUME

MARKET WOMEN—BUCHAREST

In the place of jolting over cobble-stones came the smooth running of a luxurious car over well-made roads ; instead of indifferent hotels my first night in Bucharest was spent in complete physical comfort. I stood rubbing my eyes in the morning to make sure that what I saw was not a myth of the imagination, for I had passed through lands where stark necessity was the explanation for most that I had seen, where there was the unmistakable tinge of the Orient, where queer peasant costumes predominated, in short, where the Europe of my ken seemed far away, and the less familiar lands of Asia Minor so close. Here, in the " Champs Elysées " of Bucharest, I stepped right back to familiar scenes. Between the lines of forest trees, well-dressed pedestrians thronged the footpaths, correctly attired men and women were astride well-groomed horses on the bridle-paths, and in the centre of the roadway there were real motor cars—not the dingy, high-seated and broken-down relics of a past generation. One foreign note, however, told me that I was neither in the Bois de Bologne nor Rotten Row. Out among the automobiles there were carriages with pairs of horses, and on the driving-seat were coachmen in a kind of green and blue velvet livery with gold belts. In the distance this main boulevard of the Roumanian capital was spanned by an Arc de Triomphe, a gleaming white pile which formed a vivid contrast with the green of the trees.

A few mornings later I stood on the outskirts of this city, literally where the pavement ends. A line of hovels bordered a dusty, unmade road. Playing on the ground in front of these poverty-stricken shacks were the half-naked children of the vast gipsy population which spreads a ring of squalor around the

luxurious and, I fear, licentious heart of Greater Roumania. Yet it is these gipsies who have built modern Bucharest. I watched a gang of about thirty men, women and children at work on a new cinema, saw heavy loads of concrete carried to dizzy heights by sunburned women, while men toiled far above and far below ground from sunrise to sunset, and I realised that this city, which has doubled its population, its size and its magnificence since the World War, is symbolic of the contrasts that exist in this peasant state of to-day.

Later travels took me out into the broad fields and through the villages. On the great black-soiled plain formed by the delta of the Danube I saw the immense areas of ripening corn which make this land one of the granaries of the world. Still farther afield I passed through tens of thousands of acres under tobacco. In three hours I motored from Bucharest towards Transylvania, and wandered about the awful cluster of oil derricks and hills of black sand surrounding the town of Ploesci, where the air was sweet with the smell of petroleum. In this field—and there are two others in Roumania—the oil is so heavily charged with black sand that much of it has to be brought to the surface by buckets, which are seldom more than a foot in diameter but no less than four feet long; in appearance they resemble pipes, and the oil is like black treacle when it comes up from the wells, 2,000 or 3,000 feet deep, in a hot, slimy flow—equalling from all the Roumanian fields about ten million barrels a year.

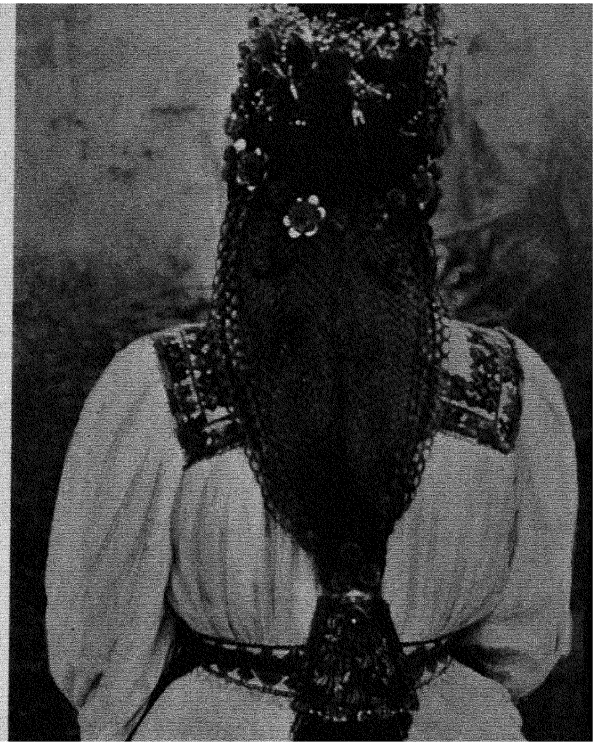
I passed out of this " black country "—where soil, buildings and everything else is covered with the ebon-hued oil slime—into the vast forests of the

FUNERAL PROCESSION IN ROUMANIA

SCHOOL FOR MOTHERS IN RURAL ROUMANIA

Facing page 34—2.

BRIDAL HEAD-DRESS AND NECKLACE
Roumanian Peasant Girl.



GALA COIFFURE
Roumanian Peasant Girl.

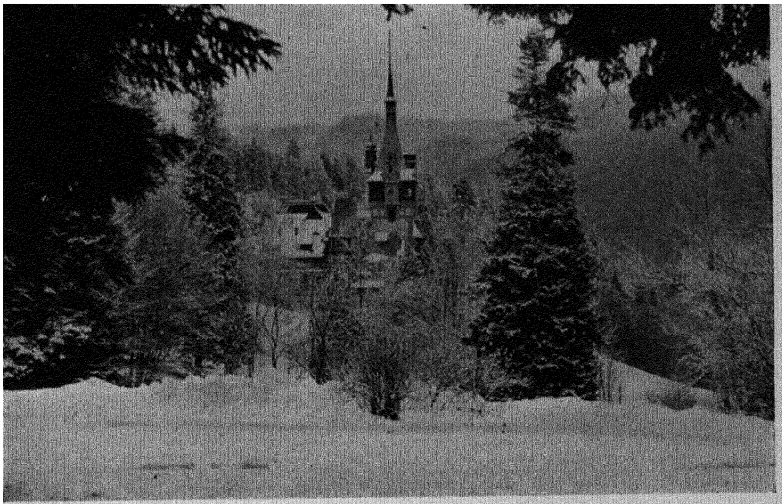
mountains, which form a rugged background to the oil-fields. Timber is the third source of Roumania's natural wealth. More attractive, however, than the industries, or even the landscapes, are the dresses worn by the peasants in almost every part of the country, but especially in Transylvania. The garb of these people has not changed since the Roman conquest. George Oprescu, in his finely illustrated work on "Peasant Art in Roumania," states that: "As it appears on Trajan's column or on these votive monuments, so it remains to this day. The Roumanian peasant wears no other dress.* A pointed fur cap fitting tight round the head; over the wide trousers a long loose shirt, drawn in over the hips by a leathern belt; sandals, also of leather, tied with cords or leathern thongs which, in certain districts, are carried up to the knees by cross-gartering; a sheepskin great coat or a coat of rough woollen material, woven by the wife, this being frequently slung across the shoulders, the sleeves hanging empty. A staff, and a bag on the shoulder complete the dress. This bag sometimes assumes peculiar shapes † and is used to carry petty articles of daily use, but also to

* During the visit I paid to the Roumanian Academy of Rome in 1924, the students of archæology showed me some photographs of monuments depicting Dacian women of the area now called Transylvania. The costume was exactly that worn to-day: the smock, the braided belt taken several times round the waist, the wide short skirt, the sandals and the head veil.

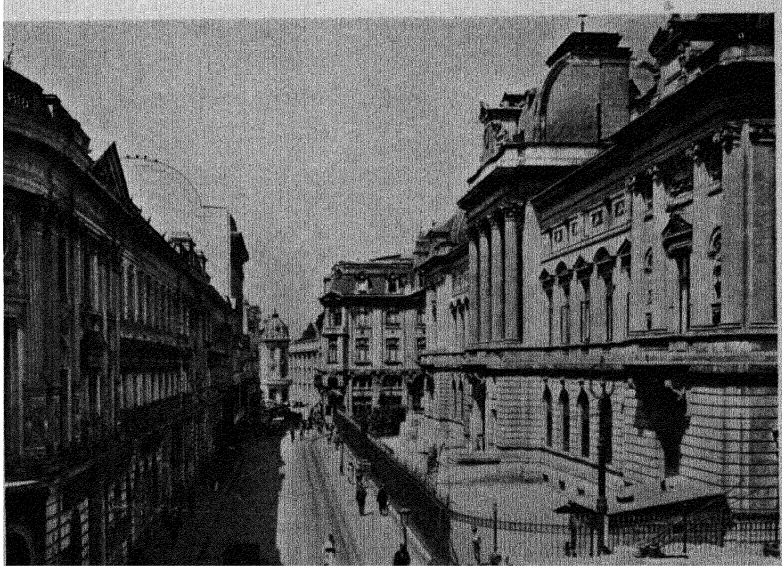
† M. Romulus Vuia, Director of the Cluj Ethnographical Museum, has discovered on Trajan's column a bag of a very characteristic shape which is still in use at the present day among the inhabitants of the Hateg district—a district more closely wedded than any other to ancient traditions. It roughly coincides with the area in the centre of which stood Sarmisegetusa, the capital of the Dacians.

protect the head and neck from the rain. The women also wear a smock, the upper part of which is embroidered and forms the bodice. It is pulled in at the waist, not by a leather belt as with the men, but by a braid woven in brilliant colours, trimmed at both ends, with fringes or woollen pompons. Over the smock they wear a short, wide, pleated or gathered skirt, covered with embroidery or woven patterns; in other districts, two aprons—also ornamented—one in front and one behind (in the Banat, the latter is edged with multicoloured fringes), or a skirt consisting of a square-cut piece of material (trimmed with two broad vertical bands having embroidered or woven designs at both ends, and a third band as a border). This piece of material is wrapped round the hips, to display the figure; it is slit up the left side to allow of movement in walking, and to show the white fabric of the smock, which is frequently relieved by an embroidered design."

On the southern slopes of the Transylvanian Alps stands the beautiful mountain resort of Sinaia. It is the summer capital of Roumania, and contains a royal castle standing on the slopes of a beautifully wooded hill. Here as elsewhere in Roumania the buildings are of spotless white, and Sinaia possesses several large hotels besides a casino where gambling and dancing are the principal attractions. It is no unusual thing for very large sums of money to change hands in this palace of chance in the heart of the mountains. There can be no doubt that Sinaia is both fashionable and attractive. Its open-air restaurants, its military bands, its tennis parties and the society people who follow the royal family make it the principal mountain resort in this portion of Europe.



ROYAL CASTLE—SINAIA



BANKING QUARTER—BUCHAREST

Facing page 36—2.

A RELIGIOUS PROCESSION—BUCHAREST

Here I must confess that places which depend largely upon a casino and the annual migration of a certain set of people from a near-by city make but little appeal to me. Sinaia has its beautiful surroundings and its luxurious hotels, but I found these attractions insufficient to cause me to prolong my stay there for more than a week-end.

The history of Roumania is certainly a most interesting one. By the close of the first century the Roman Emperor Trajan had not only conquered this country—the classical *Dacia* and *Scythia Pontica*—but had also colonised it. Although this happened nearly 1,900 years ago, the Roumanians claim to be descendants of the conquerors of the ancient world. Their language has a Latin origin and is very similar to Italian, although many words have been introduced from the surrounding Slavonic countries of Poland, Bulgaria, the Ukraine and Czechoslovakia. It is remarkable that a people separated by vast distances from all other Latin races should have maintained a language having as its parent that spoken by the Romans long before the dawn of the Christian era.

During the Turkish dominion the country was ruled very largely by the Phanariotes, or Greek subjects of the old Ottoman Empire. Even up to the present time these people have formed the landowning class. Then came the Union of the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, in 1859, and the acceptance of the crown of this new kingdom of Roumania by Prince Charles of Hohenzollern, the founder of the present dynasty.

As a consequence of the Great War Roumania trebled its area by acquisitions of territory from the defeated Central Powers. She was awarded

Bessarabia from Russia, the Bukowina from Austria, and Transylvania from Hungary. The territorial extent now exceeds 159,000 square miles, and the population is about eighteen millions, most of whom are engaged either in agriculture or mining, although there are eleven towns of over 40,000 inhabitants.

One of the most interesting portions of Roumania from the historical point of view is the Dobruja, the strip of country lying between the Danube and the Black Sea. Like many another borderland, it has been the scene of much conflict. In early times the northern tribes, Slavs, Tartars and Goths, made many wild forays and several determined invasions, with the rich city of Constantinople and the towns on this eastern flank of the great Roman Empire as their objectives.

At last, in A.D. 106, the Emperor Trajan built the famous wall. It consisted of three lines of ramparts, defended on the northern side by deep and wide entrenchments. Fortified posts were established at intervals along the entire length, from the Danube to the shores of the Black Sea at the point where now stands the city and port of Constanza. The ruins of this great wall, which I saw in the Dobruja, after the lapse of nearly 1,900 years, show conclusively that it was once of immense strength.

In the year 1812 this country was crossed by a Russian army marching to assist the Bulgarians in their stand against the Turks. Again, in 1916, the German and Bulgarian forces, under von Mackensen, caused its evacuation by the hard-pressed Roumanians. Notwithstanding centuries of warfare and devastation, the population of the Dobruja remains unchanged and the fertility of its soil unimpaired.

Travelling rapidly and comfortably southwards and eastwards I reached Constanza after crossing the Dobruja and the broad Danube. From this growing port, which is Roumania's front door on the Black Sea coast, I took ship and, fortunately, entered the Bosphorus and Constantinople in a few hours, as the sea was rough and the vessel neither clean nor comfortable.

CHAPTER VI

ON THE FRINGE OF THE ORIENT

EUROPE, in the south, is divided from Asia by the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles. Both are narrow waterways which have loomed large in ancient and modern history. There can be no doubt that of the two the Bosphorus is the more beautiful, for on its shores stand the great cities known to the world as Constantinople. As waterways go, the Bosphorus, which joins the Black Sea with the little Sea of Marmora, is insignificant both in size and in its setting of rugged, and, in places, tree-clad hills. Only nineteen miles long, it varies in width from two miles to about three-quarters of a mile, and its waters are covered with ships both large and small. These vary from small liners to the picturesque *caïque*, or Turkish sailing boat.

Here are some of the changing scenes which the Bosphorus provided from the deck of the small steamer which had brought me, in acute discomfort, from Constanza. Throughout my travels I have always noticed that the sea invariably makes amends for misbehaviour, and this was certainly the case when the hills of both Europe and Asia closed in on the ship and changed a grey wind-flecked sea into a broad ribbon of blue water streaked with gold. The scene was not unlike the passage of the Italian Lakes.

Although the steep slopes on both sides of the Bosphorus are somewhat rugged, fine villas with beautiful gardens dot the European as well as the Asiatic shore. Besides the fashionable little Turkish watering-places of Yenekeui, Buyukdere and Therapia, there are many landing-places and villages that appear to have a small maritime trade carried on by the peculiarly shaped sailing boats which, with their emblem of the crescent and the star, give an unmistakable hint of near approach to the gateway of the Orient.

Ships become more numerous as the channel narrows. Oil tanks, then hotels, the great Dolma-Baghcheh, with its white marble glittering in the sun —a palace built less than 100 years ago to exceed in magnificence anything beheld by previous Sultans —and, finally, a mass of buildings beneath countless minarets come down to the sea. Rising above the crazy assembly of dingy dwellings, housing nearly a million human beings, only half of whom are Turks, the remainder being Armenians, Greeks, Jews and other heterogeneous peoples who inhabit the threshold of the East, are gigantic mosques with many slender towers cutting the skyline.

This is Constantinople, the city founded by Constantine the Great in A.D. 330, and for a thousand years one of the most elegant and civilised centres in the world. It is, to-day, a number of towns, strikingly different in character, separated from each other by the waters of the Golden Horn. But there is no Constantinople. In an excess of nationalism the Government of the new Turkey has decreed that the name which has figured so large in the stirring history of the past shall be known no more. That

which was Byzantium to the Romans and Constantinople for about fourteen centuries is now Istanbul, a corruption of the word Islambol, meaning " Islam abounding." It was here that Imperial Germany had planned a centre for the famous Berlin-Baghdad Railway, the great iron road for the " Drang nach Osten."

This great city by the waters of the Bosphorus is, however, divided into three sections, only one of which was ever known as Constantinople. The most important part is Stamboul, in which reside by far the largest proportion of the Mohammedan population, and where are situated the great mosques and the labyrinth of bazaars. On the other side of the Golden Horn, an arm of the Bosphorus less than a mile wide which winds inland to its meeting with a river called the " Sweet Waters of Europe," stand the twin towns of Galata and Pera, where dwell the bulk of the foreign population, and where international commerce has its headquarters. Then there is Scutari, which at the time of my visit was a town of highly fanatical Turks and war refugees from all parts of the Near East and Russia. Connecting the European sections of Constantinople with the great Mohammedan city of Stamboul is the famous Galata bridge across the Golden Horn, and it was from this that I obtained my first comprehensive picture of the strange world which, despite the decrees of a Government, will ever remain Constantinople to all who live beyond sight and sound of Santa Sophia, the great mosque of Stamboul, which was built as a Christian church by the Emperor Justinian in the year 537, and is to-day the largest and most lavishly adorned religious edifice in the Moslem world.

The story of Constantinople is a strange one. Constantine the Great moved his capital from Rome to this city, which was then called Byzantium. It grew rapidly in both size and magnificence, and remained for nearly ten centuries one of the principal cities of Christendom. The Turks could never gaze across the Bosphorus at the beautiful domes of the city which had become known by the name of its august founder, without desiring its possession. As the years passed, the Turks grew stronger, while the resistance of the Romans steadily declined, until at last, in 1459, this great Christian stronghold passed into the hands of the rising Moslem power.

From the ruins of the Byzantian Empire Turkey emerged as one of the most powerful nations in Europe. The Balkans were conquered, Greece and the Ægean Islands came beneath her sway, all Hungary and most of Austria were overrun, and even portions of Italy fell beneath the all-conquering Turkish armies. Slowly, however, the Ottoman Empire crumbled before the almost continuous assaults of its neighbours and the revolts of its own people. To-day there is little left of the greatness which once was Turkey. The development of the National Movement has caused the great and historic city on the Bosphorus to abdicate in favour of Angora, the mountain capital of the new Turkey, in the Anatolian wilds.

Inside the walls built by the Roman Emperors, Constantinople covers seven hills with a vast labyrinth of dilapidated houses, many built of wood, and streets, narrow, steep and often tortuous. Much of this city gave me the impression of being a huge rubbish heap, indescribably sordid. There are miles

of rough, cobbled streets and semi-dark lanes, deeply rutted, and with no pretence at paving, sanitation, or proper lighting.

It did not take me long to discover that the principal interest for the ordinary sightseer is in the purely Oriental city of Stamboul. So across the Golden Horn I went, morning after morning, in the wake of a dragoman whose principal object in life it seemed was to lead me each day by different paths, all rough and disgustingly filthy, into the great bazaars. Nearly all of these are more or less covered in, and resemble a noisome rabbit warren, where, in the drab half-light, I was literally dragged into hundreds of booths and urged to consume cup after cup of treacle-like Turkish coffee in order that I might be the more easily persuaded to purchase some worthless objects or curios. Thousands of Greeks, Armenians, Jews, Persians, Syrians, Egyptians, Dervishes and Turks were all packed into the circumscribed area of either the Grand Bazaar or the Egyptian Bazaar. The first of these is a maze of narrow streets and houses, from which the newcomer to the East might easily imagine he would never emerge alive. The Egyptian Bazaar is confined to one enclosed street, and it is quite impossible to enumerate here the wares of both East and West sold from its shops. In fact only a connoisseur could tell whether many of its goods came from Birmingham, Czechoslovakia, Damascus or Teheran.

Let us take a look at these bazaar streets, for they are certainly unique in the world. It is an area of tunnel-like alleys enclosed within a wall and arched over by a curved roof with many cupolas. The interior is but dimly lighted by bleary windows high

up in the curve of the roof. The floor is of cobbles, blackened by age. The yellow walls and coloured roof are fairly clean but sadly in need of repair. Facing one of the little streets in the enclosed area are literally hundreds of open-fronted booths covered with carpets, rugs, mosque lamps, red slippers, jewelled belts, buckles and weapons. No one has yet succeeded either in describing the multifarious, usually gaudy, and often spuriously antique wares, or the heavy scent and dust-laden atmosphere of an Eastern bazaar. At one booth which I passed on several occasions, the Armenian proprietor forcibly sprayed me with diluted attar of roses despite the fact that neither his cunning smile nor the assurances of my dragoman that he was " damn honest man " would induce me to enter his reeking, tunnel-like shop.

At one Turkish restaurant the tables were arranged along the street and the customers conveyed the food to their mouths with their fingers. I could not resist the temptation to stand and watch, as unobtrusively as possible, until sickened by the sight of bones, fish and sweets, all being thrust into the mouths of the hungry by unwashed fingers which did not hesitate to afterwards stir the noxious-looking coffee served in the most artistic of cups.

Sweets, fig-paste, sherbet, coffee, Turkish delight, rice cooked in butter, and fish from barrels, seemed to be the most popular dishes, and finger napkins were served out to even the poorest customers. On the steps of a near-by mosque a venerable-looking figure, with a massive white beard and side-whiskers beneath a green turban—denoting a pilgrimage to Mecca—was busy writing a letter dictated by a middle-aged Turk in the dark coat and the inevitable *tarboosh*,

or fez. This old scribe was a public letter-writer, and like many others, all of whom seem to take up their stand in close proximity to the numerous mosques, is patronised even by the more wealthy, for illiteracy is still common throughout Turkey.

In Stamboul appear to be concentrated all the principal monuments of Constantinople. Every hill is crowned with a fine mosque, usually painted pink and white and gleaming in the sunlight. Vast square-turreted buildings, from the centre and corners of which soar slender spires, domes and minarets, add beauty and Oriental colour to what would otherwise be a city of indescribable ruin or dilapidation. In the little mosque of Kahrich I saw some exquisite mosaic work and in Sultan Ahmed some beautiful mosque lamps. Friday, Saturday and Sunday may be termed off-days in the bazaars of Stamboul. The first of these is the Moslem Sabbath and all the Turkish shops are closed. On Saturday the Jewish booths are silent and often shuttered, while Sunday is the day of rest for the Christian Greeks and Armenians. During these days I visited the hospitable English and American residents in their fine homes facing the Bosphorus, and the purely western streets and shops of Pera and Galata on the Princess Island. It takes quite a time to learn how many towns and even villages are comprised in the generic name of Constantinople and to realise how necessary are the services of a reliable dragoman.

Of all the buildings in Constantinople none can compare with St Sophia. Although erected as a Christian church by Constantine the Great and dedicated to *The Holy Wisdom*, this magnificent edifice was destroyed during a riot, being subsequently

rebuilt on a much larger scale by Justinian. It has been a Mohammedan mosque for over five centuries. The interior is by no means imposing, although its splendid dome and slender towers give it an artistic appearance when viewed from a distance. Inside, however, the amazing spaciousness below the central span, the diffusion of light, and the richness of the marbles, the mosaics, the old lamps and the immense carpets give it more the appearance and the atmosphere of a vast Oriental palace.

At night the lamps like full moons hanging by invisible wires from the lofty vault above, the scintillating marble columns, the thousands of faces turned towards Mecca, the colours of the prayer-rugs, the turbans and the gowns, with the musical voice of the *imam*, all combine to produce a scene which is not only impressive but distinctly unusual.

Here, where East meets West, one realises to the full the part which religion has played in the history of the old world. It is told to the visitor that when this great edifice—said to have cost over ten million pounds—was first dedicated to the Christian faith the Roman Emperor exclaimed: "To the Glory of God Who deemed me worthy of accomplishing such an undertaking. Solomon, thee I have surpassed!"

A thousand years later, when the Turkish hordes burst into the new building, driving the hundreds of Christians who had taken refuge there into slavery, their leader, Sultan Mohammed II., struck one of the pillars with a blood-stained hand and shouted: "There is no God but Allah." The mark made by the blow is shown to-day! From this it may be gathered that tragedy has lurked around the pillars of St Sophia as in the shadow of almost every other

old church, mosque and temple from China to Peru, and from the dawn of history to the present day.

All over Turkey, and especially in Constantinople, there are the fanatical sects known as the dervishes. A dweller in one of the great Western cities of Europe or America, whose knowledge of the East has been gained from an occasional reference in newspaper or journal to the awakening of this vast and thickly peopled portion of the world, and the establishment of a new régime in the country which acts as a connecting link with Europe, may be forgiven for believing that religious fanaticism, almost amounting to barbarism, has long ago disappeared from the new Turkey. Here is what I saw in the mosque of the Whirling Dervishes, situated less than a mile from one of the principal European hotels of Pera. In a small circular room over fifty fanatics, wearing mantles and tall sugar-loaf caps, were whirling round on their toes with outstretched arms, until one by one they dropped to the floor in a state of insensibility. The places of the fallen were immediately taken by others anxious to produce, by this means, a state of religious intoxication, which they believe places them in communion with the Holy Spirit.

Then there are the Howling Dervishes, an even more fanatical sect, who first work themselves into a religious frenzy, and afterwards hold red-hot charcoal in their mouths and allow the priests to thrust sharp steel prongs into their flesh. All this happens in the new Turkey, where women have very largely cast aside the veil and are being educated, while glib politicians talk of universal suffrage. Later travels took me far and wide in Eastern lands, and I realised that while the shibboleths of Western civilisation

come easily to the tongue of the educated—and usually discontented—the masses everywhere are still immersed in an ignorance and fanaticism which has changed but little in the course of centuries.

Although Western inventions have caused certain visible alterations in the life of old Constantinople, the effect produced is little more than skin deep. For example, in many of the cinemas I noticed that the male and female audiences were divided, husbands and brothers going in one direction while their wives and sisters disappeared into the darkness of a section reserved exclusively for women. The streets of Constantinople are mostly paved with stone, and were certainly not made for the motor car when driven by fanatics. Without a speed limit, and with life very cheap, the way of the pedestrian is hard. Yet there is a very large number of cars of all makes in this great city, but still the *hamals*, or porters, stagger along weighed down by the gigantic loads, because the work of carrying almost everything is the exclusive privilege of these men, and has been handed down as a heritage from father to son. Even the city's garbage is carried on the backs of the *hamals*. The more one sees of the East, and the deeper the investigation into the changes wrought by time, the more convinced one becomes of the truth of Kipling's famous lines :

> "Oh, East is East and West is West,
> And never the twain shall meet."

There are two places in Stamboul which afford a glimpse of the Byzantine world. One is the ruins of the great Hippodrome, where the Roman Emperors received their victorious generals amid the acclamations of the multitude ; where criminals were executed

to afford a public spectacle ; and martyrs suffered so that their beliefs might be handed down to posterity. Another such place is the museum, where one finds the sarcophagus of Alexander the Great, which was recovered from the ancient ruins at Sidon, and is supposed to be over 2,200 years old. Here there are also interesting collections from Babylon, Assyria and Mesopotamia. Then there is the Column of Theodosius, the Serpentine Column, the Pyramid of Constantine, and lastly, the Adrianople Gate. From this point a wonderful panorama is obtained, extending over the monuments of the Moslem cemeteries to Eyoub.

Above all, however, it is the streets of Constantinople which afford the greatest amount of interest to the casual traveller, for here one sees donkeys, camels, clumsy water buffaloes, modern motor cars, toiling *hamals*, and people whose features and dress proclaim them fellow-wanderers—not from the uniform West but from far distant places in the vast and dissimilar continent of Asia, where all that pertains to human life and conduct is so apposite that although Western eyes may see it they can never quite interpret its meaning or its motives.

I left Constantinople by way of the Dardanelles. In the ruddy sunset we passed Sid al Bahr, Ashi Buba, Lone Pine Ridge, Suvla Bay, Gaba Tepe, and negotiated the Narrows, all names which, but a few short years ago, were on the lips of almost every English-speaking man, woman and child. They signified suffering, sacrifice and glory. Now these historic spots are marked only by those tragic reminders of former days, the " little fields of crosses white,"

denoting the last resting-place of the Empire's warriors in the Great World War.

When darkness had closed over this scene I watched the light from Cape Hellas flash through the gloom on to the white memorial to the British, from many parts of the far-flung Empire, who laid down their lives in the epic landing in the spring of 1915. This solitary beam playing momentarily on the memorial was peculiarly impressive—symbolic of eternal light in a world of darkness.

CHAPTER VII

THE CAPITAL OF FRANCE

NOW that I sit down to write of France, of Paris—and the two are not synonymous—it seems that this country and this city, out of all the lands of the world, have shown so many sides to their character during the twenty years of our friendship that a simple record of travel would be colourless and without life. I have known both of these places in sunshine and in storm, in hate and in happiness, in fear and in victory, and so it must be just portraits of France, picked out in the colours of time and place.

It is the day of Victory. In the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles the Treaty of Peace between the Powers of the world, ending the greatest war in all history, has been signed ; and the boulevards of Paris are alive, joyous and a little arrogant. I have crossed the Place de la Concorde—the hub of all France, and the scene of so much that is vital and dramatic in this country's history—and through rejoicing crowds have made my way along the Cour de la Reine, over the beautiful Pont Alexandre III.—named after the famous Russian Czar—to where the spirit of martial France is typified.

Drawn by some curious impulse, call it sentiment

if you will, I am standing in the circular crypt of the old Église Royale, where the Kings of France used to attend Divine Service. Above is a gilded dome and through twelve windows in the square tower just below a pale yellow light is streaming from the sunlit Esplanade des Invalides. It shines with almost supernatural brilliance on to a plain porphyry sarcophagus. Twelve stone figures, symbolic of past victories, stand in a circle round the grey walls. Sixty captured flags hang motionless. The silence is absolute. Not even the noisy traffic of the Paris streets disturbs the serenity of this crypt in the Invalides.

Bronze figures, bearing the sceptre, the crown and the globe, stand guard at the entrance, above which and behind the High Altar is a sentence from a famous will—"I desire that my ashes shall repose on the banks of the Seine, in the midst of the French people whom I have loved so much."

Little round chapels encircle the crypt, and each contains the remains of a king or queen who owed his or her throne to the one who lies in the central stone. Marshals of France also rest beneath this great dome, above which, 344 feet high, rises the Cross of Faith and the Lantern of Eternal Light.

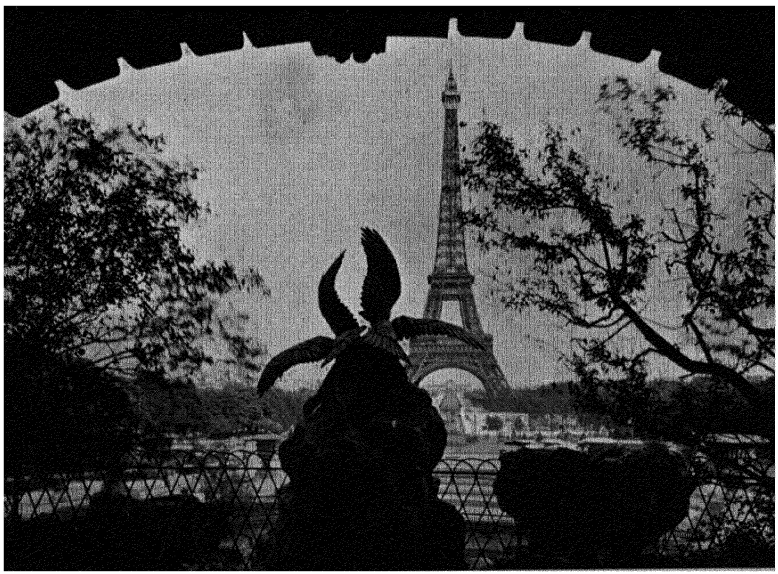
On this day of unsurpassed victory there seemed to be a great spirit astir—that of the Emperor Napoleon I.—whose remains lie between the Eagles of France.

Ten years later I was once again in the Invalides, and in the cold light of the aftermath examined its treasures. Behind the tomb is the Church of St Louis, with its grim instruments of torture, and the Napoleon

Chapel, with its souvenirs of the Emperor's unhappy days in the island of St Helena. In the Court of Honour there are many trophies of the Great War, including the railway coach in which the Armistice was signed. Then there are the museums of the Invalides, with their relics of Napoleon. Among the many interesting things to be seen here I noticed a button from the tunic of the famous flying Ace Guynemer, in which a small compass and a folded miniature map were concealed. The Invalides form one of the famous sights of Paris, and the fine Esplanade, which dates from the early days of the eighteenth century, affords a wonderful panoramic view across the Seine towards the long Avenue Gabrielle.

One of the most delightful features of Paris are its streets and gardens. Few people, even among those to whom the *Ville Lumière* is an old friend, can explain exactly wherein lies the subtle charm. To me it has always seemed to be due to the fact that the traveller visits this city for pleasure more than for business. He arrives with a holiday spirit, and is prone to accept and enjoy that which he would scoff at as second-rate in his own home town. However this may be, there is no doubt that Paris is a gay city—gay in spirit, so that everything done to amuse and interest is sure of a ready response. It is not so devoted to business as London or New York, and the male population appears to have so much more time to spend in pleasure than is usual in the great Anglo-Saxon centres of civilisation. It is the Latin temperament which gives to the capital of France its peculiar light-heartedness. Let us walk along its boulevards

GALERIE D'APOLLON, THE LOUVRE—PARIS



THE EIFFEL TOWER—PARIS

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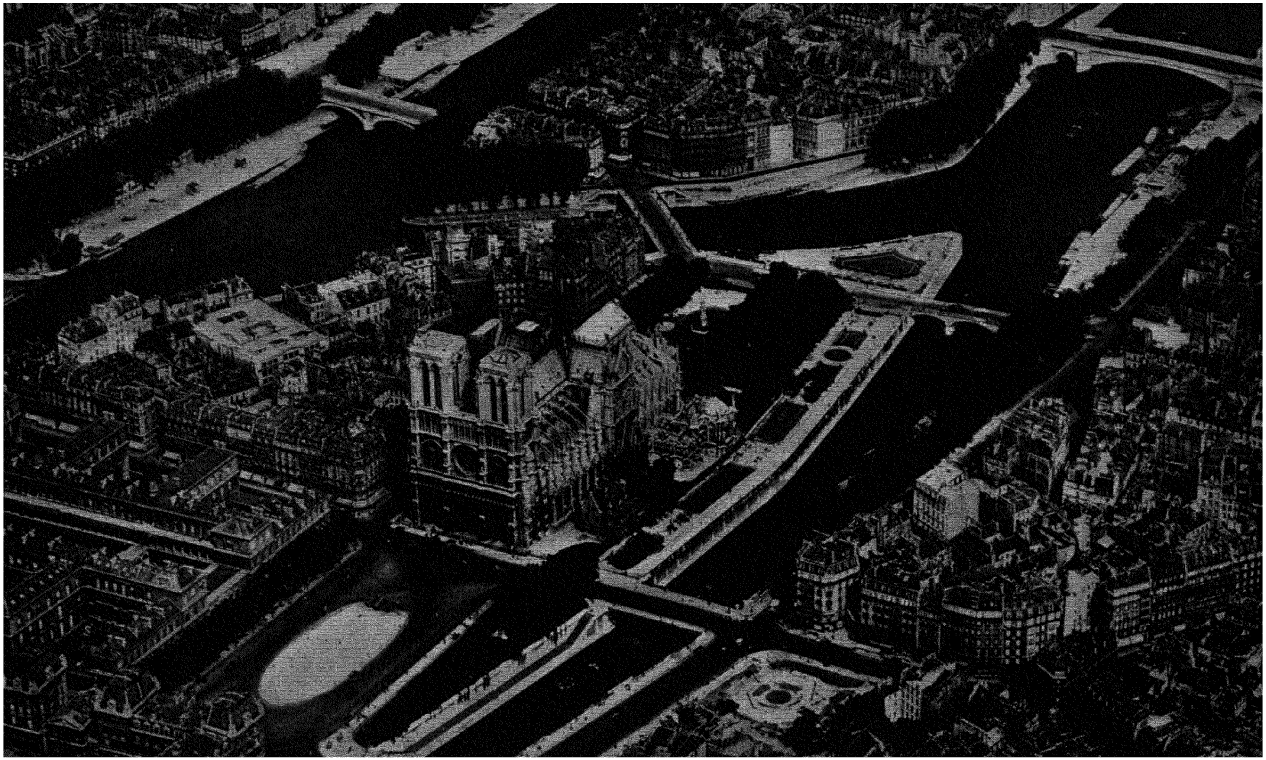


AERIAL VIEW OF NOTRE DAME, THE SEINE AND THE OLD CITY—PARIS

and through some of its famous streets and gardens, forming our own conclusions as to why it is considered the pleasure-city of the old world.

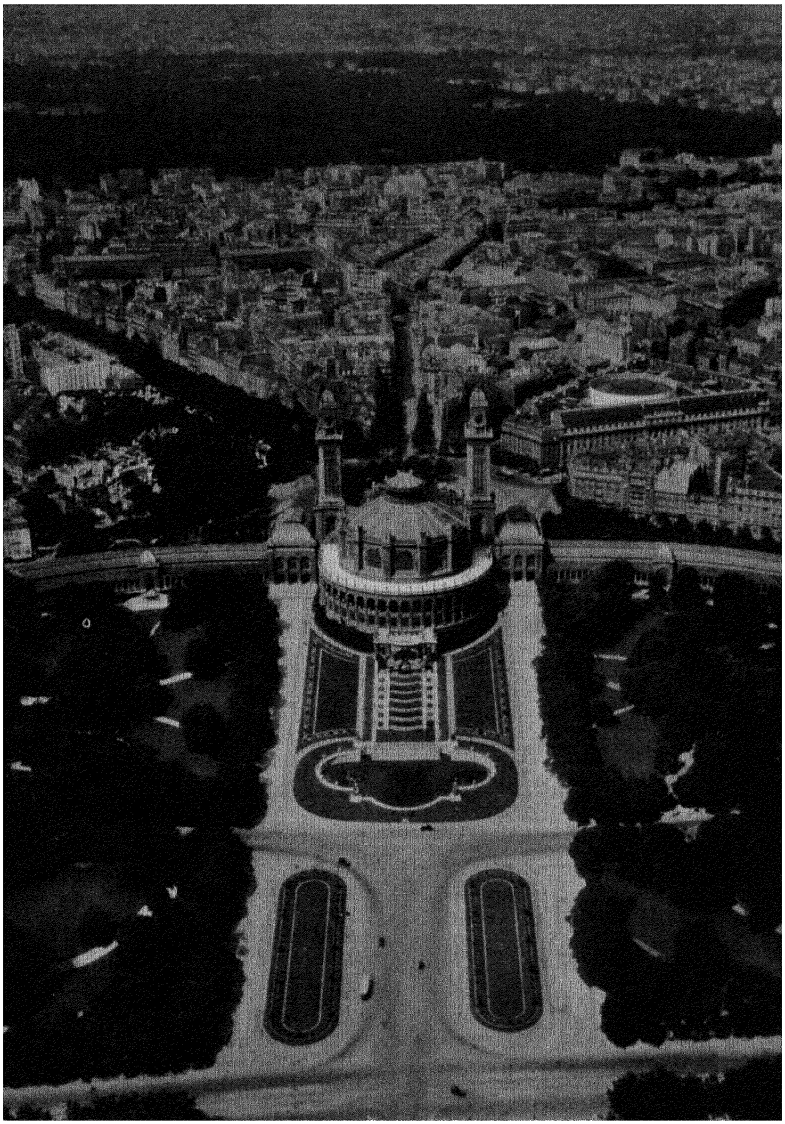
Here is the Rue de Rivoli, one of the best-known thoroughfares of the world, with a cosmopolitan crowd beneath its arcaded footpath on one side and, beyond the seemingly inextricable maze of flying, hooting taxis, the beautiful gardens of the Tuileries. It is neither a modern street nor is it picturesquely antique, having been constructed in 1835, yet it has a charm that few visitors to Paris can resist. Only at its eastern end, near the Louvre, are its shops particularly interesting, but it breathes history, and history of a peculiarly exciting kind which is not too far back to be understandable. So little was this street favoured by the citizens of Paris when first constructed that sites and buildings facing it had to be granted free on leases extending over a hundred years. Walking along this street we come to a pillar which is numbered 230. It occupies the exact position of the bar at which the Royalists were tried during the Reign of Terror.

Crossing into the beautiful and historic gardens of the Tuileries we find only one little building, the Pavilion du Flore, remaining of the famous palace in which so much of French history was made. Built by Catharine de Medicis in the sixteenth century, it was destroyed during the troublous days of the Commune in 1871. Few people who walk through its gardens to-day know the origin of its name. This palace received its title from a very ordinary circumstance. It was built on a clay pit from which the *tuiles*, or tiles, for the roofs of the houses of old Paris were originally obtained.

There can be no doubt that the long and straight Avenue des Champs Élysées is the most beautiful of the Paris boulevards ; and on the lower part of this tree-lined road, beyond the Rond Point, we find one of the characteristic features of Paris life. Here are some of the more famous music halls and restaurants, including the Ambassadéurs, Alcazar and Ledoyen. Much of the space between the trees of this portion of the Champs Élysées is occupied by stalls selling toys and sweets, while children's goat-carriages and donkeys trot about with their joyous little riders.

At the top of this avenue stands the Arc de Triomphe, the largest erection of its kind in the world. It was built as a memorial by Napoleon I. to his victorious generals. It was not completed, however, until 1856. Beneath this ponderous but beautifully decorated arch the body of Victor Hugo rested in June 1885, and on practically the same spot the Unknown Warrior was laid to rest in November 1920. Although a tiresome climb, it is well worth while to ascend the 272 steps which lead to the top of the Arc de Triomphe, for the view over Paris from this eminence is almost equal to that obtained from the more famous observation posts on the Eiffel Tower, and from the platform of the Sacré Cœur on Montmartre. To attempt to describe this panorama would be to court failure, for Paris is so divided by gardens, and so studded with towers and columns, that it appears even more beautiful from above than it does to the restricted vision when in its streets and squares.

From the Arc de Triomphe one passes by way of the Porte Dauphine into that famous Paris playground, the Bois de Boulogne, which contains the steeplechase-course of Auteuil and the Hippodrome



THE TROCADERO FROM THE EIFFEL TOWER—PARIS

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L'ARC DE TRIOMPHE—PARIS

LES INVALIDES, TOMB OF NAPOLEON—PARIS

de Longchamps for flat racing. Here is also a polo field, the open-air Théâtre de Verdure du Pré-Catelan, the headquarters of the famous Racing Club of France, the Zoological Gardens, several large lakes and many restaurants, clubhouses and rides.

It is the rendezvous of fashionable Paris on week-day mornings. Along its shady Allée des Acacias, and its broad Avenue du Bois de Boulogne, with their many by-paths, one meets an endless succession of riders and pedestrians from those cosmopolitan circles of Parisian society which embrace the whole Latin world.

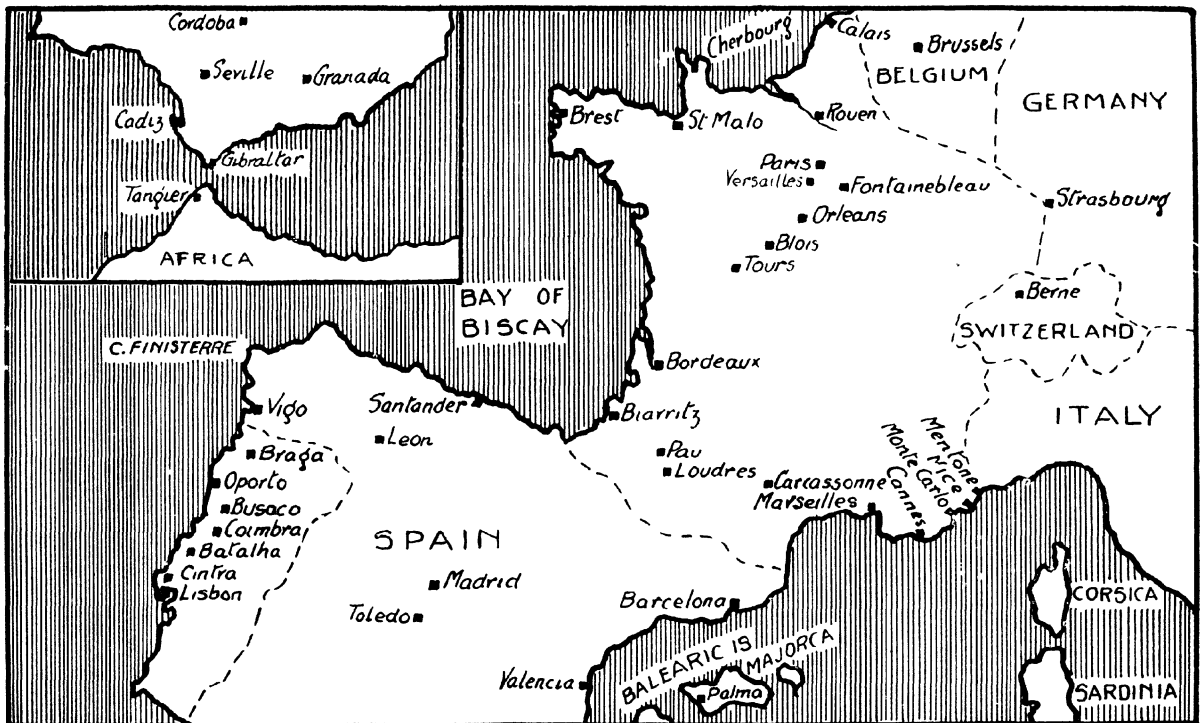
On the opposite side of the French capital there is the Bois de Vincennes, which forms the playground of the working classes during the summer months. In the famous château, which was once used as a prison and is now a fortress, many historical figures have been confined and executed. An excellent description of its dungeons and torture chamber, with many incidents founded on authentic facts, is to be found in Dumas' " Marguerite de Valois." During the Great War it was used as a place of confinement for spies, and the dancer Mata Hari faced the firing squad behind its grim walls.

Although there is no doubt that the grand boulevards of Paris, which extend from the Place de la Madeleine to the Place de la République, have lost much of the glamour they once possessed for the world of fashion, there is generally a well-dressed cosmopolitan crowd to be seen shopping in the famous Avenue de l'Opéra, with its jewellers, and in the Rue Royale, Boulevard Madeleine, Boulevard des Capucines, and the Boulevard des Italiens with the Opéra Comique. A feature of these streets are

the flower-girls, with their gay and often artistically arranged bouquets, and the pedlars of toys. There are usually, around the Place de l'Opéra, however, touts for the less respectable places of amusement with which Paris abounds, although little which even hints at vice is ever to be seen in its streets.

One of the most attractive features of Paris life is undoubtedly the restaurants, with their *terasses* open to the street, and thronged on a fine day with people of many nationalities. Even in winter these cafés manage to do business in the open with the aid of glowing braziers. Then there are the open-air café-music-halls, such as the "Ambassadéurs" in the Champs Élysées, where one can dine and afterwards witness quite a bright and snappy revue or variety show. Of quite a different character is the "Rotonde," on the Boulevard Montparnasse, a rendezvous of Bohemian life in the real Latin Quarter, which is no longer situated in the maze of narrow streets on the Hill of Martyrs. In this café, as in the Dome which is situated on the same boulevard, one meets a great variety of interesting and extraordinary people of many nationalities; and it should be remembered that there is very little of what is called the colour-bar in French social life. In fact, on one occasion my fellow-diners in the "Rotonde" were a Chinaman and a negro. Perhaps in the whirl and gaiety it is this all-embracing cosmopolitanism which provides the so-called charm.

There is, however, another Bohemia besides that of Montparnasse. It has its being in the cafés of the Boulevard St Michel, which are made exceptionally lively every Saturday evening by crowds of men and women students from the Sorbonne and other schools



FRANCE—SPAIN—PORTUGAL

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of the Paris University. Although the district of Montmartre is the one generally associated in the minds of foreigners with the gay and more irresponsible night life of Paris, which in the eighties was made famous by its congeries of artists, poets, students and models, it has long since lost the attractive wickedness which lent it glamour. To-day, it is either dull and somewhat sordid, or else the scene of cabarets and cafés intended solely for the exploitation of English and American tourists who remember the colourful stories often surreptitiously read in their youth. It is true that there are still a few of the old *ateliers* left, and when one knows the life of the Quarter it is still possible to find a dance-hall or a café patronised by the art students of more than one nationality.

Towards the close of the nineteenth century the popularity of Montmartre was waning, although I well remember a visit in later years to the " Dead Rat," when, in the dim green light of a cellar, I obtained quite a thrill from a half-pint of sour wine—*vin ordinaire* —drunk from a skull and served by an apache over a counter representing a coffin. Another famous resort of those days was the *Moulin Rouge*, which was known to the girls of the Quarter as " La Reine Blanche." The dancing in the " Red Windmill," which was eventually burned down, was neither sober nor respectable ; and many a crime had its origin in this palace of flamboyant vice.

Owing to the vogue enjoyed by the apache dance, or act, in the music-halls of the Western world during more recent years, it became customary for those who had not seen the real Paris to think of an apache quarter as something quite apart from either the fashionable or even the working-class districts of the

French capital. On one occasion I was speaking to a detective from the *Surete*, who told me that no such district ever existed, although there are many thieves' kitchens in the narrow and tortuous streets of the Temple and Villette. It is generally considered inadvisable for strangers to Paris to explore these districts, although I have passed through them several times without even being accosted.

To see Paris without knowing where and when occurred the chief happenings of its stormy history would be to lose much of the interest of this great city. As I said at the beginning of this chapter, Paris has been to me a corridor through which to reach other lands, and these comings and goings occurred many times before I even realised that the great central square which lies between the Rue de Rivoli and the Champs Élysées was called, at one period of the city's history, the Place de la Revolution. Many times I stood in this great square without knowing that it was constructed to commemorate the victories of the French armies commanded by Condé and Turenne. In later years the guillotine was busy at a point near the junction of this square with the Avenue Champs Élysées. Still later, in 1871, the Place de la Concorde formed the eastern line of occupation by the Prussian Army during its stay in Paris after the Franco-German War. For nearly fifty years the statue of Strasburg, in the north-east corner, was decorated with crêpe as a sign of French humiliation at the loss of Alsace-Lorraine. This sombre adornment was not removed until after the Allied victory in 1918.

Although there is nothing left of the old Bastille,

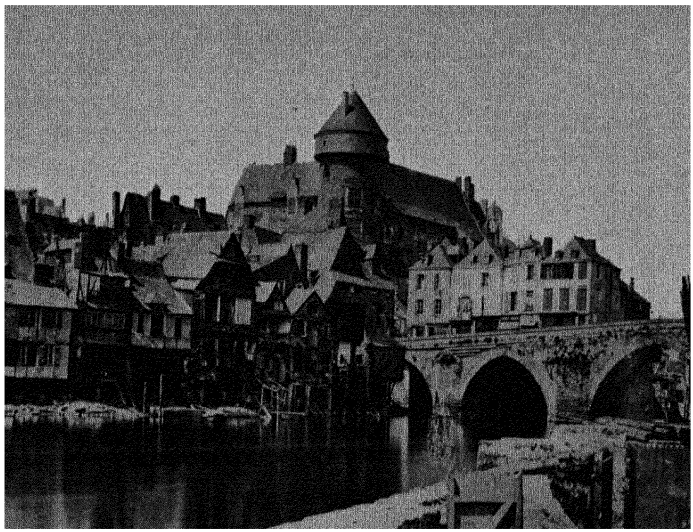
which was erected as a state prison by Charles V. during the years 1370-82, and was destroyed by the Paris mob on July 14th, 1789—an event which marked the beginning of the Revolution—there is history in the old Conciergerie. These massive towers on the Quai de L'Horloge contain the dungeons occupied by Marie Antoinette and Robespierre. The Palais de Luxembourg was built by Marie de Medicis in 1615, and was used as a residence by French royalty until the Revolution, when it became a state prison. With the rise of Napoleon this fine edifice was made the Palais du Consulate, and in the Second Empire it became the Chamber of Peers. It is now the Palais du Sénat. A portion of the old building was originally the residence of Cardinal Richelieu.

The place from which the best view over Paris can be obtained is undoubtedly the 200-feet-high dome of the Church of the Sacré Cœur, situated on the top of the Montmarte. It is, however, entirely a modern building. The religious edifice possessing the greatest historical interest in all Paris is the Cathedral Church of Notre Dame. Although this building was commenced in 1163, that which one sees to-day is almost entirely thirteenth-century workmanship. The interior and exterior details of this great Gothic structure are described in every guide-book and depicted on millions of post cards. It so happened that I stood in this church soon after the anti-religious declaration by the Bolshevik Government of Russia—which was treated by the European Press as something new and astounding even in a Communist state. Almost the same thing occurred in Paris during the Reign of Terror. Notre Dame became the "Temple of Reason," and the image of the Virgin was replaced

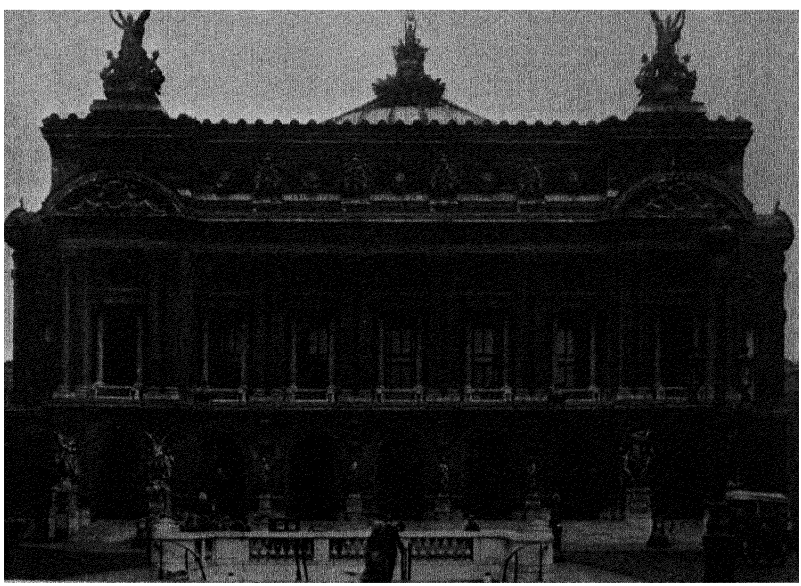
by a figure representing the goddess of so-called liberty wearing the scarlet cap of the Revolution. A flambeau in a mound of earth placed in the choir was called "The Torch of Truth," and the disgraceful orgies which took place within the sacred precincts eventually led to the closing of the church.

Another famous Paris church is the Madeleine, situated at the end of the Rue Royale. It was built by Napoleon I., in the year 1806, and was intended as a Temple of Fame. This huge structure, with its massive Corinthian columns, has one curious feature. Built in the style of a Roman temple it contains no ordinary windows, and is somewhat gloomy inside. The Madeleine, although possessing magnificent bronze doors, is more famous for its music than for its artistic appearance.

In Paris one could spend many weeks exploring historical buildings, art galleries and museums, until at last undue familiarity with the antique produced an unhealthy contempt for the past. There is, however, one other building of truly colossal size to which the footsteps of most travellers will be directed. This contains the famous galleries of the Louvre, with several miles of corridors and many hundreds of rooms. Although commenced in 1346, it was not until Napoleon I. came to the throne that any particular interest was taken in this vast château, to which almost every king of France has made some addition. The Palace of the Louvre is one of the largest buildings of its kind, and covers about forty-four acres. It contains one of the finest collections in the world, and the exhibits cover almost every field of French art both past and present.



IN THE CHÂTEAU COUNTRY



THE OPERA—PARIS

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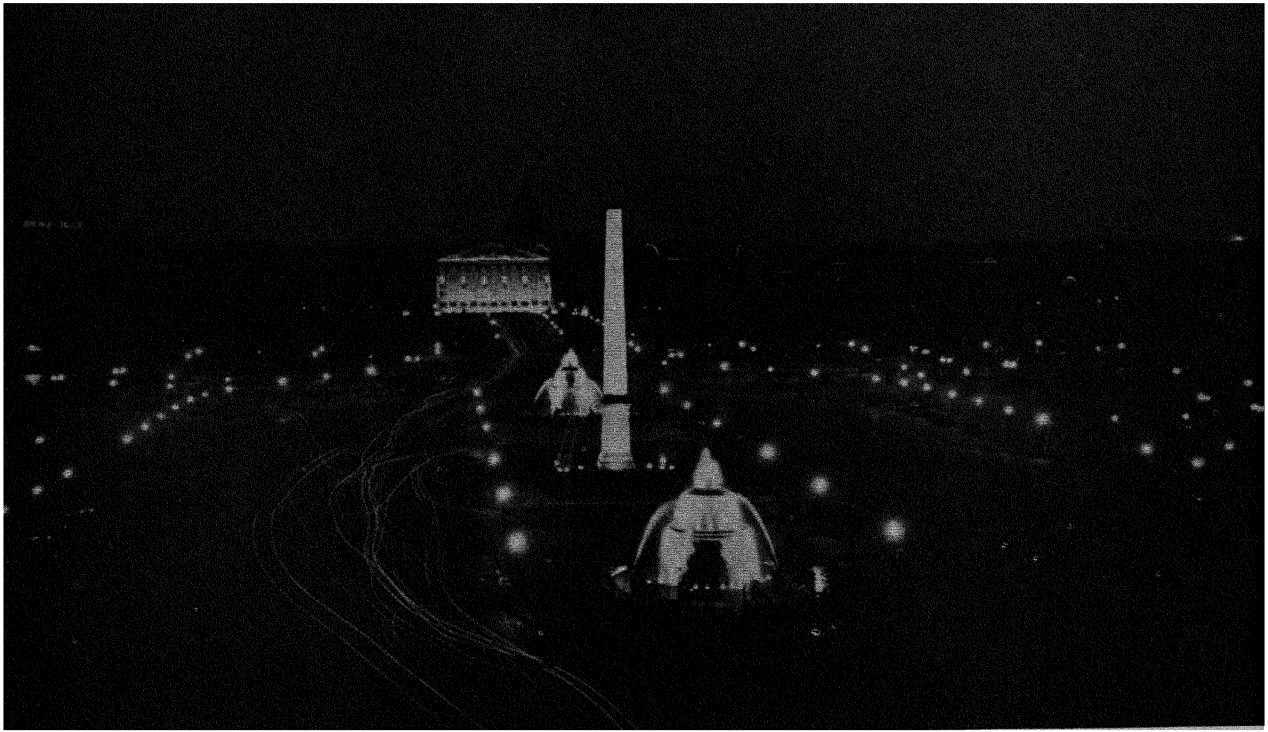


PLACE DE LA CONCORDE AT NIGHT—PARIS
Chamber of Deputies in Background.

CHAPTER VIII

REALMS OF ROMANCE

LITTLE more than half-an-hour's journey from the centre of Paris is the town of Versailles, famous the world over for its palace and gardens created by Louis XIV. in 1681, and the birthplace of three of the succeeding kings of France. Some of the greatest events in world history have taken place within its walls. Here, more than anywhere else, one can visualise the magnificence of the French Court during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Vast sums were expended not only in the building of this palace—which, it is said, housed over 10,000 people during its period of greatest magnificence—but also in decorating the interior and laying out the many acres of beautiful gardens, lakes and lawns. One estimate places the total cost of Versailles at thirty-two million pounds—this, however, presumably includes the little town which was also built by Louis XIV., with its wide squares and streets, now forming the capital of the Department of the Seine et Oise.

The palace has become the National Museum, and it contains not only the royal apartments but also an immense collection of pictures and sculptures. There is, in addition, the Grand and Petit Trianon, built by Louis XV., with its memories of Marie Antoinette. The impossibility of giving here an

adequate description of this vast assemblage of buildings will be better understood when it is explained that one side of the palace, that facing the gardens, is nearly half a mile in length !

In order to enjoy Versailles it is necessary before going there to read some of the romantic and descriptive literature of the French Court under the influence of Mme. de Pompadour. Then—preferably alone in its galleries and rooms—one can imagine the scenes of gaiety and magnificence, almost without parallel, which ultimately brought about the great storm which swept to the guillotine or to miserable exile the " Lilies of France."

History teems with examples of both monarchs and proletarian leaders who have sown the seeds of revolution for their successors to reap the harvest. One of these was Louis XIV., the creator of Versailles. Less than a century later the first rumblings of the coming storm threw the Court into a state of panic. Three months after the fall of the Bastille, in July 1789, the Paris mob, led by thousands of semi-crazed women, marched to this great palace, sacked it, and forced Louis XVI. to return to Paris as a prisoner. A year later this unhappy King and his Queen were executed, and there began that awful period of French history, the Reign of Terror.

The next scene in the drama of Versailles did not take place for eighty-one years, during which time the palace had been renovated and turned into a museum and picture gallery. For seven months it was occupied by William I., King of Prussia, and his generals, after the entry into Paris following the defeat of the French armies in the war of 1870. It was here that the German Empire was born. Victory,

coupled with the outstanding ability of Prince Bismarck, caused the allied German states to elect William of Prussia, during his residence at Versailles, the first Emperor of Germany.

Fifty years then elapsed before the curtain was again raised to disclose the famous scene in the Galérie des Glaces, a magnificent salon completed in 1684, at which the Peace Treaty was signed, bringing to a close the greatest war in all history. It is curious that the final humiliation of militaristic Germany should have taken place in the same great and tragic building of an alien land as that in which a previous generation had proudly set out to found an Empire.

There is history, tragedy and drama in every room and corridor of this vast royal city of Versailles.

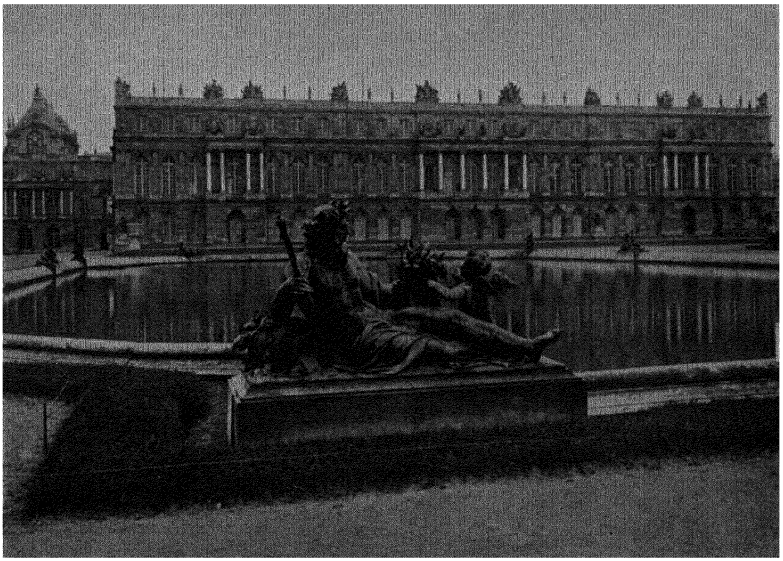
About forty miles south of the French capital lies the Palace and Forest of Fontainebleau. Although I could have reached this place by train from the Gare de Lyon, so attractive is the country through which the road passes that I motored there from the Place de la Concorde during two hours of a beautiful spring morning, and registered a vow that I would return one day and live for a week or two in the quaint little town of Barbizon, rendered famous by R. L. Stevenson and many noted artists.

The Palace of Fontainebleau, like that of Versailles, is of vast extent, and was built by Francis I. early in the sixteenth century. Although it was the favourite summer residence of French kings, whose custom it was, in later years, to give the most extravagant feasts and fêtes in its halls and parks, this palace more than any other is associated with the progressive and glorious days of the First Empire. In it occurred

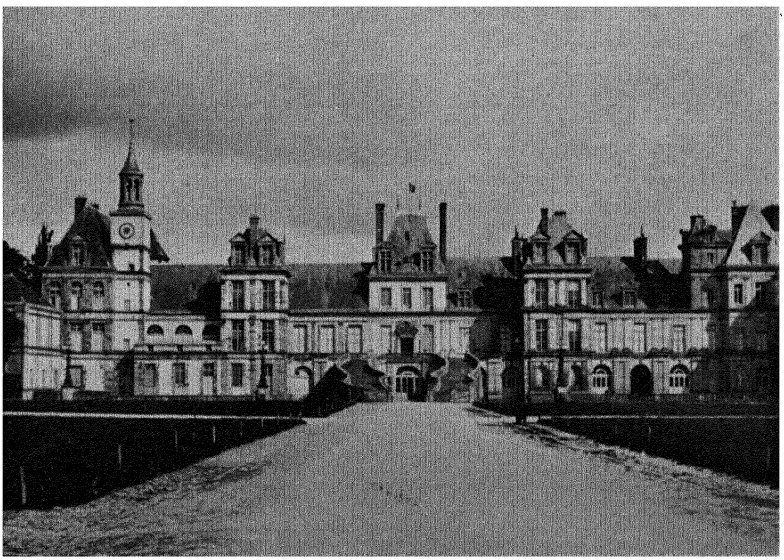
many dramatic scenes. Napoleon's "Lucky Star," the Empress Josephine, received sentence of divorce in the year 1809. The courtyard giving entrance to the palace, which was then known as the *Cour de Cheval Blanc*, was the place where Napoleon bade farewell to his old Guards after abdicating the throne in April 1814: it is now appropriately called the *Cour des Adieux*. Inside this vast array of beautiful buildings there are the apartments of Napoleon I., consisting of a few comparatively small rooms, in one of which is the camp-desk of the Master of War, and in another the bed, bronzes, and furnishings of the Emperor's sleeping apartments. In the *Salle du Trone*, which has a most beautiful ceiling, there is the famous dais marked with the imperial "N."

To catalogue here the sights of Fontainebleau is unnecessary. Anyone familiar with French history will be able to people its silent apartments with the gorgeous array of figures from past ages made familiar by the paintings in the panels and on the walls. The apartments of Marie Antoinette are typical of the period in which she lived. Then there are the Gobelins Tapestries, the rooms once assigned to the dowager queens, with their exquisite examples of eighteenth-century furniture, and, above all, the beautifully wooded gardens with the *Bassin des Carpes*. According to tradition, some of the fish one sees in this lake were alive long before the Reign of Terror and the rise of Napoleon Bonaparte.

On one occasion I travelled from Paris through the château country in the Valley of the Loire. An interesting chapter of French history is unfolded along the banks of this beautiful river. At Orleans, with



THE CHÂTEAU—VERSAILLES



THE CHÂTEAU—FONTAINEBLEAU

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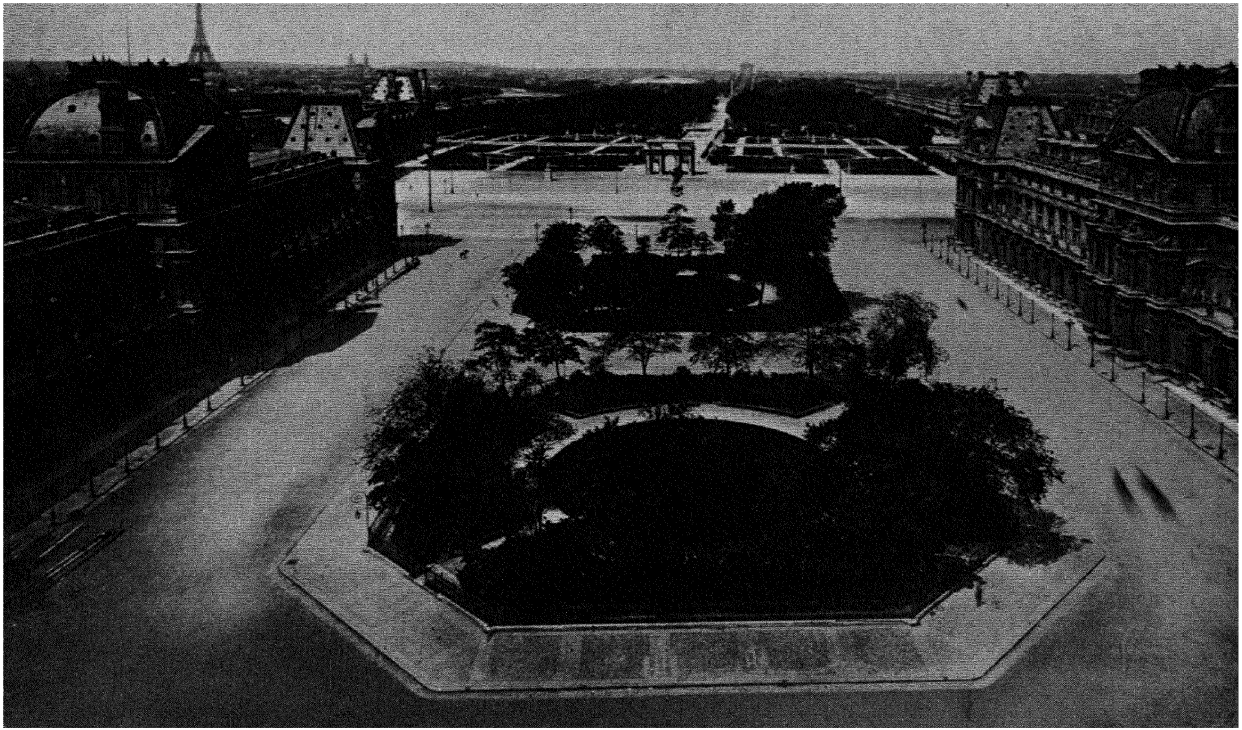


PARIS

From the Place du Carrousel, showing the Tuileries and the Champs Élysées.

its memories of Joan of Arc, there is a truly wonderful cathedral—but the best centre hereabouts is, perhaps, the quaint little provincial town of Blois. The château here consists of a collection of buildings belonging to different periods, but more particularly to those of Louis XII. and Francis I. Blois was a royal castle, and in it the Duc de Guise was assassinated: the Francis I. wing possesses a fine exterior staircase.

In this portion of what is called "Royal France," the Renaissance was responsible for some of the most beautiful buildings in Europe. Justly esteemed as one of its marvels is the Château of Chambord, about ten miles from Blois. Its dormer windows and turrets are remarkable for their wealth of decoration. In this early sixteenth-century castle-mansion Louis XIV. gave many brilliant fêtes. So numerous are the châteaux in this portion of France that I visited only a few of them. Villandry was constructed in 1532, and has three main buildings surrounding a Court of Honour. It is situated in the midst of delightful gardens, which are watered from the ancient moats. The interior is enriched by a wonderful collection of ancient art. The Château of Luynes is of feudal origin, and is entirely different from that of Chambord. Outwardly it consists of great round towers, resembling antique pepper-boxes, which give it a formidable aspect. From the terrace, however, there is a delightful view over forest and river. A short distance away there is a remarkable fifteenth-century chapel with carved timber work. The castle of Valencay, on its immense terraces, was, in 1808, assigned as a dwelling for King Ferdinand VII. of Spain, whom Napoleon had dethroned.

This château country does not depend entirely on its beautiful and often quite unfortified castles, for it is a land of rivers, lakes and forests, where every prospect pleases. Many of the largest châteaux of the Loire are situated in Touraine, which, owing to the fertility of its soil and the mildness of its climate, has been called "The Garden of France." Near to the old city of Tours, which has many churches and towers dating from the twelfth century, stands the royal castle of Amboise, in which dwelt many of the early kings of France. In the year 1560 it was the scene of a frightful massacre of the Huguenots.

In Anjou there is one of the most impressive monuments of the military architecture of the Middle Ages. This is the Château d'Angers, built by Louis IX. in 1234. It has 106 massive towers over 133 feet high, which act as bastions in its walls. These are decorated near the top with stonework of different shades. The inner courtyard contains a picturesque little chapel.

Away in another quarter of France there is Alsace, which is quite as attractive as the château country of the Loire. Many of the Alsatian towns still retain their old-time picturesqueness. For instance, Colmar, in which I found myself one snowy winter's morning, is more like a scene on a Christmas card. Its gabled roofs and Gothic convents in an environment of pine-clad mountains are peculiarly attractive. Then there is Kayersburg with its old ramparts, Barbarossa and its castle, and Selestal with the lofty steeples of its art-filled cathedral.

If there were only ancient buildings, however,

Alsace would be particularly dull. There are interesting schools of spinning and weaving, the University of Strasburg—an old-world city with a modern idea of industry—Mulhouse and its chemical laboratories ; and, above all, the beautiful pine-clad hills.

CHAPTER IX

IN THE SHADOW OF THE PYRENEES

ALTHOUGH the Basque coast really begins a little to the south of Biarritz, it was from this famous seaside resort that I commenced a tour through the interesting region of the French Pyrenees, from the Bay of Biscay to the Mediterranean.

Northwards along the coast from Biarritz to Bordeaux lies the Côte d'Argent, over 100 miles in length and backed by the vast forest of the Landes. This thinly populated region consists of pine trees, sand dunes, vast lakes and scattered villages. Passing through this district on the way to the Basque coast I found it an unspoiled land of unique rural charm. Biarritz, on the contrary, is sophisticated and cosmopolitan. Situated on a broad bay fringed by a sandy beach, huge hotels, promenades and two casinos, it is an all-year-round resort for visitors from afar. Although a windy place, there is something which can only be described as scintillating and invigorating in the rock-set town, with its shores washed by the huge waves of what the Basques call the Gulf of Gascony. To anyone not so well versed in local topography, this gulf is really the south-east corner of the Bay of Biscay. Although it has become fashionable to consider Biarritz as a spring and autumn resort, visits to this town at different seasons

of the year have left the impression that if climate is the important factor, then the whole Basque country is at its best in summer.

When one has spent many evenings in casinos the world over, their attraction in a new town becomes only momentary. In Biarritz there are the Belleview and Municipal Casinos, wherein to while away the hours according to inclination ; and here it should be said that gambling plays only a small part in the social life which centres around these cosmopolitan establishments. With the summer sky ablaze with stars there is little temptation to watch the spinning wheel, the exchange of francs, or the dancing and the dining, which, together, constitute the artificial life of most French seaside places, and of which one soon tires when the novelty has worn off. The daytime hours at Biarritz were, however, delightful. Bathing in the Biscay surf, with tea on the gay beach at Port Vieux and golf at Chiberta, with a few hours spent watching the fastest ball game in the world—the Basque *pelota*—gave me the rest for which I was in search before continuing my journeys through France and then away across the sands of the Sahara into Equatorial Africa.

On this corner of the Bay of Biscay coast, rounding into Spain, lie several very attractive resorts. First comes St Jean de Luz, with its bathing beach, casino, and, not far away, the golf-course of Nivelle. This place has a marvellous background formed by the Pyrenees, and with its face towards the Bay of Biscay it leaves nothing to be desired in the æsthetic sense. Just across the Spanish border there is the little town of San Sebastian, where one enters another world, the more colourful and unusual life of the Peninsula.

The Basques, who inhabit this corner of France and a considerable portion of Northern Spain, are a Celtic people like the Bretons. They still preserve their national dress and customs. Skirting the foot of the Pyrenees, I reached Pau. This town appears to be sustained by walls and arcades above its winding river. In the centre of the fine Boulevard des Pyrénées is the Place Royale, from which a wonderful panorama is obtained over the houses and streets to the 100-mile semicircle of superimposed ranges. Three things make this place attractive—the scenery, the facilities for all forms of outdoor sport, and the mild climate both in winter and summer. Situated on a promontory, and flanked by great towers roofed with tiles, is the château where Henry IV. was born. Besides its immense dungeon it possesses some fine Flanders and Gobelins tapestries.

Continuing over what is called "The Pyrenees Route," which in places winds round mountains and through gorges beneath towering walls of rock, and then debouches again into the fertile valleys of Languedoc, I reached one of the most extraordinary cities in the world. Imagine an afternoon's motoring through unfamiliar country and then the sudden appearance of a city of battlements and pointed bastions, not merely a deserted fortress, but a complete town of the Middle Ages encircled by two walls with fifty towers; inhabited, unchanged through the centuries, and with modern civilisation ending at its ponderous gates and mile-long lines of turrets.

Carcassonne appeared like the castle of the giant in the fairy tale of "Jack and the Beanstalk." Nowhere in Europe, so far as I know, is there such a complete and inhabited city of sixth, twelfth and thirteenth

century defence works, houses, shops, streets, churches and baronial halls, as in this town at the foot of the Pyrenees. It is a unique specimen of the architecture, both military and ecclesiastical, of the Middle Ages. Within its double ring of walls there are buildings dating from the Roman period to the fourteenth century, and it is possible to trace the methods of construction employed by different peoples who have made a home therein — Romans, Visigoths, Franks, Saracens, feudal counts, aristocrats of the old France, and citizens of the New Republic.

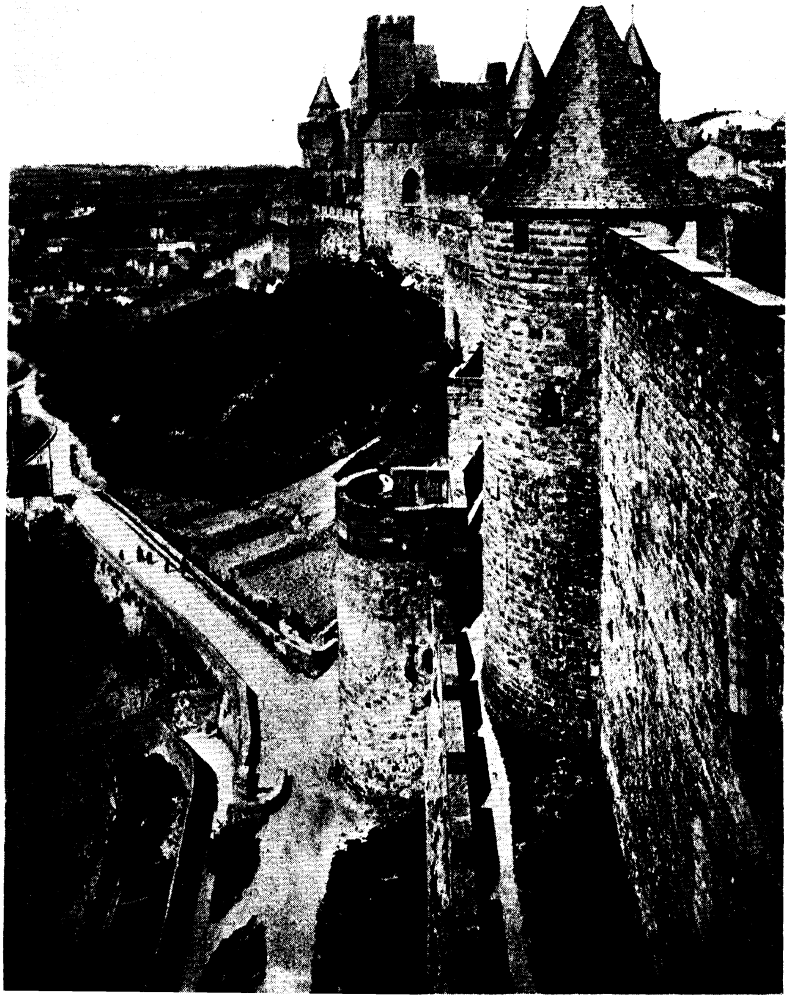
Beginning at the towers of the Porte Narbonnaise, I first encircled the city by means of its two walls, one lower than the other. The first of these lines of ramparts measures about a mile in length, while the inner and more lofty of the two is just over three-quarters of a mile in circumference. Looking down into the centre of the town from a tower in these lines of defence, one sees a maze of crowded mediæval buildings and streets relieved by the green of trees, and with the still somewhat quaintly dressed people of to-day living and carrying on their business in the alleys and habitations of the Visigoths who constructed many of the existing defences and buildings on Roman foundations.

At first the scene resembles the preparations for a great historical film—and many have actually been made here. This illusion, however, is soon dispelled by a night spent in the quaint old-world hotel, and a moonlight stroll along the battlements. Then there are the lists, the feudal castle with its archæological museum, and the Basilica of Saint Nazaire—a beautiful old cathedral in the heart of the citadel, which is composed of a Roman nave and a Gothic

transept and tower. Being built on a Visigothic foundation it is very original in form, with a Roman steeple facing the ramparts. The choir is a masterpiece of beauty, and a number of thirteenth-century stained-glass windows admit only a subdued and mellow light.

In the little Jardin des Plantes there are two beautiful white marble fountains and a statue of Helen of Troy. At another point in the city there is a fine Calvary erected on the site of an old bastion. The Church of St Michel has a nave completely covered with paintings, and the steeple of St Vincent is 160 feet high. Only at one point is Carcassonne disappointing. In the Square Gambetta I noticed the two motor buses, which looked quite out of place in this mediæval city, almost untouched by the hand of time.

Having planned my visit to coincide with the Sunday before July 14th, I was able to witness the Fêtes of Carcassonne. Apart from some dramatic representations in the antique theatre, the city was illuminated at night. From the surrounding country a blaze of light showed up in detail the spires, towers and roofs of the centre, framed by the black outline of the tessellated walls and the glinting, pointed-roofed bastions. What by day had resembled an old-world city ringing its bells and spreading its banners to welcome the return of mailclad victors, became at night a city of the Middle Ages being destroyed within its massive fortifications by the spread of a fire which it knew not how to subdue.



THE RAMPARTS—CARCASSONNE

Facing page 74—2.

PROMENADE DES ANGLAIS—NICE

TYPICAL VILLAGE ON THE CÔTE D'AZUR

CHAPTER X

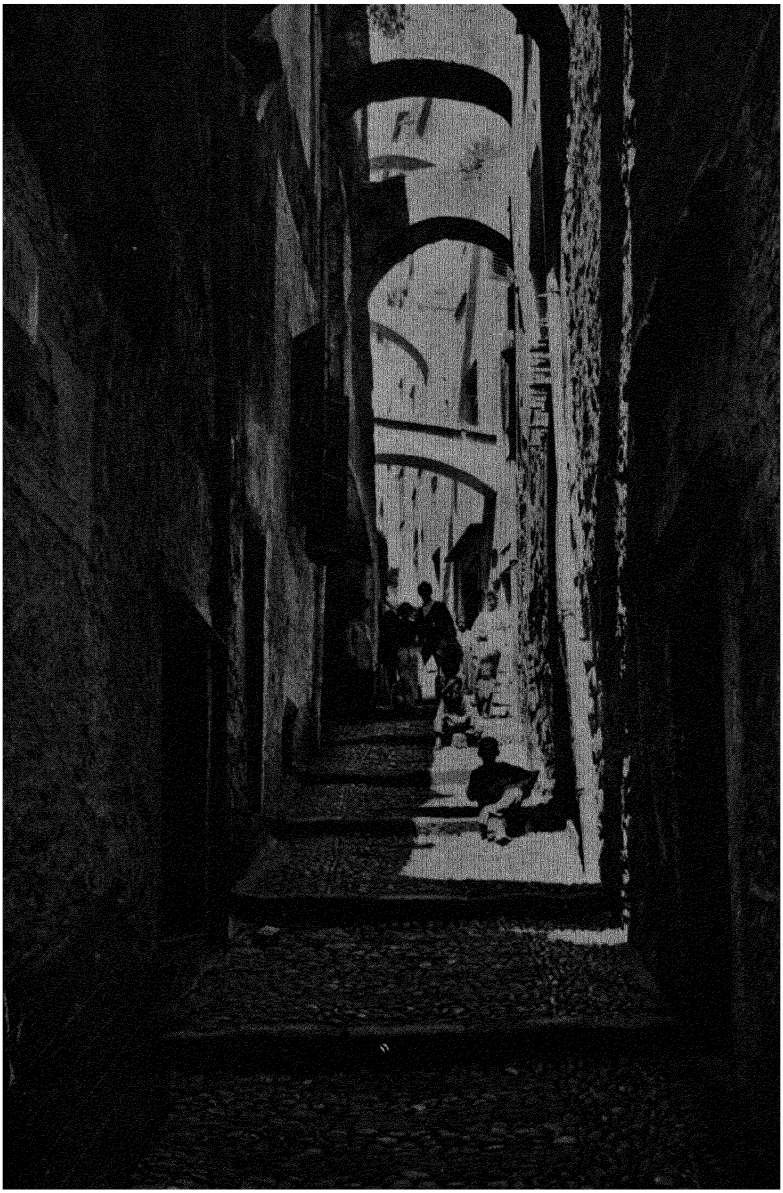
DISCOVERING THE RIVIERA

MANY people decide to visit the French Riviera under the erroneous impression that they will be quite beyond the reach of the northern winter. This mistaken belief is the cause of much subsequent disappointment, and it is the *raison d'être* for the unfair criticism to which this beautiful coast is often subjected by those who have visited it once only, and in the wrong season. It is the southern sun which warms the Côte d'Azur, for the breezes are often strong and cool. Apart from occasional cold snaps, however, the only serious defects in the climate during the winter months are the strong gusts of wind —the mistral—which blow from 11.30 to 4 o'clock in the afternoon, on about three days each week, from January to March, and the variations of temperature between sunlight and shade, and between daytime and night. At sundown the thermometer drops rather suddenly and the nights are invariably cold. In the spring and autumn there may be a cool edge to the wind, but the sunshine will be brilliant and warm, the sky cloudless, the sea a deep blue, and the semi-tropical flowers and foliage all around. It is the absence of greyness and gloom, combined with the long hours of sunshine and the little moisture in the air, which make the azure coast so attractive

climatically to dwellers in the sombre lands of northern Europe.

Each resort of this favoured land has its own peculiarities and attractions, and the French Riviera differs from that of Italy, which it joins near San Remo, in a variety of ways. My own introduction to the Mediterranean coast of France was anything but a pleasant one. Having gone to Marseilles a few days earlier than was necessary in order to catch a steamer for the Far East, I decided to fill in the time by a motor tour along the Corniche road. The mistral started, however, and fierce gusts of wind with deluges of rain put a sudden stop to the venture before the principal seaport of France had been left behind many miles. In fairness it should, however, be said that the winter-time Riviera does not begin at Marseilles, although the summer resorts of this coast, which are rapidly gaining in popularity, extend westwards almost as far as this place. The Côte d'Azur is merely the southern edge of the Alps, which is sheltered from the north and east.

The sleepy little town of Cannes, discovered by Lord Brougham in 1843 and popularised by him among English people in subsequent years, had only 3,000 inhabitants. When I visited it in post-war times it not only had a resident population of 57,000, and possessed all the conveniences and attractions of an up-to-date seaside town, but was also receiving 17,000 foreign visitors each year. Those who are inclined to scoff at the value of a tourist trade would do well to remember the size of this place and compare it with the number of foreign visitors alone, which will give some idea of the monetary value of a fine



SAN REMO—ITALY
In the Old Town.

Facing page 76—2.

THE CASINO—MONTE CARLO

THE PROMENADE—CANNES

climate plus a little ingenuity and enterprise, and a lot of advertising.

The climate is exceedingly dry and sunny, especially in the sheltered parts of the town on the slope away from the sea. Cannes suffers less from the mistral, which blows from the north-west during the period January to April, than any other resort on the Côte d'Azur, except, perhaps, beautiful but quiet little Hyères, the artists' paradise. There are many fine hotels and clubs. From the terrace of the Palm Beach Casino an unrivalled panorama stretches from Cap d'Antibes to the extreme point of the Esterel. This casino has, besides its gaming-rooms and restaurant, a theatre and an open-air swimming bath. The surrounding country is exceedingly picturesque. Near by are the Isles of Lerins. On St Marguerite is the prison where the unknown victim, called "The Man with the Iron Mask," was held a captive, and in St Honorat Island there is a Cistercian Monastery which no woman has ever been allowed to enter. On the land side there are the Esterel Mountains, and the little town of Grasse, where the hillsides are gay with flowers being grown for the perfume industry, which has its headquarters in this pretty place, itself fast becoming a popular centre.

There are so many small seaside places along this coast that it is difficult to tell where one ceases and the other begins. Juan les Pins, with its magnificent parasol-pines, has a remarkably gay little beach, and appears to be the home of the sun-worshippers; while Antibes, on the opposite side of the peninsula, is an old town, a Phœnician colony in pre-Roman days, with narrow and tortuous streets. The Mediterranean, being a tideless sea, has a tendency to

accumulate flotsam along its shore edges, and I noticed at Juan les Pins the municipality takes special care to ensure the cleanliness of the water.

The largest of the Riviera resorts is Nice, which has a resident population of over 160,000, with a numerous English and American colony. The attractions include a casino, race and golf meetings, regattas and tennis tournaments, as well as battles of flowers, and last but not least, the palm-bordered seaside Promenade des Anglais and the Quai États-Unis. To describe the gaieties of Nice during the height of the season would be to catalogue all the known sports and pastimes, from flying and motor-boat racing to golf and tennis. But this gem of the French Riviera does not rely entirely upon artificial amusement; it is a beautiful town, best seen from the hill of Cimiez, and is embowered in semi-tropical flowers and trees. Nice is fast becoming as much a summer bathing resort as a winter place of residence, for it has an excellent beach washed by the warm waters of the Mediterranean. During carnival time, which lasts a fortnight, Nice becomes the scene of a bewildering succession of balls, processions, and battles of flowers. King Carnival enters the "Good Town" with a following of decorated cars, gay courtiers and grotesquely masked beings, who are pelted with flowers and confetti.

Journeying on, I came to Monte Carlo. This luxurious white city sprung up around its gaming-rooms in the nineties, and there can be no doubt that the casino is still its *raison d'être*. Roulette, the ballet and grand opera, all take place under the same roof. The morning is the time for a walk on the terrace, when every one who is anyone will be

seen there. Then comes the *apéritif*—a habit or a religion, which you like—taken beneath the orange and white sun-umbrellas. The life at all these places is so much alike, and the weather being warm—as it is so often during the late spring on the Riviera—I bathed from the little Plage of Larvotto, danced at the Café de Paris, watched the tennis on the La Festa courts, visited the Country Club, played golf at Mont Agel, and came home from the casino with the stars paling rapidly into the sky and a decidedly cold breeze giving the lie to the imported palms.

Upstairs from Monte Carlo I discovered Monaco, built on a peninsula of rock, with its steep cliff sides washed by the blue waters of the Mediterranean. This promontory is only 1,000 feet across, but crowded into the tiny plateau-principality there is the palace of the Grimaldis, the oldest reigning dynasty in Europe, a cathedral, a maze of narrow, crooked streets, a convent, a public garden and two museums. It is, of course, the casino below which provides the revenue for the little kingdom above.

The last of the French resorts on this coast is Mentone, with its suburb Mentone-Garavan. This latter place is such a short distance from the Italian frontier that on attempting to walk across the St Louis Bridge I was pulled up sharply by a suspicious *douanier*. Mentone enjoys a particularly warm climate, but relies very largely for its amusements on neighbouring Monte Carlo, although there is a casino, a golf-course and a large number of hotels. In springtime Mentone is a floral paradise, and even in midwinter it is less troubled by wind and dust than the other resorts.

As much a part of the landscape as the mountains

themselves are the villas of the Riviera. Where the slopes are not terraced for vineyards or orchards, they are invariably covered with white houses, which seem to spring up on the hillsides almost overnight. Everywhere the garden walls are curtained with the purple blossoms of the bougainvillæa. Terraces and balconies, quite early in the year, flaunt pink and yellow roses and startlingly red geraniums. Such semi-tropical trees as the eucalyptus, the orange and the beautiful pepper tree, to name only a few, are a constant source of delight along the shores of the Mediterranean.

Mixed up with the more fashionable and sophisticated resorts are ancient villages. La Turbie, with its cobbled lanes, tiny sun-kissed Exe, and the like, all become popular places of pilgrimage during the seasons. From St Raphael southwards to Toulon, the great Mediterranean naval port of France, there is a delightful stretch of coast, which for some years has been steadily adding to the number of its devotees. On this *new Riviera* there are few, if any, casinos or carnivals, only isolated hotels, often perched on lofty hillsides, with beautiful little sandy bays fringed with exotic trees. Agay, with its red rocks facing a blue sea ; La Rayol, and its forests of pine and cork-oak ; Padigon, with its avenue of palms and mimosa leading from hotel to silver strand ; and the larger resort of St Raphael, are but a few examples of names as yet but little known, but which in a few years will sound as familiar as those of Nice, Cannes and Monte Carlo.

CHAPTER XI

ACROSS ALGERIA

SNAPSHOTS of people, places and things in the wild mountains and oases of Algeria, the native cities of Tunisia, and amid the sand-dunes of the Grand Erg of the Sahara, will give a more faithful picture of what I saw in these vast realms of French North Africa, where distances are measured by the day instead of by the mile or kilometre, than an uninteresting record of journeys accomplished by train, car and camel.

The city of Algiers begins at the breakwaters and wharves extending out into the Mediterranean. From these it rises in a series of blazing white tiers of houses to where the great port-holed walls of the Citadel, once the stronghold of the corsair Deys and now garrisoned by French artillery, rises over the lesser but more modern growths of stucco and stone on the slopes below.

I am standing on the broad and level quay by the water's edge, looking up at Algiers. All around me are the warehouses of a busy port, and at my back thirty ships are at anchor in the placid waters enclosed by the stone piers, or are lying alongside the docks, being loaded or unloaded by swarthy labourers from the mountain villages of the interior.

Algiers is divided into two distinct portions: there

is first the new town with its hotels, casino, big restaurants, broad boulevards, theatres and electric trams. Above this, and surrounding the Citadel, lie the narrow streets of old Algiers, where the traditional life of the East continues its leisurely course in spite of the bustle and hum of the great port at its feet.

Having climbed to the first tier by winding flights of stone steps I am not only in the broad Boulevard de la Republique, with its gaily dressed throng of Europeans, Arabs and negroes, but I am actually walking on the roof of the warehouses below. This fine thoroughfare was constructed by an English company over the old city walls, in which are the vaults and godowns of maritime Algiers. The Boulevard de la Republique contains many of the principal shops and business establishments of the city. The buildings, with iron balconies projecting from the yellow walls, have residential flats above the shops and offices. These dwellings often obtain a fine view from their windows across the busy harbour. On the landward side the pavement of this street is arcaded and affords welcome shade from the sun. Unfortunately this boulevard is particularly noisy.

That portion of Algiers which begins with the Boulevard de la Republique and extends up the hill until it merges with old Algiers is almost entirely composed of typical French business thoroughfares, such as one sees in Marseilles. The busiest street is, however, the Rue Bab-Azoun, which runs parallel with, but slightly above, the first boulevard. The shops beneath the arches of this thoroughfare attract not only the tourists who come to this town from many parts of northern Europe to escape the winter, but also the veiled Moslem women with their white

THE PECHERIE MOSQUE AND ONE OF THE CENTRAL SQUARES NEAR THE WATER FRONT—ALGIERS

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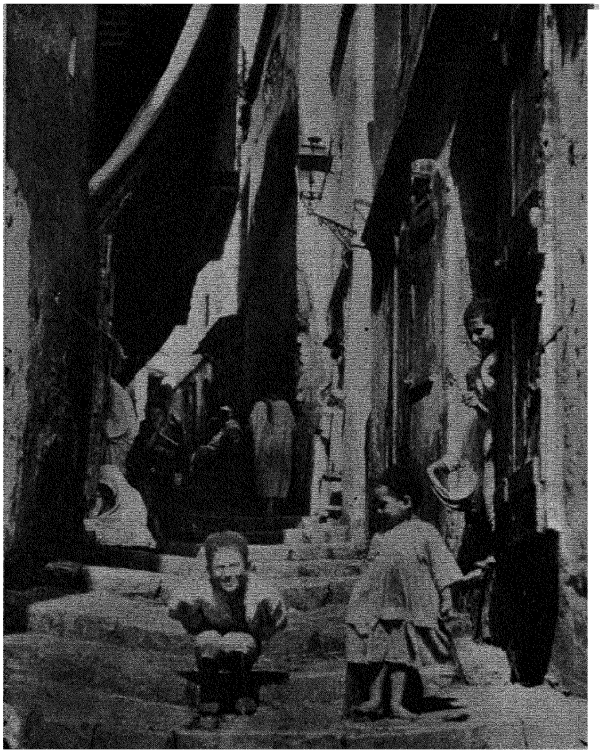
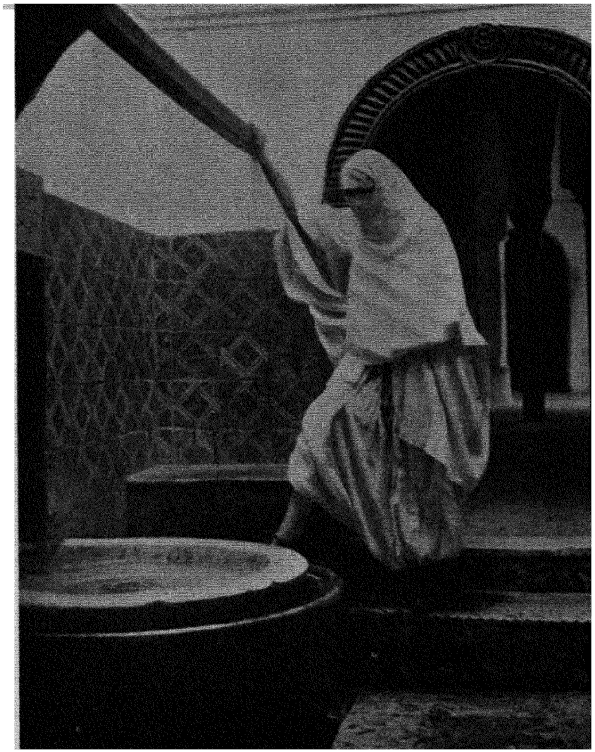


A STREET IN THE OLD ARAB TOWN—ALGIERS



AT THE SACRED FOUNTAIN—ALGIERS

pantaloons, French soldiers in blue and rusty red, nondescript Oriental men wearing the inevitable tarboosh, and ragged Kabyles of both sexes who seem to be the hewers of wood and the drawers of water in this capital of Algeria.

By way of the Rue d'Isley I climbed to Mustapha Supérieur, a fashionable residential suburb on the hills 600 feet above the city, and then returned to the Place du Gouvernement, a typical French square surrounded by administrative offices, in which the great White Mosque of Djama el Djedid looks almost out of place. It is here that the principal hotels of Algiers are situated.

In order to avoid climbing the seemingly endless flights of stone stairs one must take either a street car, in which there are both first and second class compartments, or else a carriage and drive up the long slopes which lead from one portion of the city to another. However, in spite of a strong dislike to climbing steps, I ascended a large number of these and emerged in old Algiers.

Far too narrow for the passage of wheeled vehicles, the alleys in this lofty part of the town are a maze of semi-dark passages, over which the houses project so that it is only possible for a narrow beam of light to find its way into the gloom below. Tiny cave-like shops line these steep and narrow streets, but I found little of interest in old Algiers. There is a certain fascination for the newcomer to the East in the evil-smelling and dim Street of the Devil, with its turbaned men and white-gowned women, and in the narrow stairway-streets leading up from level to level. To the uninitiated the little semi-dark cells, in which native carpenters, jewellers and leather-workers make

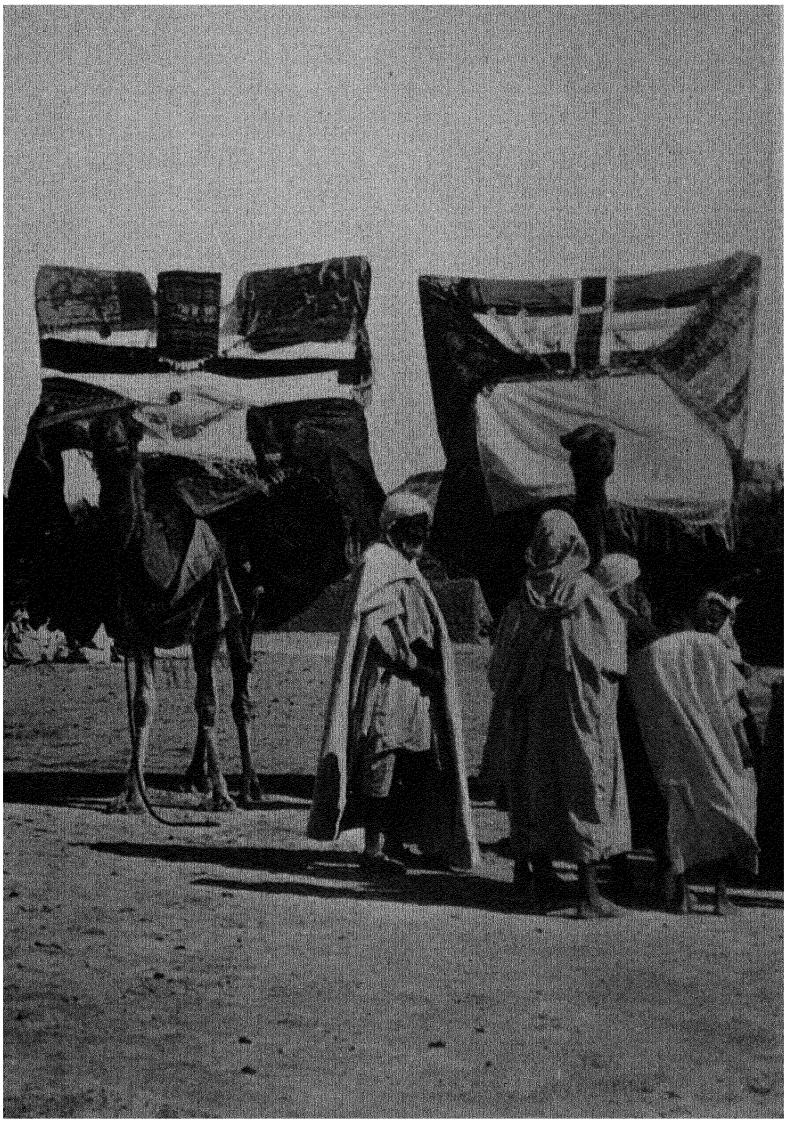
their quaint inlaid tables, filigree silver, and saffron or scarlet slippers, offer the lure of novelty and mystery, but to anyone who knows the great teeming bazaars of other worlds—for the African Orient is not that of Asia, and the Orient is not the East—old Algiers is but a relic of the past, maintained largely for the tourist and the native labourer in the city below.

Climbing still higher I reached the Citadel, with its mosque, now a French church. Over the entrance gate there is a tower in which the piratical Deys once received their prisoners and sentenced their criminals. Hanging from its windows is a chain upon which the heads of both infidels and malefactors were often exhibited as a warning to those entering this corsair stronghold.

Here, at Ghardaïa, just over 400 miles due south of Algiers, and on the edge of the Grand Erg—the region of the moving sand-dunes of the Sahara—I am in one of the seven pyramidal cities of what is known as the M'zab, the queer land of the Quakers of Islam.

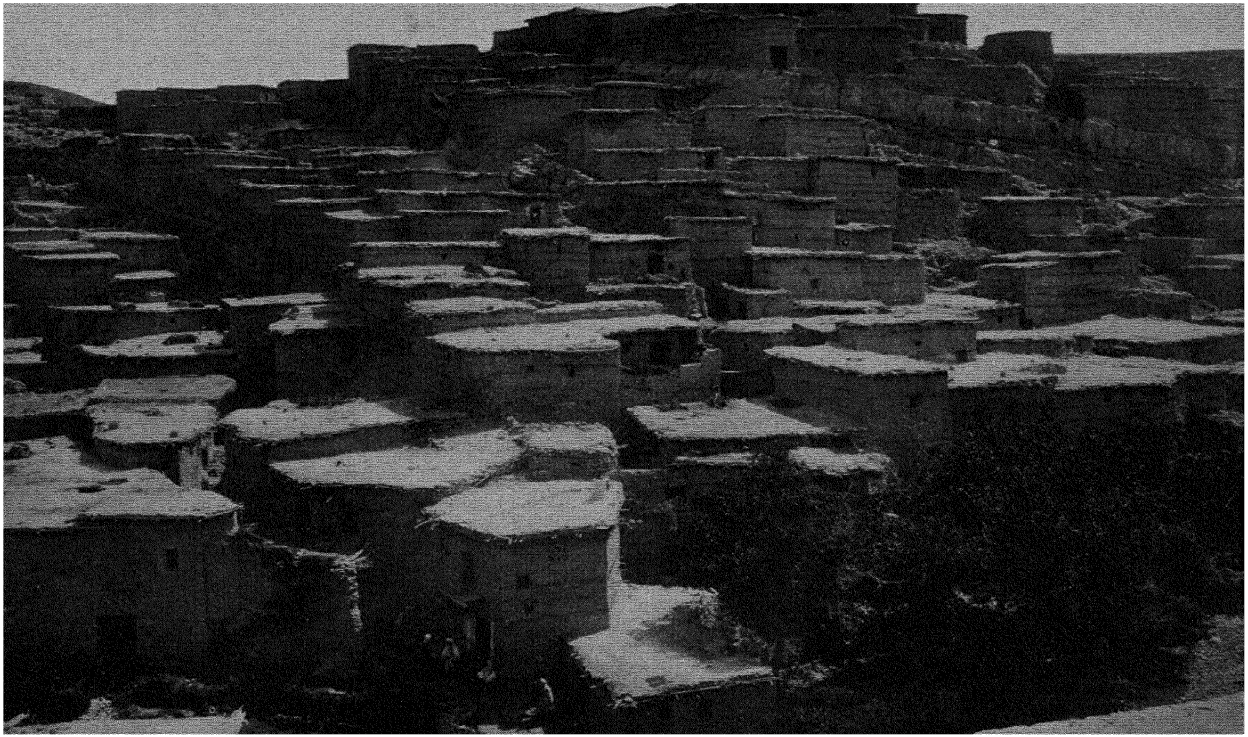
Persecuted and driven from place to place in former years the Mozabites, a curious sect of Berber origin, eventually found sanctuary in a line of small oases in the northern part of this great desert. Being of unorthodox belief, they had been for ever at war with their more rigid neighbours, and so decided to place the desert around them as a means of protection.

These Berber people journeyed into one of the most cruel countries of the world and made of it a land which floweth with milk and honey. A French writer has described the sagacious and thorough way



CAMEL TENTS

In these Brightly Coloured Tents on the Backs of Camels,
Women of the Harem perform all Desert Journeys.



A TYPICAL BERBER TOWN OF THE M'ZAB COUNTRY

these tribesmen draw the vital water supply from the earth for themselves and their crops as the " Miracle of the M'zab." In this sandy region water is seldom found much above 300 feet, and it is from such a depth that these people obtain their supply and distribute it by canals. What this means will be better understood when I point out that there are seven cities, surrounded by 200,000 date palms, and inhabited by 40,000 people.

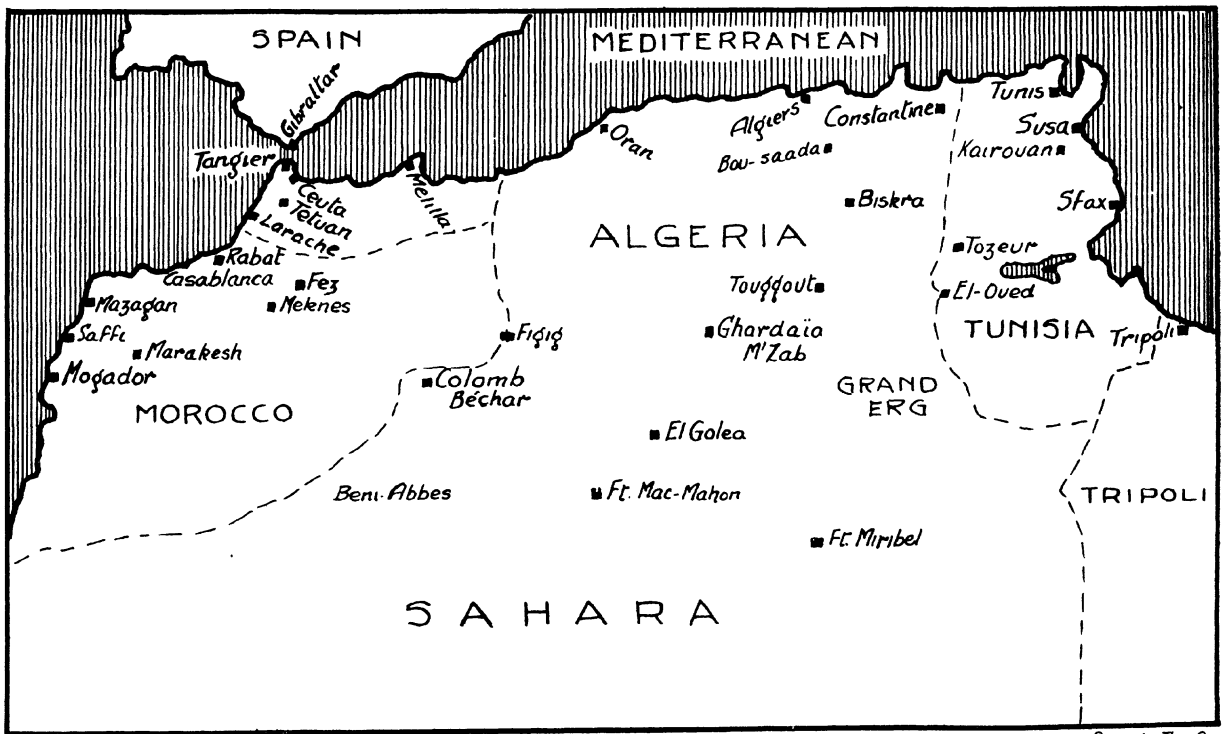
Looking around I see fruit trees, trailing vines, and a sea of palms thriving by the ingenuity and labour of their cultivators. Upon every five trees the life of one of these queer people almost entirely depends. The Quakers of Islam are peaceable and industrious, and there is so little crime among them that they are allowed by the French authorities to police their own towns, while the military force in the M'zab consists of only a few native soldiers under two French officers.

The most important of the seven towns is Ghardaïa, which rises in the characteristic pyramid fashion from the surrounding desert. It is actually built on one of the great sand-hills and culminates in the single minaret of the mosque. Each of the seven towns is constructed in exactly the same manner, and the flat-topped houses are built of the desert sand made into sun-dried bricks. Few, if any, of these dwellings are provided with either gardens or courtyards, and they appear to be huddled together on each side of the streets, partly roofed by arches. In these habitations there are no windows, only narrow slits let in the light and air.

One of the most curious tenets of this queer religion is that no woman between the ages of fifteen

and fifty-five shall be allowed out of the house in which she lives. From this it may appear that the Mozabite men are mere jealous tyrants. This, however, is not the case. On questioning one old lady who had earned her emancipation, I was surprised to find that she ridiculed the idea of the women of her race being compelled to submit to what can only be described as life-long imprisonment in a house where there is scarcely enough light even to discern objects or colours. Apparently they accept willingly both seclusion and imprisonment in return for the creature comforts which the whole Islamic faith is supposed to assure for the female sex.

Ghardaïa struck me as a town where the life of every inhabitant, from the cradle to the grave, is made subservient to religious laws of an almost patriarchal character. There is no oppression or even pressure brought to bear on any of its adherents. A proof of this is to be found in the fact that the young men of the tribe usually wander away from the seven cities, even going as far as Algiers, in search of work. Their ambition is to make sufficient money in order to return and settle down for the remainder of their lives in one of these palm-oases of the Sahara. I was told by a sheikh that there is a law which adjures a Mozabite man to return to his native town once in every two years; and that no Mozabite woman is expected, under any circumstance, to leave the M'zab, either as a child, a widow, or when she has reached an age entitling her to the freedom of the open air. These people are kindly and hospitable, and they have made of their desert home a veritable garden.



ALGERIA—MOROCCO—TUNISIA

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CHAPTER XII

FANTASY AND FACT IN THE SAHARA

ALL around the surface of the desert is broken by glittering magnesite rocks and tufts of camel grass. It is called the *bled*, and I am crossing it in a little white train on the way to Touggout, the so-called " Capital of the Sahara." Patches of mist appear and vanish mysteriously along the horizon, and in their place come shining lakes of blue water and domed cities. Even when viewed through binocular glasses these mirages of the Sahara seem real enough for the brief space of time that they remain stationary. Then the " City " disappears, while a line of palm trees is forming elsewhere with bewildering exactitude. I have seen the mirage of the Arctic in very high latitudes, where non-existent rocky islands have appeared in the Greenland Sea ; and the " looming " of the Newfoundland coast is yet another form adopted by this curious phenomenon of heat, cold and refraction.

Slowly a line of walls and minarets, crowning a low sand-hill, came into view in the seemingly clear distance. I watched it assume definite shape and finally a warm brown colour. Here, surely, was the finest mirage I had ever seen. The reason for this I attributed to the passing of the *bled* and the presence of the undulating dunes of moving sand, rippled by

the breeze, which proclaimed the beginning of the real Sahara Desert.

Suddenly my eye caught two motionless figures of military appearance mounted on tall trotting *mecharis*, silhouetted like statues on a distant sand-dune against a golden sunset. Was this also a mirage? Then I saw the long legs of the camels move, a light trail of smoke-like dust float up into the air, and the figures had dropped behind a ridge of sand.

Feeling somewhat mystified I glanced again in the direction of the walls and minarets. They had not dissolved into mist but were aflame in the deep orange glow of the westering sun. The valleys of sand between the tall, light-splashed crescents, some of which must have been over 100 feet high, were already veiled in purple shadows, and I realised suddenly that these great walls enclosed the desert city of Touggout.

The capital of the Sahara is built entirely of sun-dried mud, and its tunnelled streets are formed by the second storeys of the adobe houses being built over the narrow passages and supported by the trunks of palm trees split into halves. The object of this curious form of construction, which renders the streets not only semi-dark but in places musty smelling, is to give protection from the fierce rays of the desert sun.

At first I could scarcely see my way about in these pipe-like alleys amid a jostling crowd of natives, which included not only Berbers and Taghis but a hundred different Arab peoples. Every flash of sunshine through the slit-like roof, or when passing from one street to another, blinded me for several minutes, and caused me to collide with swarthy figures in white

and beggars in rags. Then I realised why it was that the sunny side of any open space was shunned, and I followed the example of a French soldier, wearing red trousers, blue jacket and tall red cap—a most uncomfortable dress in the heat and glare of the desert—and crossed into the shade, however much farther round it might take me, and when this was impossible, shielded the eyes with my hand. I learned afterwards that this soldier was one of the famous Foreign Legion, a patrol having come in from the desert farther south.

While exploring the highways and byways of Touggout I came across such a medley of costumes and peoples that only an ethnologist who had made a study of the Sahara could possibly have classified them. There were tall men with elaborate straw hats, Jews with long black curls, and white-robed Arabs. Most curious of all, however, were the Tuaregs, or veiled men of the Sahara. Very few of these fierce people come as far East as Touggout. The area of desert which they inhabit lies more towards the Moroccan frontier, in the Grand Erg between Beni Abbes and El Golea.

Only a few years ago these veiled desert warriors were the robbers of the Sahara, descending upon caravans and murdering and looting with callous indifference. Now many of them are employed as camel police, and range far and wide over the great sand-sea of North Africa. The Tuareg never discards the white, black or blue veil, which is wound round the nose and mouth and across the forehead, so that only the eyes are visible. There is, however, something in the carriage of the Tuareg which proclaims him a warrior.

I had come to Touggout in order to cross a part of the Grand Erg by one of the specially constructed desert cars of the Transatlantique Company, which, with the aid of the Foreign Legion, has been mainly responsible for opening to travellers the Central Sahara, far beyond the limits of the railways. The night before leaving this mud city I was taken by a French officer outside the walls into the oasis, and, by the light of a blazing fire of palm fronds, witnessed a *m'bita*, or the peculiar and barbaric body contortions, which are called dancing by the women of the Ouled Nail—the nautch-girls of the Sahara.

We glided away from the palms of the Touggout Oasis in our modern ship of the desert—a three-ton, twelve-wheeled Renault desert car, complete with guides, stores and equipment. Our destination was the town of Tozeur, nearly 200 miles distant, across the undulating sand hills of the Grand Erg. These dunes are often several hundred feet high, and take the form of a ridged crescent with its horns turned away from the prevailing wind. Even the lightest breeze blows the fine crystalline dust up the windward incline and eventually rolls it over the top. Up to a point which is determined by the area of their base, these hills steadily increase in height, and simultaneously they creep slowly forward, swallowing up everything which obstructs their path. Broadly speaking, the winds of the Sahara are circular, and therefore these dunes move slowly—very slowly—in a long succession of waves over this vast area of North Africa.

The sensation of motoring over the desert is

peculiar. Directly the firm track is left the car seems to slide down the slopes of one dune and up the next. It is not unlike a slow form of tobogganing. This cross-desert journey, which occupies ten days by camel caravan, can be accomplished in three days by desert car. For hour after hour we moved over the mighty waves of sand with their surface rippled by the breeze. The view from every crest was of a heavy sea which had been suddenly arrested and turned to golden sand. The mirage, which had hitherto confined itself to the horizon, now came closer, and a calm blue sea continually receded in front of us. In mid-desert we passed a caravan. The camels, with their high saddles and gay trappings, were knee-deep in the mirage water. Long caravans are now seldom seen, but here was one with the balloon-shaped tents of striped fabric perched across the back of the camel in order to protect from the glare of the sun the women of these Bedouins.

Towards sunset we caught a brief glimpse in the mirage far ahead of the palm-oasis of El-Oued, for which we were heading. This appeared along the horizon like an island floating in the sky. Then came the magic hour when Nature paints the desert with such vivid colours. The car came to a standstill on the summit of a huge sand-dune, which must have been fully 400 feet high. With the stopping of the engine the curious stillness of the Sahara became suddenly emphasised. Not the faintest sound was astir in the air. Far away on the sand-rimmed horizon a ball of orange flame was dropping slowly towards the distant hummocks of sand. A rich golden flush caused the Grand Erg to resemble a tossing sea of iridescent fire. Slowly the colours

changed to a pink glow, which seemed not only to tinge the sand but also to form a roseate mist in the air itself. Every sandy hollow was now lightly veiled in purple, while the tops of every crescent caught the copper glow from the westering sun.

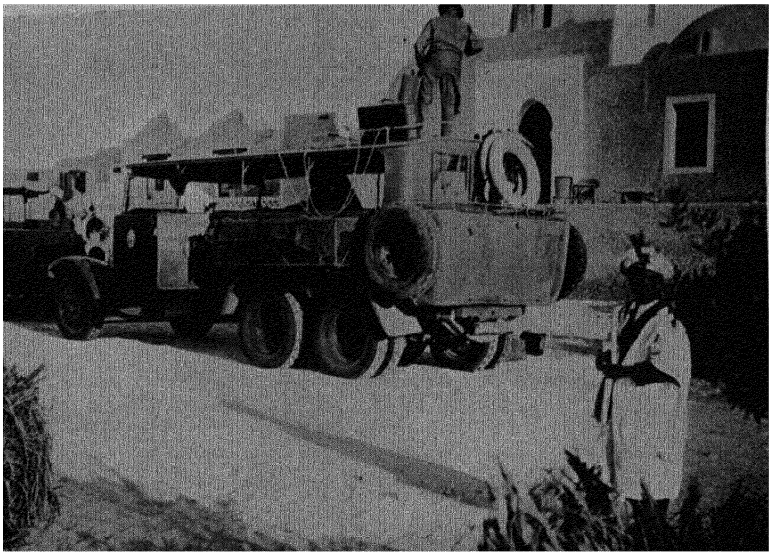
CHAPTER XIII

CITY OF A THOUSAND DOMES

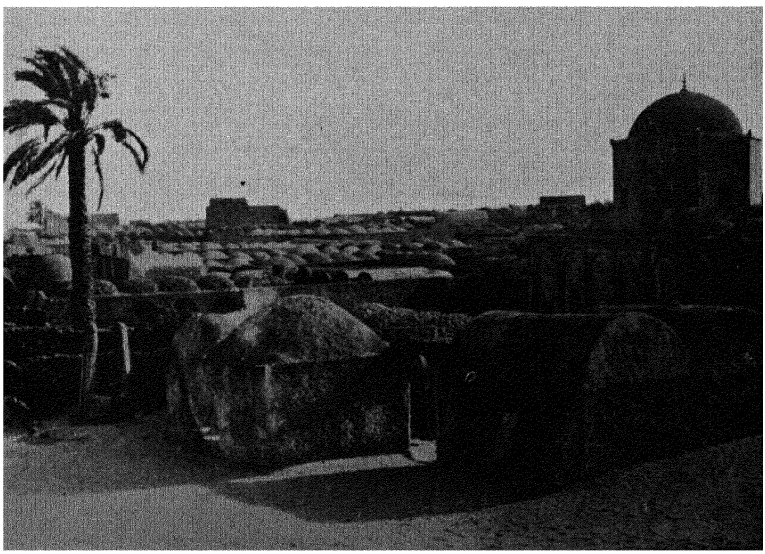
JUST before nightfall we entered the oasis of El-Oued, with its palms in a series of patches among the ridges of sand. Here there is a small desert hotel, and on the following morning I awoke in the " City of a Thousand Domes." A typical town of the Souf Desert, El-Oued is fantastically Oriental, and is built entirely of mud. Each house has its *Koubba*, or low white dome, and the view over this sun-baked town resembles a plain covered with gigantic white beehives, divided into groups by low walls interspersed with palms. As far as the eye can see, stretch the gleaming hundreds of semicircular *Koubbas* of El-Oued. Here, also, the streets are a succession of dark tunnels, and life is even more crude and barbaric than in Touggout.

While passing along in the half-light of these tortuous thoroughfares, with clouds of sandy dust enveloping passers-by almost to their knees, a stray gleam of sunlight would every now and then shine on the polished barrel of a rifle, held loosely in a swarthy hand, or upon the hilt of a dagger amid the white folds of a *burnous*. Many of the natives in El-Oued carry old-fashioned weapons of some sort, but there is no gleaming forest of spears such as I afterwards saw in the sûks of the Central Sudan.

Around this mysterious city, and even growing in the open spaces between the houses whenever their roots can reach sufficiently far down to obtain even the slightest amount of moisture, are thousands of palm trees, which yield the transparent golden date known as the *deglet nour*. Whether performed for my benefit—as news of a white stranger travels rapidly in all Eastern bazaars—or if it was an everyday occurrence, I cannot say, but while among the open booths I saw a crowd gather round an Arab man and boy. The child was stripped to the waist, and the man drew a long thin sword from an elaborately decorated case of scarlet Moroccan leather. After gazing fixedly at the boy for a few seconds the old Arab thrust the shining blade through the skin and flesh of the child's shoulder. No sign of pain was visible on the boy's face, but his lips were firmly compressed and his eyes were expressionless—most curious thing of all, no blood flowed from the wound, and when the sword was withdrawn I examined it carefully and found only a faint trace of scarlet on its sharp edge. On the child's shoulder there was a thin blue line on the brown velvet skin. It may be that the sword was thrust through an old incision in the flesh which had long ago partly healed, much as an ear-ring is inserted into the pierced lobe. I was told, however, that these Arabs of the desert have a way of making themselves quite immune to pain, and that children are brought up to exercise their will so that all physical discomfort can be mastered by one supreme mental effort. This may sound fantastic, but elsewhere in the heart of Africa I came upon corroborative evidence that something of this kind is successfully practised.



MODERN SHIPS OF THE DESERT LEAVING EL-OUED



THE THOUSAND DOMES OF EL-OUED

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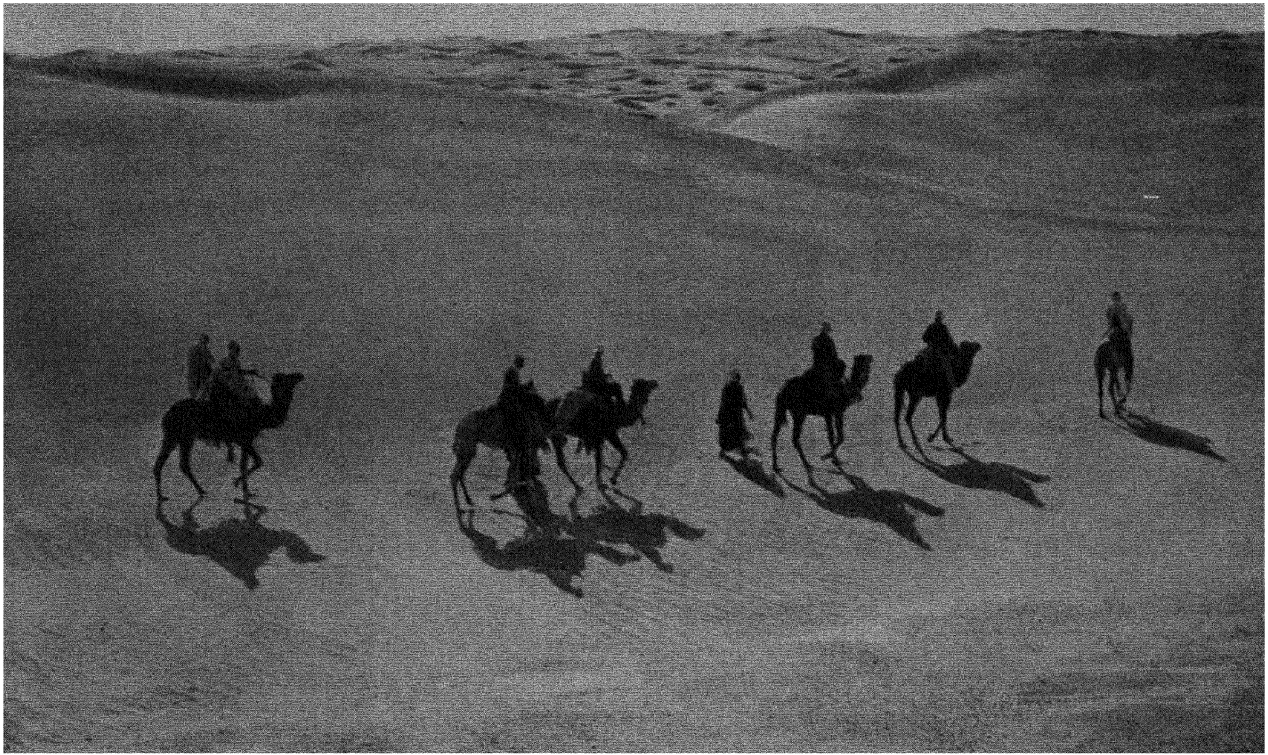


CAMEL CARAVANS IN THE GRAND ERG

During the journey from El-Oued to the oasis of Tozeur, with its 200,000 palms, we passed over nearly 100 miles of the great Souf Desert, seeing not a living thing during the whole time. Immediately after sunset there occurred the delicate and momentary "green flash," which comes with the last rays of the dying sun. Curiously enough, I had seen this same phenomenon in the watery wastes of the South Atlantic.

A common mistake is the assumption that rain never falls on the desert. About two days before we crossed to Tozeur there had been a heavy storm of wind which had whisked up the sand. A considerable shower of rain had followed, and there were now patches of white broom and other tiny flowers, immediately awakened to life by the damp hand extended from the heavens towards the parched earth in which the seeds had slumbered for countless years.

Hereabouts in the Sahara there are quite a number of small oases, and at Tozeur I left the desert car and made my way by a rickety little train through a deep winding gorge in one of the southern spurs of the great Atlas—the gateway of the desert—to the oasis of Gafsa. Here I saw Arab women tattooed all over their arms and legs. They wear quantities of crude native jewellery, and bathe in the warm springs of water which rise up from the ground. The old Roman baths still exist, and into these the native boys will dive in order to recover coins thrown in by the onlooker.

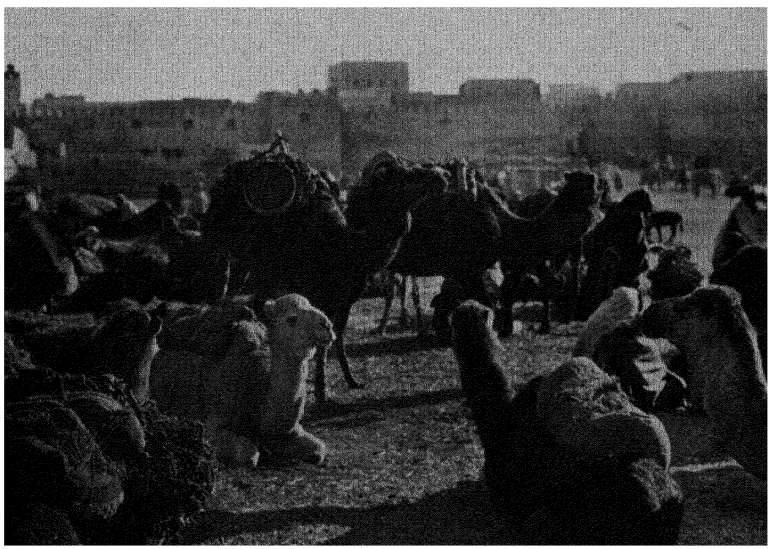
At Sfax I was again on the shores of the Mediterranean, and exchanged the little desert train for an open touring car, which was to take me to the Holy City of Kairouan. The ancient town of Sfax, which

is in Tunisia,—I had crossed the frontier between El-Oued and Tozeur,—is surrounded by loop-holed walls in an excellent state of preservation. So closely compressed are the streets inside, and so full of coloured humanity, that movement was at times difficult, and I found myself beneath the yellow teeth of a snarling camel or being rubbed by the sore flanks of a line of donkeys. Close to this busy town is the great Roman amphitheatre at El Djem, which is almost as large and is certainly in as good a state of preservation as the Colosseum in Rome. This vast ruin stands high, like a grey ghost of the past, on a desolate plain. At Susa I descended into the Christian catacombs, and gazed at the beautiful mosaics of its many mosques and buildings, which depict in coloured stone scenes of bygone days.

Crossing a bare, sandy plain I reached Kairouan, the Mecca of North Africa, which was founded by the famous Arab general, Sidi Okba, in A.D. 670. Up to the year 1881, when it was captured by the French, few infidels had entered this holy city of the Mohammedan world, which is encircled by a lofty crenellated brick wall. Although there are eighty-five mosques in this city of domes, minarets and flat-roofed Arab houses, its greatest attraction is the Grand Mosque of Sidi Okba with its marvellous Hall of Prayer. Kairouan is the only town in the whole of this land where the stranger, if he is an unbeliever, after obtaining an order from the French civil authorities, is allowed to enter the mosques.

Inside Sidi Okba I stood in the midst of 200 columns supporting the arched roof. Each of these pillars is of different coloured marble, taken from the pagan temples of Sbeitlon and other Roman

INTERIOR OF THE GRAND MOSQUE OF SIDI OKBA—KAIROUAN



THE CAMEL MARKET—SFAX

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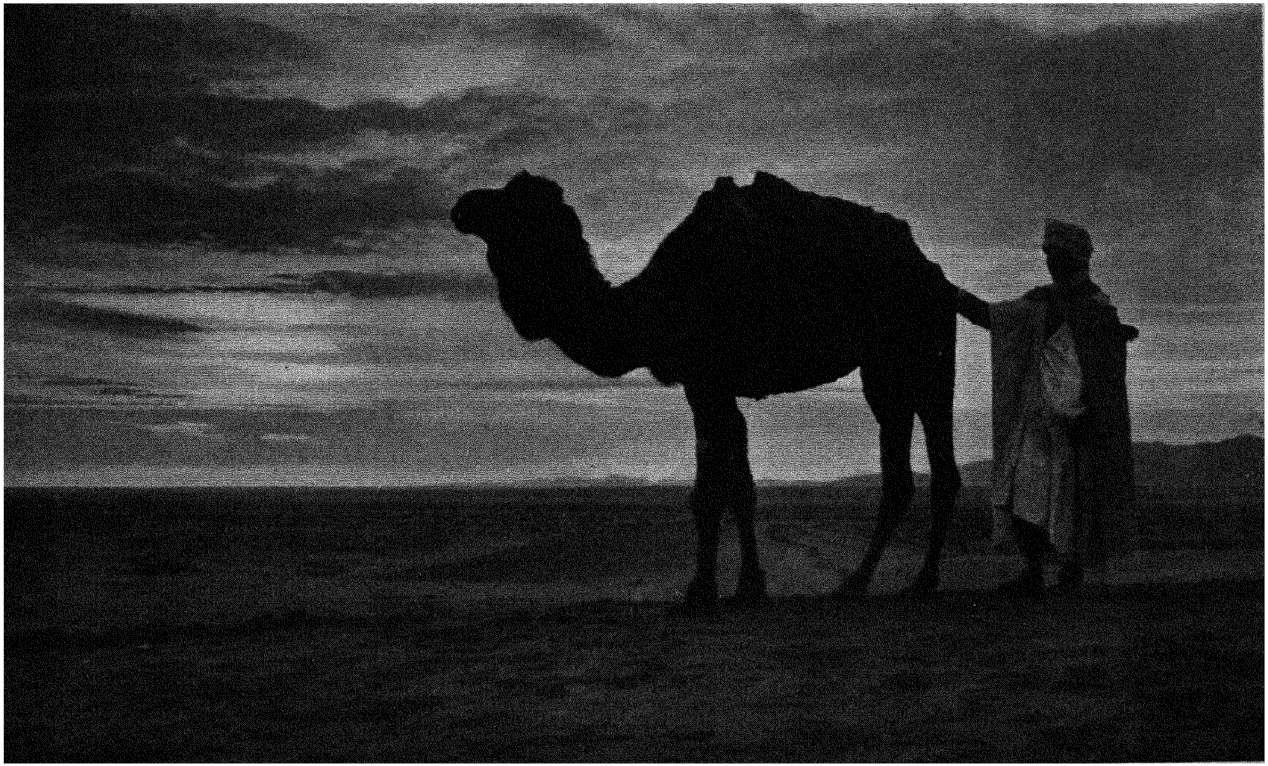


SUNSET OVER THE SAHARA DESERT—BISKRA

towns. Exactly how these immense columns and capitals were moved to Kairouan is almost as great a mystery as the transfer of stone by the ancient Egyptians for the building of their superbly coloured temples and tombs on the banks of the Nile. The Great Mosque at Kairouan has seventeen aisles of Moorish arches, from which hang exquisite mosque lamps of beaten brass, inlet with coloured glass. Although the tile work, the carved wood pulpit, and the screen which divides the space reserved for the veiled Arab women from the remainder of the Hall of Prayer, are both interesting and unique, there is little else to add to the attractiveness of the interior besides the beautiful architecture. Another holy place of Kairouan, which is quite as beautiful as that of Sidi Okba, because in it may be found many fine pieces of stucco and tile work, is the Mosque of the Barber.

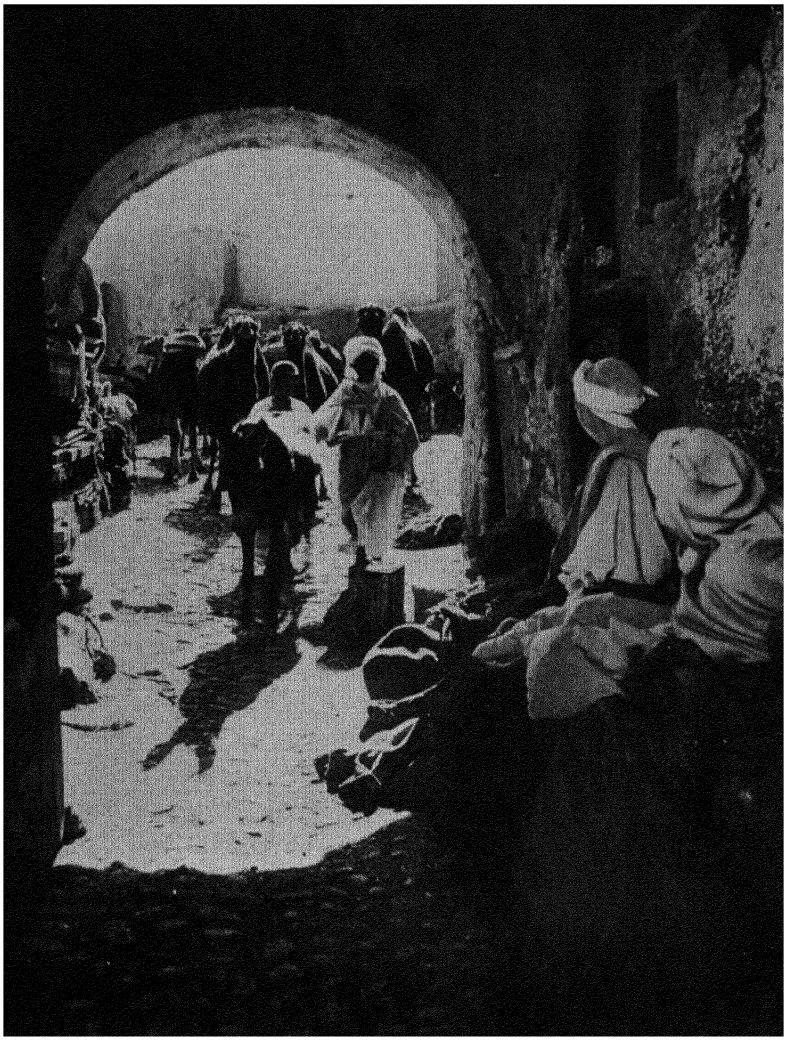
In a city like Kairouan, to which many people are attracted by its eighty-five mosques and ninety *Zaouias*, or praying places, and its indefinable atmosphere of the African East, combined with proximity to Tunis, the little port of Susa, and the Mediterranean, it is but natural that the booths of its stucco streets should be gay and even gaudy with coloured silks, carpets, leather-work, and aromatic scents, but they cannot compare with the covered bazaars of the great city about seventy-five miles away.

CHAPTER XIV

IN TUNIS

TUNIS, behind its five miles of landward wall, is both a city of the Orient and a winter resort of Colonial France. Its population is cosmopolitan in the extreme, but its bazaars are more interesting than those of any other city that I know in French North Africa. The European quarter, by the edge of the lake, contains some fine hotels and boulevards. There is a casino, which is made peculiarly seductive by a theatre and restaurant adjoining the *salle des Jeux*. Here it is possible to witness some farce or revue, eat and drink during the performance, and between the acts to stake either large or small sums of money on the Wheel of Fortune—or misfortune, as the case may be.

It is, however, in the great white Moslem city behind the gigantic wall where interest really centres. Here the East comes close to the Mediterranean littoral. The 80,000 Tunisians who dwell in these crowded streets are more fanatical than their co-religionists of Algeria, and they are allowed a wide measure of liberty by the French authorities. The mosques of old Tunis are closed to foreigners, and it is inadvisable to attempt to enter any of the religious buildings in this essentially Oriental city. Here are the covered-in alley-ways of the native bazaar, which



TYPICAL STREET SCENE—ALGERIA

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MARKET SCENE—TUNISIA

I entered from a point not far from the whitewashed streets surrounding the Citadel.

Imagine a labyrinth of roofed streets stretching away in all directions until lost in the subdued light which comes in only through grated holes high up near the whitewashed stone of the ceiling. These vaulted streets have arches supported by hundreds of pillars, many of which include beautiful capitals. They are the spoils of old Carthage, and the white marble has been painted with coloured stripes to suit the more gaudy tastes of the Arab population. In these passages there are miles of open-fronted booths, which, from the outside present so many colours and so much silver, gold and tinsel, as to be dazzling even in the subdued light. Enter one of these shops and examine the rich silks, the embroidered jackets, and the gold thread displayed so lavishly by the corpulent merchant in red tarboosh and black coat, unctuous but crafty.

In the bazaars of old Tunis each trade seems to occupy a section, or street, and I passed from that of the weavers into one where the air was thick with the perfume of jasmine, attar of roses, sandalwood, and stephanotis. Tiny gold and silver phials, curious glass bottles, and even the essential oils from which these scents are made, can be seen and purchased in this street of heavy odours. Then I came to the booths of the coppersmiths, and here found not only this metal beaten and turned into every conceivable shape and form, but also watched the native smiths at work on gold and silver, which they were inserting into designs of ivory and enamel.

In the street of the booksellers I spent many hours examining some of the old and new illuminated texts

in their quaint covers of tooled and coloured leather. It was here that I came across a wonderfully illuminated Koran which now reposes in my library. In the street of tailors there is an early morning auction of both new and second-hand clothing, but I preferred to carry home a little packet of verbena with which to enjoy a scented bath. Tunis is certainly the city of perfumes. Everything that one handles, eats or drinks, whether it be books, silks, Turkish delight, coffee or tea, seems to exude the concentrated aroma acquired by years of contact with the sickly floral extracts beloved by the Oriental.

Nowhere in these bazaars is there a fixed price. The shop to which one's dragoman inevitably leads the way is that from which he obtains the greatest percentage of commission. It is useless to seek to avoid this form of touting, for every bazaar in Tunis seems to be full of boys and men who earn their living in this way. They are prepared with a hundred and one tricks to outwit the newcomer. I noticed one little urchin who followed me for miles, and when I eventually entered a shop he managed, somehow, to squeeze in ahead of me, and boldly proclaimed that he had shown me the way. I did not argue, because the Jew shopkeeper would pay the commission, and I offered him only a third of the price he asked for an exquisite casket of scent contained in globular bottles of cut crystal.

In the Bardo Museum I inspected with admiration the beautiful mosaic floors which have been collected from the Roman remains scattered over Tunisia. These form a picture gallery of life in North Africa 1,700 years ago. It was not until the seventh century that the Arabs overran the country and destroyed

many of the Roman temples and converted others into mosques. In this museum there are rooms filled with Roman sculpture, bronzes and pottery, and others displaying Arab arts and crafts.

About twelve miles from Tunis stands all that remains of mighty Carthage, not the city built by the Carthaginians, which was entirely destroyed over a century and a half before the coming of Christ, but the great capital constructed about 100 years later by Julius Cæsar and Augustus. In spite of the vandal hands of Arab builders previous to the French occupation, it is still possible to discern, among the chaos of stone, the ruins of theatres, houses and tombs, and the great cisterns which supplied the city with water. Everywhere there are fragments of pottery, coins and pieces of marble. Itinerant vendors still offer for sale Carthaginian coins which were used in the Punic city built over 2,500 years ago. The elliptical arena is 280 feet long and 100 feet wide, and is now many feet below the level of the ground. Only a few of the tiers of seats are visible, but the dens for the wild beasts and the prisons which held the Christian martyrs can still be seen. I spent a considerable amount of time in the museum at Carthage, where all the more intimate things used by both the Carthaginians and the Romans are to be seen. Razors, spectacles, surgical instruments, scissors, needles and jewellery of many kinds caused me to realise the truth of the saying that there is nothing new under the sun. In one place I noticed a polished metal mirror, in another the rouge pot used by some Carthaginian girl twenty-five centuries ago. Even locks of hair, ear-rings, and complete skeletons with the jewellery still clinging to their bones have been discovered in

the Carthaginian and Roman cemeteries. I could not help thinking of the old Prussian king's remark—"What a little thing is life!"

It seemed strange to pass in a short half hour from the gay Oriental bazaars of old Tunis, past the lake with the pink-winged flamingos, and to stand in the midst of broken columns and arches which formed a world-famous city, with a cultural and artistic life not altogether dissimilar from that of the present day, which existed, however, long before the great capitals of Europe had even attained the dignity of rude towns. Where will the great centres of human life have their being in the forty-fifth century A.D.?

CHAPTER XV

THE NEW ITALY

I AM in the new Italy, a country which has only just awakened from the sleep which has lasted since the days of ancient Rome. That it has been made bright and new, clean and energetic, anyone who remembers the old Italy and walks the streets of its cities to-day, travels in the carriages of its trains, contrasts the new pride of achievement with the old slovenly apathy, and regards with unbiased mind the changes which have come over the face of this land, both on and off the beaten tracks of travel, must unhesitatingly agree.

Although with the ways and means by which this great change has been accomplished we are not concerned here, it is quite evident that there has been less dangerous destruction of individual ideas, ideals, enterprise and ambition—the mainsprings of national progress in the long run—under the Fascist system of post-war reconstruction than has been the case under its antithesis in the new Russia. One has produced, by raising the average ability and reward of the individual, a people of greater self-reliance and hope ; whereas the other has created, by lowering this same average, a mass-minded populace almost incapable of individual self-supporting activity and devoid of healthy incentive and ambition.

On arriving in Italy an Englishman or an American is rather liable to look with astonishment upon the number of men in uniforms, not a few of which are, to the practical mind, more than a little grotesque. In Genoa, where I arrived by sea from Marseilles, the arcaded streets, the well-filled shops, and the general air of prosperity, were beginning to make an impression as I climbed leisurely up from the picturesque and well-organised harbour to the clean and really beautiful thoroughfares at a somewhat higher level. Then I turned into a large restaurant and found green uniforms, blue uniforms, gold braid, and a plethora of cocks' feathers in many hats. For a moment it appeared that the city was an armed camp, that hundreds of soldiers were living a life of comparative idleness. But I looked again with a more discerning eye. Only a few of the uniforms present denoted the military career, and I remembered the desire of almost every Government official in the countries of southern Europe to be encased—for that is what it amounts to—in the approved and locally understood garb of authority.

There were customs officers from the port; railway officials from the station, one of whom had a gold-braided shako of which even a victorious general would have been proud; and members of Genoa's Fascist organisation, doing a spell of voluntary duty. So far as I could distinguish there were, amid this mass of uniformed men, only a few officers of artillery; and it seemed that these were regarded by the others as somewhat superior beings. This, however, might have been imagination.

Then I noticed the prompt service of the waiter, the cleanliness of the glasses, cups and saucers, the

floors and even the counters. As a mere tourist in a foreign country it is often difficult to prevent either an inferiority or a superiority complex from coming suddenly to the fore according to one's environment; but either one or other extreme was quite unnecessary, for every request brought an intelligent and cheerful response. Here, indeed, was a change from the Italy I remembered both before and soon after the Great War, when either a slovenly fulsomeness was employed to cover imperfections, or else there was a truculence denoting the early stages of Bolshevik propaganda.

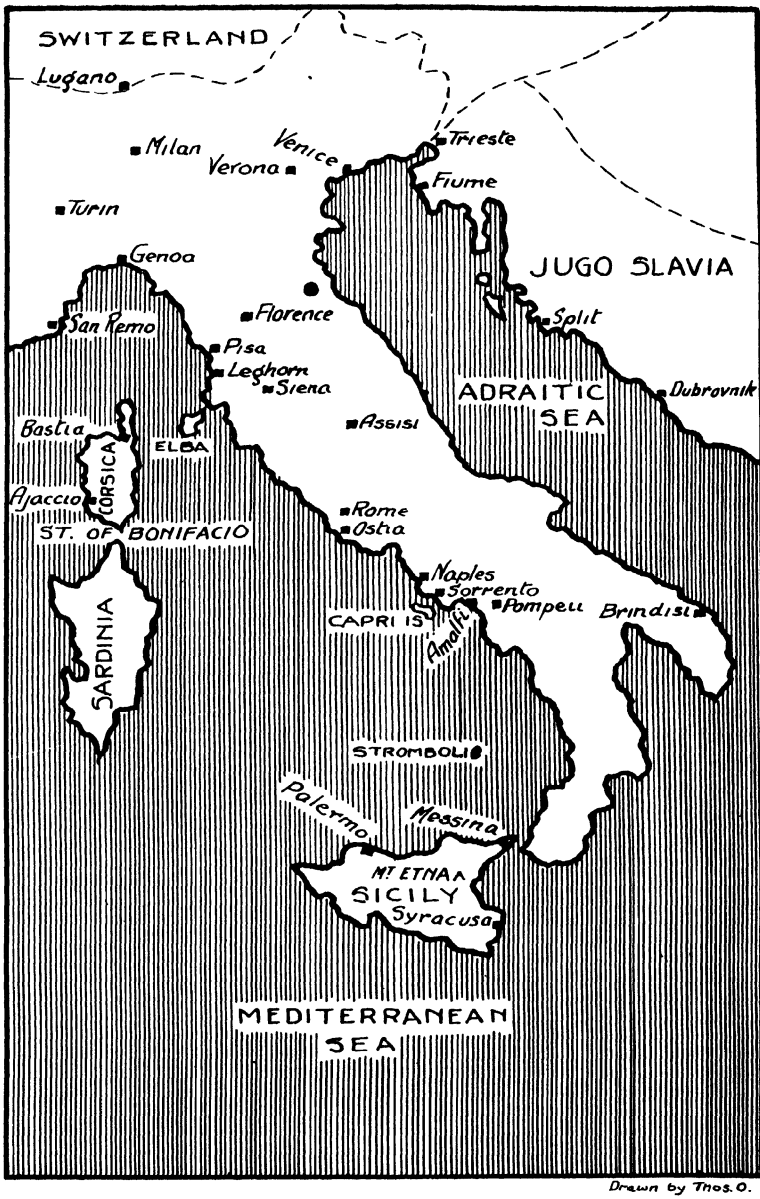
It so happened that my first day in Genoa under the new régime was a Sunday, and I employed it wandering about the streets and squares, casting a critical eye over this great Italian seaport which was bathed in warm sunshine beneath a blue sky. There was, however, a decided chill in the atmosphere, especially towards sunset. Genoa was enjoying its day of rest in a quiet, sober way. Families were strolling about the streets or driving in cars or taxis —these latter were all of national manufacture, and were in every way the equal of the private car. In contrast to what I had noticed during a previous visit, every one, both rich and poor, seemed well dressed.

There was no sign of poverty, although I noticed that some of the slum areas around the docks still existed, notwithstanding the enormous improvements effected in the main shopping thoroughfares and business quarters. I walked over a large section of this busy seaport and was never once assailed by the unsavoury odours of which I had a vivid recollection in past years. At the beginning of the twentieth

century these were as much a characteristic of Genoa as they are now of the water-fronts of Oporto and Lisbon.

Mechanical efficiency, or perhaps it would be more correct to say *efficiency in mechanical products*, has become almost a fetish in the new Italy. One sees efforts in this direction on every hand, but not all of them are as successful as might be, owing to insufficient regard being paid to practical utility. I watched a big new liner come in from the sea, and although at first glance she appeared a veritable floating palace, having the eye of a sailor I could not help noticing the display of palms and flowers in impossible positions, which had quite evidently been put out when the vessel had reached sheltered waters. There were also an undue number of glass windows in positions peculiarly exposed to both wind and sea. All that one observes in these southern countries is, however, largely a matter of temperament. Uniforms reflect the desire for colour and easily acquired authority; shades which would appear bright in contrast with the sombre lights and landscapes of the North, blend more easily with the vivid hues of Nature beneath the Italian sun; and the modern tendency, the world over, is for mechanical efficiency to be somewhat subordinate to appearance and consequently earning capacity.

There are two Italys interwoven and living side by side. One is the rejuvenated industrial and agricultural country of to-day, and the other is the old Italy, the land of art and culture. In the city of Milan, on the plains of Lombardy, one sees this intermixing of the new and the old more, perhaps, than in such purely artistic and tourist centres as Venice and Florence. Milan, to-day, forms the



ITALY

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business centre and the principal railway junction of Northern Italy. Yet it is also important on account of its monuments. It rises out of a vast level plain, intensively cultivated and with many large industrial establishments, but for a centre-piece has the world-famous cathedral, a monument of art and the greatest building in Gothic style existing in Italy. Anyone who values a magnificent view should toil up the flights of stone stairs which lead to the roof, and there, amid the forest of spires, enjoy the panorama of a great city which fades into the sunlit plains of Lombardy. Just below the vast stone nave there is the treasury of this cathedral, and those people who are interested in ecclesiastical jewels and plate will here obtain the authentic thrill occasioned by the sight of antique splendour.

Milan has other sights besides its cathedral, and one of these is its great square and its magnificent arcade, although one seldom hears this latter proclaimed as an attraction of the city. Another beautiful spot is the courtyard of the richly ornamented Palazzo Marino ; but decidedly the most conspicuous building in Milan is the vast Castello Sforzesco, with its valuable museums. After a round of visits to notable churches of almost every century, and to art galleries with pictures which varied in beauty and workmanship from those of Leonardo da Vinci, I found myself in the cemetery. Not being of a morbid disposition I do not usually seek such places, either for the contemplative wandering which is customary among southern people, or as indicative of the emotional art of the Latin temperament. The cemetery of Milan is, however, the most magnificent burial ground of its kind, and many of the monu-

ments therein are exquisite piles of white marble beautifully carved. It is a feature of the city, like the cathedral and Da Vinci's " Last Supper " in the Santa Maria delle Grazie ; and when these have been seen one's own inclinations can be followed without that feeling of guilt for something omitted that is the bugbear of the complete traveller.

The use of a guide-book by strangers, other than art students, should be strictly prohibited in most Italian cities, because if one religiously followed the advice given therein little or nothing of the *real* Italy would be known after a tour of many months' duration through this delightful country. For this reason, in Milan, as in many other cities, I purposely avoided spending days in the hot and stuffy atmosphere of innumerable churches, museums and palaces, preferring to choose just the outstanding and the unusual, rather than to acquire an indigestible mass of names, dates, architectural features, and objects of art. It seemed more important to know something of the general aspect of this country and the life of its people in the twentieth century. So, after reading in a little guide-book that no one should miss seeing the collections of the Ambrosiana and of the Poldi-Pezzoli Galleries, and finding out that I had visited this town too late in the year to witness one of the fine operatic performances in the great Scala Theatre, I took train for Verona.

Here is a city with decades of art and centuries of history, girt about with picturesque hills and the babbling waters of a river flowing swiftly down from the mountains to the Adriatic. But Verona is not only a town with a wealth of artistic buildings and historical associations, it is also a populous city, picturesque and lively in appearance, with nearly

100,000 inhabitants. Reaching the centre of the town at the sixteenth-century Porta Nuova Gate, I drove along the straight Corso Vittorio Emanuele to the Piazza, which is literally encompassed by monuments and palaces of the most ornate period of the Renaissance. Here, however, is the great Roman Arena, built towards the end of the first century. It is the next largest after the Colosseum in Rome, and being constructed of Veronese marble, it is in a good state of repair, especially the interior; so good, in fact, that lyrical entertainments are occasionally given within its walls, where there is accommodation for 30,000 people.

By way of the gay little shops in the Via Mazzini I reached the multi-coloured Piazza delle Erbe, where, surrounded by ornamental palaces interspersed with houses of the most humble kind, and guarded by two mediæval towers, there was a dense mass of large white umbrellas to protect the buyers and sellers in this open-air market from the burning rays of the sun. In this square, which must surely have been laid out for the artist, one can observe the everyday life of the people, often obtaining a momentary picture of a gaily attired peasant girl shopping at an open booth. On a little column, raised above the sea of white umbrellas, is the Lion of St Mark.

Among the many churches and palaces, all of which are rich in works of art, there is one, in the Via Cappello, with a dark brick façade and an ancient balcony on the top storey, which is of more than ordinary interest. According to tradition it is the house of Juliet, Romeo's pathetic and unhappy betrothed immortalised by Shakespeare. Penetrating still farther into the heart of this city, I discovered

the Arco dei Leoni, constructed in the first century A.D., and forming one of the gates of the town in the days of Imperial Rome. Beneath the picturesque Church of San Fermo Maggiore there is a subterranean chapel which contains the famous Torriana Sarcophagus and the Brenzoni Mausoleum. What makes the art of Italy somewhat monotonous is its insistence upon the Biblical scenes of a stereotyped character. After a few days in the country one has seen so many representations of such subjects as the Madonna and Child, the Baptism of Christ and the Martyrdom of various saints, that the average human being begins to ask himself, quite apart from the artistic merit of these productions by dead artists, which of the contradictory scenes is likely to be the most accurate. Three buildings which represent in a characteristic manner the different periods of this city's history are the Citadel, the Della Scala Royal Palace, and the Fortress of the Venetian Republic. In this latter building there is a particularly good collection of works by the most celebrated masters of the Veronese School. Here also is the River Adige, which flows through the town as well as round it, crossed by a most picturesque battlemented bridge.

Amid some beautiful trees on the outskirts of the city, and protected by the arches of a Romanesque loggia, there is a sarcophagus in red Veronese marble. It is the tomb of the romantic Juliet, and near by is the sculptured head of Shakespeare. Among the attractions of this town are the beautiful cypress trees and statues of the Palazzo Giusti, the old Roman Gate of the Tax-gatherers, and the somewhat ponderous cathedral of Verona, built in two different periods, the twelfth and fifteenth centuries.

CHAPTER XVI

VENICE FROM A GONDOLA

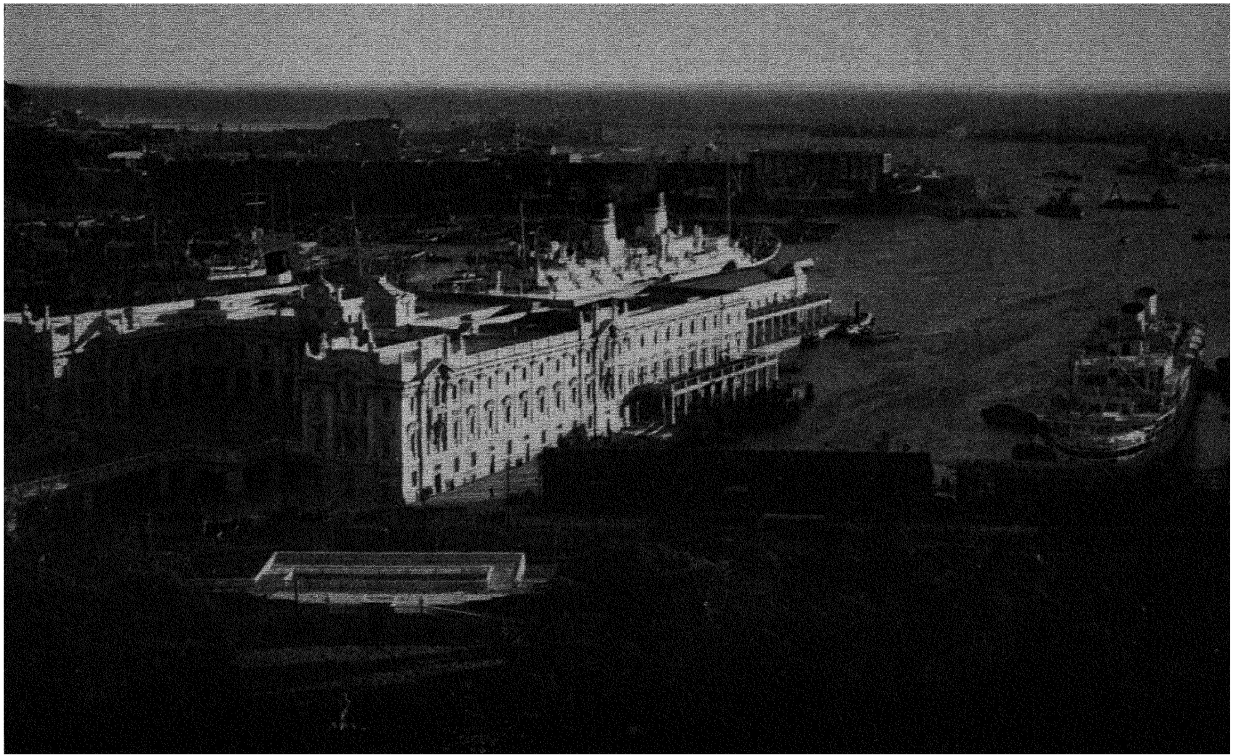
FROM old-world Verona to gay, light-hearted and flaming Venice is only a short journey, but in order to accomplish it one has to pass over a bridge four kilometres long, which leads to the island upon which, like a fantastic mirage, Venice rises from the waters of its lagoon. One morning I awoke with the strong rays of a southern sun streaming into the room through the canvas of a blind. Below my window was the picture made by the Grand Canal, with its gay gondolas and bordered by the long line of irregular but brightly decorated houses. The blue of an Italian sky was reflected in the waters, but an early mist still obscured the distance. It was a scene which I am never likely to forget, because it was too early in the day for the light to show up any imperfections, and my window was too high above the tranquil waters for the still air to be polluted by those noxious odours which do so much to detract from the unique beauty of glorious Venice. I watched the sun rise higher, and the reflections of the churches, towers and splendid marble palaces shorten on the placid water.

As every one knows, the main thoroughfares of this city, which is built on many islands joined by bridges, consist of a perfect maze of canals. In the

place of carriages and carts there are gondolas and barges, while pedestrians circulate—literally—in a labyrinth of narrow streets, the typical Venetian *calle*. The general appearance is decidedly strange, and it takes some days to become accustomed to stepping into a gondola for even the shortest journey. Of the many sights of this water-city there are two of incomparable beauty, the Basilica of St Mark's and the Palace of the Doges.

Perhaps the most noticeable thing during a first day in Venice is the absence of noise and of the starting and stopping of motor-car engines during one's progress from place to place. Gliding over the waters, past the old mansions of the Venetian aristocracy of long ago which border this Grand Canal, chief artery of the city, there came into view the Dogana di Mare, or old Customs House, where a golden globe, supported by Atlas, shone in the sunlight. The canal then opened out into the wide basin of St Mark.

Alongside the Molo of the Piazzetta were many gondolas moored by their poles, which were topped by Gothic lanterns ornamented with discs of stained glass. On the old Molo there are two columns, one surmounted by a roaring bronze lion and the other with St Theodore and a crocodile. They were erected in 1172. Behind these two monuments, on one side of the Piazzetta, is the library built by Sansovino, and on the other the Doges' Palace, resting its pink and white walls on numberless marble arches. Beyond, there is the blue façade of the Clock Tower, where two Moorish figures mark the hour by striking a bell, and the Quay of the Slavonics, which extends to the green expanse of the Public Gardens.



VIEW OF CITY AND PORT—GENOA

Facing page 112—2.

THE VICTOR EMMANUEL MONUMENT ON LEFT—ROME

The Palace of the Doges has been aptly described as a magnificent architectural manifestation of the power of the Venetian Republic during the height of its maritime splendour. The façade, with a double Gothic loggia and polychrome marbles, the great courtyard of honour adorned with statues and covered with flagstones on which historical events are depicted, and the great interior containing paintings by the most famous of old Italian artists, combine to make a symbol of magnificence and wealth.

Entering this pompous residence of the *Serenissima*, one sees the Giant's Staircase, so called because of the huge statues of Neptune and Mars. The hall of this world-famous palace is a vision of paintings, stucco, gilt and relief work. The largest room is the Sala del Maggior Consiglio, which is almost entirely covered by what is said to be the largest picture in the world—Tintoretto's " Paradise "—which is about twenty-one feet high and seventy feet long. Then there are the cells, with lead-covered roofs, and the pits, or subterranean dungeons. Joining the Doges' Palace to the ancient criminal prison is the famous Bridge of Sighs.

The Basilica of St Mark's occupies the end of a square in which is also situated the Royal Palace. Commenced in A.D. 838 and finished in 1073, this splendid cathedral was built in various styles with the Byzantine predominating. It is in the form of a Greek cross, with three naves and five large domes. Tiny fragments of very old marble form the massive floor. The golden angel on top of the belfry serves as a navigation mark, but the tower is quite modern, as the original, built in 912, collapsed on July 14th, 1902. The new tower was completed in 1912. The

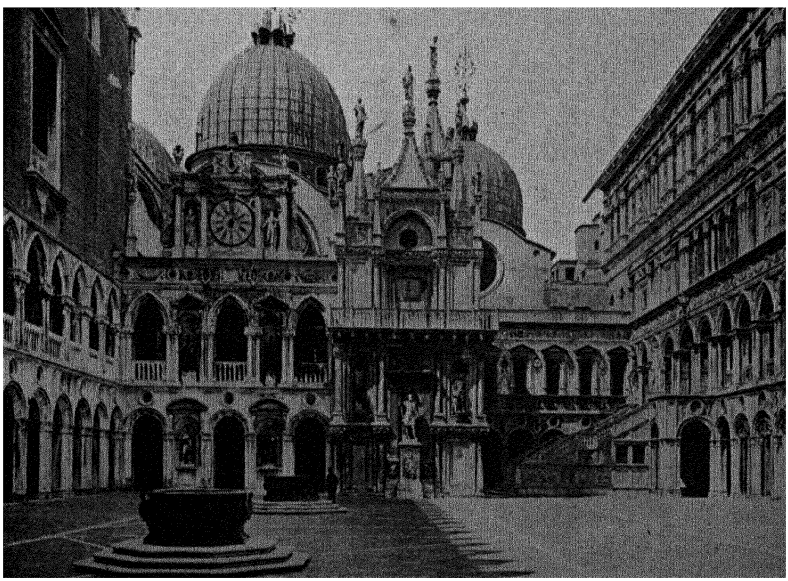
pigeons of St Mark's are fed by almost every visitor to Venice, and, like those of St Paul's, are very tame. In the interior of this great church there are treasures of considerable value, including many objects of gold studded with precious stones.

In the square on the right of this cathedral there is the celebrated Clock Tower of Mauro Coducci. During Ascension Week, statues of the Wise Men, painted in ancient style, pass and bow, preceded by an angel, before a statue of the Madonna and Child. The churches, palaces and monuments of Venice are far too numerous to describe them all in detail here. While moving about the castello quarter I chanced upon the old Arsenal, from whence the galleys went out to gain glory and treasure. There is an extremely interesting Naval Museum in this building, which contains many souvenirs of the ancient Venetian navy.

To cross the Grand Canal in the very heart of the city one passes over the famous Rialto Bridge. This, I am sure, from the battery of cameras which always seem to be focused upon it, must have been photographed more times than any other structure of its kind in the world. On the Rialto, or high bank, Venice becomes itself. Here in the San Polo quarter are the characteristic markets installed near the colonnades and the ancient houses. In another part of the city there is the Depôt of the Turks, who traded with Venice subsequent to the year 1721. Farther along the Grand Canal one comes to the great Church of St Maria della Salute, which was erected because of a religious vow made during the great plague of 1630.

On Giudecca Isle, which was formerly the Venetian

THE RIALTO—VENICE



COURTYARD OF THE PALACE OF THE DOGES VENICE

Facing page 114—2.

ON THE GRAND CANAL—VENICE

CLOCK TOWER IN ST MARK'S SQUARE—VENICE

Ghetto or obligatory residence of the Jews, now stands the Church of the Redeemer, built in 1592. On the third Sunday in July a religious ceremony is held here, which is celebrated with great public rejoicings. This Feast of the Redeemer always draws large crowds. It lasts until daybreak, and during the night there is a display of fireworks and the singing of popular songs. Everywhere Venetian lanterns shed their soft light into the luminous blue of the Adriatic night. Illuminated gondolas move across the basin and canals in large numbers, carrying the many people who wait to see the sun emerge from behind the Lido.

After cruising about for some days on the inner canals of Venice I came to the conclusion that many of the smaller waterways afforded far more picturesque scenes than those of the main artery, and that the broad Lagoon presented the best views of all. The beauty of this Venetian lake is greatly enhanced by the number of small islands rising above its surface. Here, for example, is St Michel's Isle, which is used as a cemetery. Above the yellow stucco walls dark green cypress trees raise their lance-like tops in long avenues, which run between the tombs of many generations of Venetians. Farther away is the Island of Murano, where the art of glass-making has been transmitted from father to son, and has attained wonderful perfection. Not far from this artistic glass factory enormous quantities of coloured beads are continuously being made. On the Isle of Burano there is a famous lace school, although the principal portion of the population is engaged in fishing. There are islands everywhere; on Torcello there is a cathedral in Italo-Byzantine style of the seventh

century. Then there is St George's Isle, on which another fine old church is perched.

Lying like a breakwater between the Venetian Lagoon and the open sea there is an island, seven miles long and from a quarter to half a mile wide, that has become known to the world as the Lido. It is covered by tree-bordered avenues and gardens, with magnificent hotels. Its beach of glorious sand is lined with gay tents, and during the summer season it is alive with bathers in the shallow sea and in the brilliant sunshine. Its characteristic feature is the division of the beach into sections, each of which is the private preserve of one or more of the famous hotels. It is this atmosphere of exclusiveness which has given to the Lido its cosmopolitan bathing season. This island is sunlit and spacious, for nowhere is it crowded except, perhaps, in the sea during the morning bathing hour.

CHAPTER XVII

SEEN IN TUSCANY

TUSCANY, which I have crossed on the way to this great art-loving city of Florence, has always enjoyed a certain economic prosperity, and this has increased in recent years on account of the progress made in agriculture, industry and commerce. "Cereals are intensively grown in the valleys and plains; the vines that produce the celebrated wines of Chianti and Montepulciano flourish on the hills; olive trees are also widely cultivated for the very fine quality of the oil which is produced, such as that of Lucca; whilst cattle are reared in the great meadows and extensive woods of the mountain districts. But although agriculture is the main factor in the economic welfare of the region, both large and small industries have attained considerable importance and are still being developed."

"The Island of Elba, with its wealth of iron ore, supplies the blast furnaces of Portoferraio and Piombino; there are large deposits of mercury on Monte Amiata, and valuable copper ores are mined in the Province of Grosseto. Leghorn, the largest harbour in this region, is also an important shipping centre and its yards are well known. There are large metallurgical works in the Valley of the Arno, which is one of the wealthiest districts. The glass industry

flourishes in particular in Pisa and in the Chianti neighbourhood. The chemical industries, although of lesser importance, are by no means negligible, especially as regards the extraction of boracic acid from the blow-holes in the Volterra district, and the preparation of chemical manures and caustic soda. Finally, mention must be made of the extremely important and prosperous marble industry of Carrara, with its quarries in the Apuan Alps, which ranks as one of the principal industrial activities of the region. The white statuary marble, the red *cardiglio*, and the white Carrara marble are world-famous, and are exported either in unworked blocks, or in flags, or else in the finished state after having been worked up in the studios which have been established at Carrara and at Massa. Amongst the minor industries which are of considerable importance to the economic life of Tuscany, those which are of traditional interest are wool, pottery, porcelain, wrought iron and alabaster."

Surrounded by delightful hills, Florence, the Tuscan capital, is the cradle of the Italian language. It has enjoyed intellectual leadership since the days of Dante Alighieri and Boccaccio. In the realm of art it has also held a place of importance, having known Raphael, Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, Botticelli and many others. The architectural wonders rank among Italy's most priceless treasures, and to-day, in this beautiful city, there is an atmosphere pregnant with the art of centuries.

The Piazza della Signoria, the old centre of Florentine life, still forms the heart of the city and is dominated by the imposing Vecchio Palace. Here also is the Uffizi Gallery, one of the richest museums

in the world. The warm southern colouring, the red-tiled roofs, the white and pink walls, the green balconies, and the vivid lights and shades, combine to create innumerable little pictures of exquisite beauty.

Perhaps the most characteristic structure is the Old Bridge, arched and roofed, with quaint, brightly painted little dwellings overhanging the river. The Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore is one of those marvellous, much-ornamented Italian buildings which words cannot properly describe; and this applies to the many palaces, museums and churches which have been embellished by generations of artists and sculptors. The one most picturesquely situated is undoubtedly the Palazzo Pitti, surrounded by beautiful gardens.

The principal thoroughfare of Florence is the Via Calzaioli, and it is here that one finds displayed some of the modern artistic productions of Tuscany. The headquarters of the Dante Society—known far beyond the narrow limits of Italy—are in the old palace of the Arte della Lana, but it is quite impossible to mention all the artistic treasures and societies of Florence. When I had supped to the full of these mellow relics of a glorious past, there were the soft beauties from Nature's palette to be enjoyed from the heights of Fiesole.

Not far from Florence, and still in Tuscany, is the old city of Siena. It is a typical Italian provincial town, so crowded with mediæval buildings, and so obsessed with traditions of the past as to be a little sombre, and so full of art as to be very proud and sceptical of anything that is new. To this place I went with set purpose one August day in order to witness the *Palio*, a unique Sienese festival.

From seventeen different quarters of the town came a representative of the people of that *centrada*, or section of the community. Each was a horseman of no mean ability and was dressed in a costume of the Middle Ages, which varied in colour according to the man's *centrada*. The first event was the blessing of the horses in the local parish churches, and then followed an assembly and procession of the seventeen " Knights " from the Archbishop's palace, through the crowded streets to the broad Piazza del Campo.

This open space was filled with excited spectators. The bells of Siena's churches pealed forth merrily, drums rolled, and the procession of knights and banners performed the complicated figures of sixteenth-century flag-play. Then the horses were led out from the Palazzo Communale, the riders mounted their mettlesome steeds, and raced bareback three times round the great square, lashing their chargers with rawhide whips. The enthusiasm was extraordinary, and the spectacle terminated with wild shouts of joy from that section of the onlookers whose colours had been carried to victory in this exciting mediæval race.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE FOUR CITIES OF ROME

ROME, the centre of an ancient world, is not to-day just one city, but four. There are the remains of the imperial capital of the Cæsars, the Vatican and St Peter's, the royal and political city of modern times, and the wide-flung streets of Italy's commercial metropolis which is divided by these other entities, and so covers an area which is out of all proportion to the population of but little over 700,000.

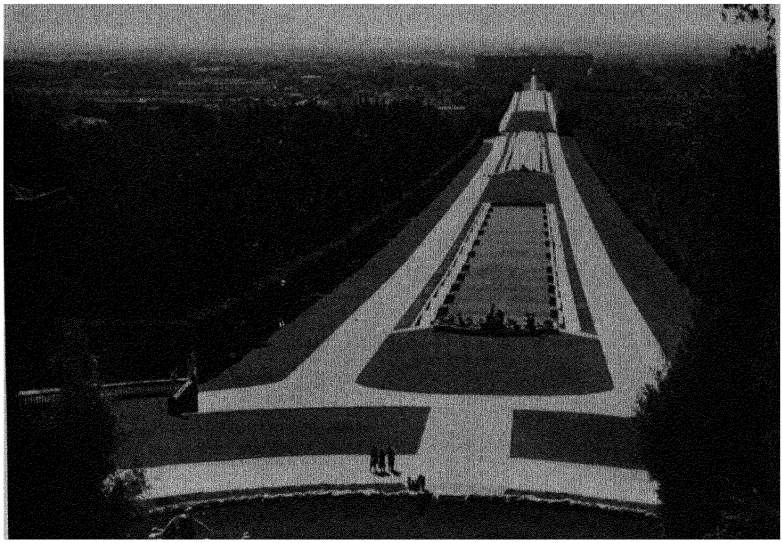
Few, except those who have devoted years to studying her, *know* the Eternal City, though many, like myself, may have wandered through her streets—among relics of the past and artistic monuments of the present. Before many hours had been spent in Rome my inclination led me to that which will for ever remain one of the great attractions of this amazing city to all in whose brain there still linger pictures of the glorious and yet infamous past as historically set out in the classics and vividly described in the romantic literature of a less introverted age.

Lying on the little plain between the Palatine and the Capitoline, two of the seven hills on which the capital of the ancient world was built some 2,500 years ago, stands the *Forum Romanum*. It consists of a great sunken space, with columns, statues, and

the remains of magnificent temples, palaces and arches, most of which have at least 1,200 years of history invisibly engraven on the stone. Here was the active centre of all things in the days when the world was young. A group of tourists stood near me having the sights explained by a monotonous-voiced guide, and I could not help overhearing the unnecessarily loud remarks of one among this party of sightseers, to the effect that he had seen "bigger rubbish heaps at home." And so will the Forum appear to all who can see no difference between one stone and another, to whom history is a closed book, and romance is confined to the pound, the dollar, a drink, or a petticoat.

To feel the spell of ancient Rome, knowledge and imagination must go hand in hand. It is not enough to have reeled off by a guide the names of a long line of emperors and a succession of dates often working backwards from the Anno Domini. A few weeks with a good history book, aided by a more picturesque and romantic story—such as that of "Quo Vadis"—will make all the difference to the thrill one experiences when standing amid the ruined walls of the Temple of Marcus Aurelius, beside the marble arch erected over 1,700 years ago to the Emperor Septimius Severus, or when gazing at the brick core of the Umbilicus, marking the exact centre of the old capital of the world.

The Forum was originally about half a mile long and a quarter of a mile wide. It was encompassed by temples and palaces, only the remains of which are visible to-day. The site on which it stands was originally a lake, drained in the sixth century B.C. in order to become the centre of civic Rome. Here



ONE OF THE NEW MOTOR ROADS—MODERN ITALY

NATIONAL FASCIST STADIUM—ROME

Facing page 122—2.

DINING-ROOM IN THE ROYAL PALACE OF THE QUIRINAL—ROME

was the rostrum from which the great Cicero, the finest orator in Rome, delivered his attack upon Mark Antony after the death of Cæsar. All great assemblies were held in this spot, and besides its many rostrums, from which spoke the city's leaders, there were shops, palaces and temples. On the north-west side of the Forum there are the granite columns of the Temple of Saturn, dedicated to agriculture, where a pagan harvest festival was held every year for many centuries before the Christian era.

In the stone paving of the Forum there are Roman coins partly melted and stuck in the crevices of the stone. Several of these coins have been covered with glass in order to protect them. The paving in which they are sunk was that of the Temple of Saturn, where the public funds were stored. On one occasion this temple caught fire, and during the transference of the coins many were dropped. These melted in the great heat and became wedged in the uneven stone. One of the most beautiful sights of the Forum are the fifty-feet-high columns of Parian marble, which originally supported the roof of the temple dedicated to Castor and Pollux, two mythical gods who came to earth mounted on white horses and led the Roman legions to victory in the decisive battle against the League of Latin Cities in the fifth century B.C. Then there is the ruined Temple of Vesta, a circular building in which a sacred flame was tended by one of the earliest female religious organisations, the Vestal Virgins. Any breach of chastity was punishable by being buried alive. These virgin priestesses of ancient Rome exercised considerable influence, and took part in all the great state ceremonies. Gladiators in the arena looked first to the Vestal Virgins for the

up or down turned thumb, which meant life or death for their victim.

Only a short distance from the Forum stands the ruins of the Colosseum. At one time this great arena could accommodate about 60,000 spectators. The encircling walls supporting the top tier of seats are over 150 feet high, and the area of ground covered by this great building is about five acres. Of its many archways, or entrances, one was reserved for the emperor, one for the patricians, and two for the gladiators. The remainder, numbering over seventy, were for the people. Huge awnings were used to shield the spectators from the rain and sun. Wild beasts on anything like a large scale were not at first included in the spectacles afforded. Subsequently, dens for these animals were provided below the level of the arena. Looking down from one of the tiers on to the great space of sand and stone, it was not difficult to imagine the scenes of ferocity, carnage and gaiety which had taken place thereon.

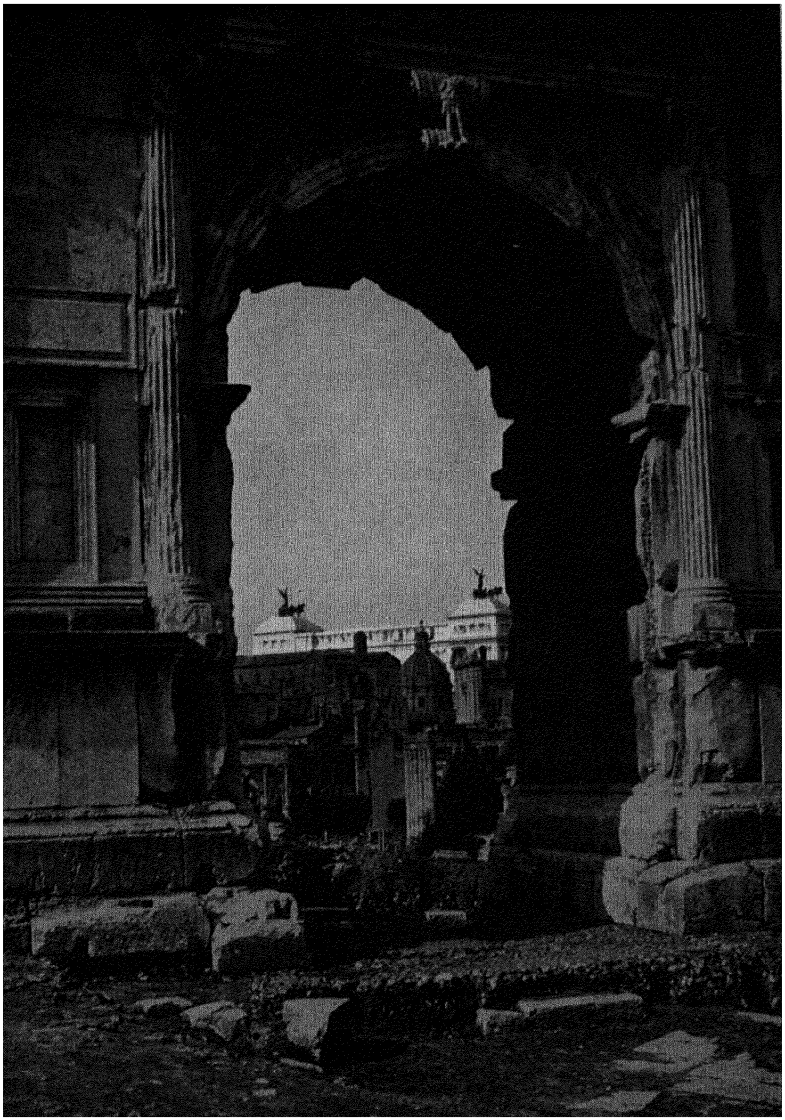
In the sun-glare of this August morning the centuries fell away. I saw the thousands of Jewish captives toiling beneath the lash to build this vast structure. I watched the populace of Rome pouring in through the great stone arches; the sailors from the galleons drawing across the great awnings, to protect the glittering array of jewelled men and women from the glare of the sun. The fanfare of trumpets sounded in my ears as Titus, "Emperor of the World" and conqueror of Constantinople, entered the great stone box with its purple and gold canopy. The gladiators in single file marched round the arena. With net, trident and short sword, fights were taking place out in the glare of the circus, and the

air was still with tense excitement or punctuated with the roar of the multitude. Suddenly the scene shifted to a later epoch. No longer were the people of Rome satisfied with mortal combat between man and man. I seemed to hear the cry, "To the lions! To the lions!" Far out in the sanded arena a group of Christians were being mauled by tawny beasts with blood-stained jaws. Years rolled by. The great Emperor Constantine mounted the throne of the Cæsars, and the followers of Christ were no longer hunted from their hiding-places in the catacombs to make a Roman holiday. For nearly 400 years after St Peter came to the Holy City, gladiators fought both man and beast in this pit of human misery. Another 1,000 years passed and I saw the builder of a new Rome taking the stone from the gaps in the great walls of the Colosseum to build palaces for the city's mediæval rulers. Market stalls appeared in this cradle of the Christian faith, and then I watched Pope Benedict XIV. bless the spots where the martyrs died and seven shining crosses appeared in the great circle—imagination would carry me no further, and I sat brooding over the things that had been.

Modern Rome is laid out very largely on the old Field of Mars, situated on the left bank of the Tiber below the seven hills where the palaces of the ancient city were constructed. The other Rome, that of the Vatican, is on the opposite bank of the river, and is most easily approached from the central parts of the city by way of the fine avenues of the *Via Nazionale* and the *Corso*. When the Ponte Emanuele has been crossed a great piazza forms the approach to the mighty St Peter's. To describe this great cathedral is almost beyond the power of the written word. In

the great nave, beneath Michelangelo's vast dome, and in the many chapels, some 50,000 people can worship simultaneously. Immediately below the central arch is the High Altar, at which only the Pope may hold service. The tomb of St Peter is reached by a flight of marble steps and is situated just in front of this central altar. For many hundreds of years the beautiful lamps in this mausoleum have been kept burning. Almost adjoining this, the largest Christian church in the world, is the little papal city of the Vatican, in which the Pope resides with his advisers and that picturesque old-world corps, " The Papal Guard." The gardens and picture gallery are particularly fine. The latter contains " The Transfiguration " and many other famous paintings.

During my wanderings through the ruins of ancient Rome I regretted deeply that my knowledge of its history and archæology was far too limited to enable me to form a connected mental picture of the city as it appeared when the victorious legions were conquering the then known world. I saw in the National Museum, which occupies the site of the Baths of Diocletian, the Venus of Cyrene, and from the Janiculum I obtained a wonderful bird's-eye view over the old and the new. I passed through the Pincian Gate into the beautiful gardens of the Villa Umberto, and I wandered from the little Church of Quo Vadis to that of St John Lateran, with its museum of Christian antiquities. On the Palatine Hill I walked amid the ruins of Roman palaces, and passed from there to the Quirinal, the magnificent residence of the kings of Italy. So intermixed were these monuments, covering about twenty-five centuries of history, that years rather than weeks would have to



THE FORUM—ROME

Facing page 126—2.

ST PETER'S AND THE VATICAN CITY—ROME

be spent in the Eternal City by one who would unravel the tangled skein of the momentous past.

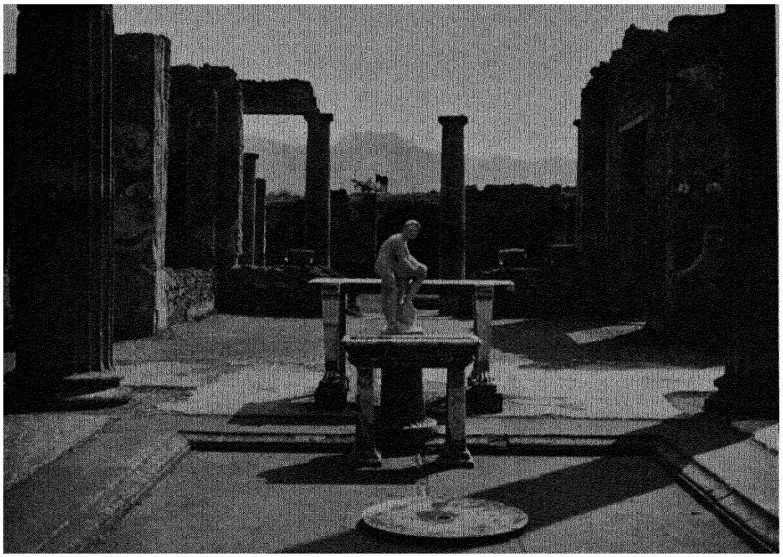
From the Italian capital I made a brief visit into the Abruzzi. Among the interesting sights of this unspoiled mountainous region of the Adriatic Coast are the festivals, religious and otherwise, in combination with the gay national costumes of the peasants. At Loreto Apruntino, every Whit Monday morning, a procession takes place which is headed by two oxen having their horns decorated with ribbons and flowers and their backs covered by scarlet damask cloths. One of these gaily caparisoned beasts is ridden by a child, dressed in white and literally laden with gilt beads. Although serving a religious purpose this little procession has an Oriental appearance in the sunny country of the Abruzzi. In Scanno, on Corpus Christi Day, lines of oxen pass through the streets, drawing tree trunks to the Church of St Francesco for a huge bonfire. In the little townships of Villalago and Cucullo, on the festival of St Dominic, a statue of this saint, entwined by snakes and vipers collected by snake-charmers during the preceding year, is carried in procession. The dresses of the people of Scanno are almost mediæval, and those of Pescocstanzo are richly embroidered and decorated with hand-made lace. Gabrielle d'Annunzio, the soldier-poet of Italy, is a native of the highlands of the Abruzzi.

CHAPTER XIX

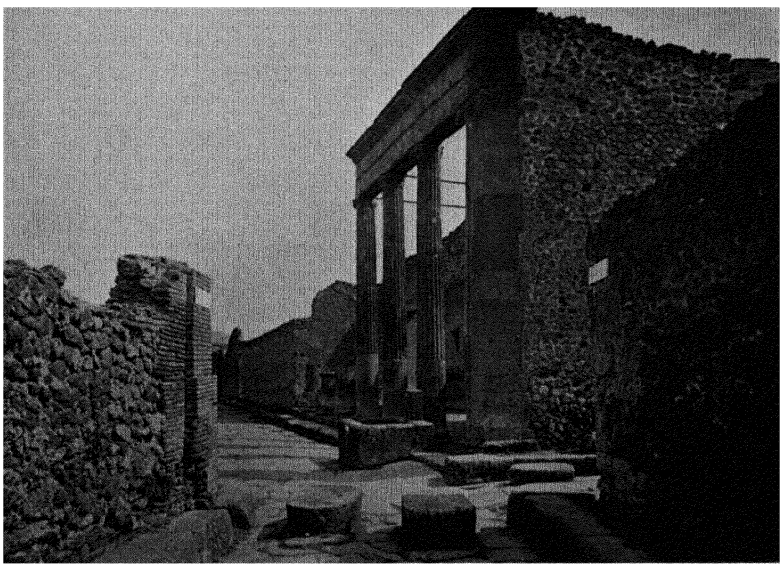
NAPLES, POMPEII AND CAPRI

THERE are many people who come to Naples knowing no other part of Italy. They are brought here by great liners, spend a few hours amid the Roman ruins at Pompeii and Herculaneum, or in climbing by funicular to the crater of the still active Vesuvius, and then depart into the merging blues of the Mediterranean Sea and sky. Many of these chance visitors are frankly disappointed ; not so much, perhaps, with the inimitable bay and the dominating gold and purple crest of the great volcano with its curling smoke cloud, as with the city of Naples itself, and they carry away to the four corners of the earth the quite erroneous impression that the beauties of Italy are greatly exaggerated. There are two things about this city which all who visit it should know.

From the heights at the back of Naples I gazed down at the miles of intricate lines denoting streets ; at the acres of sunlit stucco, brick and stone ; at the encircling arms of long breakwaters disfiguring the sapphire bay ; at the flanks of this great white, pink and green city, extending like horns around the bay, and I realised without reference to any guide-book, that the town at my feet was the largest in all Italy. It has about 860,000 inhabitants and is even more



VESTIBULE OF A ROMAN MANSION—POMPEII



ENTRANCE TO A THEATRE AND STREET—POMPEII

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A STREET OF THE ROMAN TOWN—POMPEII

populous than Rome itself. Eventually my attention wandered from the land to the sea. Two pencil-like lines of smoke were converging from the horizon. Steamers were coming in, across the Tyrrhenian Sea, northwards from Corsica and Sardinia and southwards from the Isle of Sicily. The bay was full of shipping, and fringing its shores were the wharves and warehouses of a busy port. Naples is not a garden city, it is the Liverpool of Italy.

So far I have looked at the panorama of Naples only. There are other sights, however, totally different in character. It is these which have been responsible for spreading the fame of this Italian bay. Standing on the heights of Naples it is only necessary to raise one's eyes in order to bring into the view, not just the city itself or the shipping or dock-filled waters in its vicinity, but the whole wide sweep of azure sea and green, mountain-girt shore, from the Gulf of Salerno as far as Paestum. Several little towns are perched on the side of cliffs or nestle amid the trees along the shore; others there are, faint of outline, on distant islands beyond the bay. It was here that I found the exquisite Naples Riviera, which has little more than the bright sunny climate to liken it with the great city and port in the heart of the bay. The road from Sorrento to Amalfi is without any doubt one of the most lovely coastal roads anywhere.

Naples itself is both interesting and gay, although much of its attraction for those who live in the sombre North lies in the vivid lights and shades, the gay colours of Neapolitan life, a number of fine buildings, and the relics brought from Pompeii and Herculaneum. Starting out from the Villa Nazionale, an extensive and sub-tropical garden which borders

the shore in that part of the town where many of the principal hotels are situated, I made straight for the most interesting thing in this great city, apart from the many colourful glimpses of native life. In the National Museum there is an amazing collection of relics brought in from Pompeii and Herculaneum. After having been through all the principal cities of Europe, Roman statuary was by no means unknown to me, but when it came to the eggs and bread, shown as found when excavated after the lapse of many centuries, then my imagination was so stimulated that I desired at once to visit these amazing remains of the old Roman Empire.

If there is one thing that is fatal to the understanding and, incidentally, to the enjoyment of a foreign city or place of interest, it is to allow either the so-called star-turn, or prejudice, to dominate one's desires and impressions. So I resisted the temptation of both Pompeii and the slopes of Vesuvius and turned into the Aquarium, amid the gardens of the sea front. Here was an amazing collection of everything which lives beneath the waves, not only of the Mediterranean but also of far-distant seas. It is generally considered to be among the finest collections of its kind in the world. From here I passed through the Galleria Umberto, or Great Arcade, visited the monastery and museum of St Martino, ascended Camaldoli for its view, entered the royal palace of Capodimonte, the cathedral and the catacombs for a glimpse of their interiors both grave and gay.

Great changes have taken place during recent years in Naples. Streets have been remade, housing conditions improved, and care is being given to the maintenance of parks and gardens. Post-war Naples

presents a very different aspect to the city of twenty years ago. Although this is the case, one may still see the lines of clothes stretched across narrow alleys to dry in the warm atmosphere. Many of the garments being of brilliant colours, the appearance is that of an old-world slum *en fête*. Although it has not been my good fortune to be in this southern city during the carnival season, I can well imagine the joyous scenes of light and colour which Neapolitan life would present at such a time.

It is amazing how much there is to be seen of both beauty and interest within the comparatively small area of the Bay of Naples and its hinterland. Journeying one day to Pompeii, I looked up at Vesuvius sulkily emitting smoke, and I thought of another August morning eighteen and a half centuries ago, when the same cracked earth, scorched with the heat of the sun, was suddenly rent by an earthquake, and the sky was obscured by a black cloud. Ashes were hurled into the old streets in which I stood, and there was panic in this licentious city of ancient Rome. Then, with a mighty roar, the top of this still unstable mountain was blown off, and rivers of lava, mud and ash flowed down over the countryside. In a few days this Pompeii and the neighbouring town of Herculaneum were buried beneath twenty feet of burning ashes with many hundreds of their people. I could not help wondering whether, as some Neapolitans say, Vesuvius will one day treat Naples as she did these Roman towns early in the Christian era. If so, at some long-distant date, travellers from afar will marvel, like I am doing now, at the sameness of life through the centuries.

The methods of excavation up to about twenty

years ago were very crude, but since then digging has been done with such care that objects found have either been left untouched, or else photographed and then returned to their correct positions when the work of clearing away the debris was over. In some of the houses, or rather courtyards, even similar plants or shrubs have been placed in the cleaned-out cavities which held them originally.

Pompeii is not an unintelligible mass of dead and meaningless ruins ; it still lives in an amazing fashion. One of the excavated houses has had everything replaced as they originally existed, and in the dining-room there is a meal laid out just as when its owner fled before the fog of ash and fire from the Great Destroyer. A square hole in the floor suggests that food was sent to the living-room from the kitchen by means of a small lift. Everywhere there are frescoes adorning the walls. One of these, over the doorway of a shop, shows the god Mercury stepping out of a marble temple. Another depicts a hideous god giving money to the populace. One of the finest appears to be Venus in a chariot drawn by elephants. Many of these frescoes are coloured ; and one, curiously enough, shows a man escaping from the burning of Troy carrying an aged relative and followed by his little son. It was this significant fresco which set my thoughts wandering to the future of Naples.

The impressions created by a visit to Pompeii are curious. Not only was this city provided with most of the amenities which city dwellers now enjoy and regard as of modern origin—as a sign of the advance made by civilisation—but the ways of life also must have been very similar. The baths of Pompeii are

very luxurious. In their stately way the temples must have been quite the equal of the churches of to-day. It has lately come to light that the houses were often of two storeys, and possessed balconies overhanging the streets with large front windows. That there was the same battle between good and evil is shown by the sign over a doorway declaring that "Glory shall be given to those who live honestly."

At the moment when the end of its world came to Pompeii its citizens were in the throes of an election, and the walls are defaced by written exhortations to "Vote for Claudius P. Lollius," and others, for the office of "Law-making *Dwmvir*." There are signs, too, showing that famous women recommended their menfolk to the populace; and that Roman legislators were just as prone to blow their own trumpets as those of the present day. Evidence there is that the cross-roads were dangerous even in those days, for huge bells were hung in convenient positions so that they could be struck by the whips of chariot drivers as a warning either to pedestrians or to other vehicles approaching from an opposite direction. One of the most interesting parts of the city of Pompeii, only half of which has yet been excavated, is that which surrounds the "House of the Faun," an amazing little statue in a wide courtyard.

The ruins of Herculaneum are not nearly so interesting or extensive, yet one is able to imagine with tolerable accuracy the life of the people who inhabited these towns nearly 2,000 years ago. I have wandered in the streets and buildings of many ancient cities, from Karnak in Upper Egypt, and Fatehpur Sikri on the plains of Rajputana, to Chan

Chan, the City of the Sun in the Inca-land of Peru, but nowhere has it been possible to people so vividly in the imagination the ruined corridors, streets and houses as in old Pompeii.

Guarding the entrance to the Bay of Naples on the west side are the islands of Ischia and Procida, with Capri and its enchanting grottoes on the south. The first of these islands, although larger than the others and reached in about half-an-hour by steamer from Naples, offers little of interest beyond its walnuts and its hydropathic establishment. Capri, on the other hand, is one of the dream islands of the Mediterranean. This fact proved almost as strong as the heat of Naples during the summer months in persuading me to change my temporary habitat from the mainland to this beautiful island. A motor boat transferred me in less than an hour across the blue waters of the bay, and a funicular railway hauled me up in six minutes from the little landing-place by the Grande Marina to the quaint, elevated little piazza of the town of Capri—and, incidentally, from a shade temperature of ninety-five degrees Fahrenheit to the more pleasant summer heat of seventy-seven degrees.

Capri is a queer little island, all sunshine and colour, like a jewel in a field of lapis lazuli. The old harbour is small, but a new one has been completed, and in this both yacht and liner will lie in safety during any weather. It is to be hoped that this improvement in the landing facilities will not destroy the charm of this delightful spot. At present the tiny fishing village, a bathing establishment and a number of quite picturesque hotels are all there is to detract from the rural simplicity. The little town of Capri,

surrounding its old piazza, has something almost Eastern in its steps, narrow streets, and white houses. The only other village is that of Anacapri, high up on the western part of the island. From this quiet little spot, with a few houses and hotels, the most wonderful views are obtained over the Bay of Naples.

One might live long in this little place without realising that the past was by no means as peaceful as the present. Here is the story as told to me in the island.

"From the days when palæolithic man hunted the mammals on Monte Solaro, or built his primitive dwelling and chipped his flints, Capri has been continuously inhabited. Greek and Roman, Norman and Saracen, each in turn possessed this island. At the beginning of the Roman era, Augustus, paying a chance visit, lost his heart to Capri, and raised her into the full light of history as an imperial residence. A few years later, in A.D. 26, there came to this island-goddess one, Tiberius, greatest of her lovers and most tragic figure among the Roman emperors. For eleven years Capri gave him such peace as was possible for the ruler of the world, and when he left her, it was only to die.

"In the crash of the Roman Empire, darkness descended upon the island, but she soon emerged to become the scene of many stirring episodes. For centuries the Saracen pirates were a constant peril, and the massive walls of the buildings of those days, like the fortified monastery of Materita, testify to the terror they inspired. It is remarkable what a deep impression these invaders left upon the architecture of the island, which is far more Oriental than Italian in character. There are, indeed, many spots in Capri

where it is easily possible to fancy oneself in Algiers or Palestine. At the beginning of the nineteenth century Capri played her part in the Napoleonic Wars, when, as the key to Naples, it became a bone of contention between the English and the French, who successively occupied the island and have left their ruined forts as a memorial to the struggle."

The temptation to spend idle days on the little sun-kissed beaches or in the tepid water would have proved irresistible had it not been for the many interesting and beautiful sights which this island offered. Leaving the Grande Marina early one morning in a primitive kind of rowing boat, we made our way round the coast in the leisurely fashion of the *dolce far niente* life of this little island. Passing the Bath of Tiberius and woods bright with wild flowers, we came to a remarkable submarine spring of fresh water, and then to a series of terrific precipices descending sheer into the sea and honeycombed with miniature grottoes in the process of formation. I noticed at one point, safely lodged in an inaccessible spot, a specimen of the palm said to be indigenous to the island. Rounding a point of land we entered the Blue Grotto, where even the atmosphere seemed to have absorbed some of the azure tints of the walls and sea floor of this remarkable cavern, which was famous even in the most ancient times. It is still the principal of all the sights of Capri.

Although there are green and white grottoes, none can compare with this sapphire marvel in the cliffs below Anacapri. All the steep little roads of this island seem to be bordered either with oleanders and almonds, or the green of shrubs peeping out from between the broken rockwork. The highest point of

the eastern side is Monte Tiberio, and I imagined myself in Egypt during the ride up by donkey to this elevated place, some 800 feet high. The inducement to make this climb is the quaint old church of St Maria di Soccorso, the magnificent views—all of which have a background of blue sea and sky—and the ruins of Villa Jovis, the finest of the twelve villas of Tiberius and the one in which he passed the last twelve years of his life. Another interesting place, which I reached on foot in a few minutes from the Piazza of Capri, is the Castello del Castiglione, a mediæval ruin with some very fine mosaic pavements, proving that a Roman villa once stood on the same spot.

Whether it is a kind of super-wanderlust, or merely an inquisitive desire to see and know how all the peoples of the earth live and have their being in this twentieth century, I cannot say, but the fact remains that I seldom object to moving on. When Capri disappeared into the mist astern, however, I knew, with regret, that I would never see its equal in Europe. In the East, in the Pacific, all is different, but that is another story.

CHAPTER XX

A PICTURE OF PORTUGAL

IT is a cloudy, boisterous morning in the Bay of Biscay. A grey-green sea is flecked with the foam of Atlantic billows. The decks of the 20,000-ton liner are wet and shining in the pale sunlight, which every now and then breaks through the scurrying masses of ragged cloud and forms silver patches on the restless sea.

The gale has blown itself out during the forty hours we have been steaming south from Land's End, first across the mouth, or "chops," of the Channel to Ushant, and then, in a welter of foam, through the northern half of this bay of ill-fame. The Biscay does not deserve the reputation it possesses among travellers by sea. More often are its waters calm than rough, even during the winter months, and its bad name is very largely a legacy from the past, when outward-bound sailing ships from the English Channel so often found themselves unable to make any progress against the strong south-westerlies, or else in danger of destruction by mountainous seas, which their sails could not combat, driving them towards the rocky shores of France.

About eleven o'clock in the morning the sun burst through the sombre clouds, and patches of vivid blue now give to the broken sea a tinge of warmer colour, but still the waves roll high. The wind, so

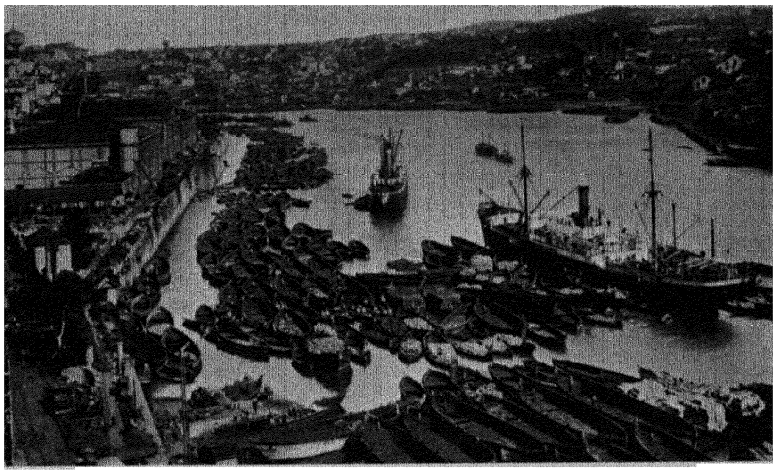
bitterly cold a few hours earlier, seems to have lost its keen edge, and there is an unmistakable hint that the cruel north is being rapidly exchanged for the more genial south. So dramatic is the change from winter to spring, which usually takes place somewhere in the southern portion of the Bay of Biscay, that its effect upon south-bound travellers from the storm-swept British Isles during the winter months is quite as electrical as that noticeable among passengers after leaving New York when Cape Hatteras has been left well astern and the way lies clear to the blue Caribbean.

Towards sunset the clouds vanished and the more gentle seas were tinged with a roseate hue. The air became warm and moist. Suddenly from out of the haze ahead appeared a lofty headland of faint outline. It was our first glimpse of the Spanish coast, Cape Villano. Lights flashed out along this rocky shore during the hours of darkness, then came Finisterre, and by the following morning we were at anchor in the blue sparkling bay of Leixões, a quaint little port on the sunny Portuguese littoral.

From the broad harbour the panorama was wonderfully picturesque. Cold northern landscapes had been left behind, and here, in a setting of azure, were dazzling white, pink and blue lime-washed houses, golden sands, queer, brightly painted, high-prowed sardine fishing craft, and distant pine-clad hills. Leixões is merely the harbour for the Portuguese wine city of Oporto. A seven miles' car drive along very bad roads, by the side of the River Douro, and I began my peregrinations in the picturesque old city which sends its famous ruby-coloured wine to all parts of the world.

The streets of Oporto have one peculiarity. They are everywhere blocked by cumbersome carts, drawn by sleek bullocks, harnessed by elaborately carved yokes, often of great antiquity. Gaily dressed peasant boys, to whom soap and water must be quite unknown, walk beside these patient, fawn-coated and doe-eyed beasts of burden. Quaintly coloured and stucco-faced old houses, with rickety ornamental balconies and projecting roofs, are interspersed with historical churches and many solid commercial blocks. On the hills surrounding the Douro are the terraced vineyards and the famous wine lodges.

The centre of this city, which has about 170,000 inhabitants, is formed by the Rua dos Martyrs, a fine thoroughfare ornamented with palms, tropical plants, and a pool of ornamental if somewhat stagnant water. Then there is the street of the goldsmiths for which this city is famous ; but it was from the Dom Luiz Bridge, with its immense span of 300 feet, that I obtained the most wonderful views over the River Douro, the vineyards, and the red and white city sprawling over the hills around. Deep down in the valley, at the foot of the Dom Luiz Bridge, Wellington's army crossed this river during the Peninsular War. At this point there is now an open market on the water-front, where picturesque glimpses can usually be obtained of Portuguese life and customs. What a pity it is that this beautiful country is so primitive and backward. Just at the moment when one is enjoying some scene of exceptional interest, a momentary puff of air from some fœtid cellar, open drain, or other horror, will waft such a stench of decay that all pleasure is lost in the effort to beat a hasty retreat.



THE CITY AND DOCKS ALONG THE DOURO—OPORTO

AVENIDA DOS ALIADOS—OPORTO

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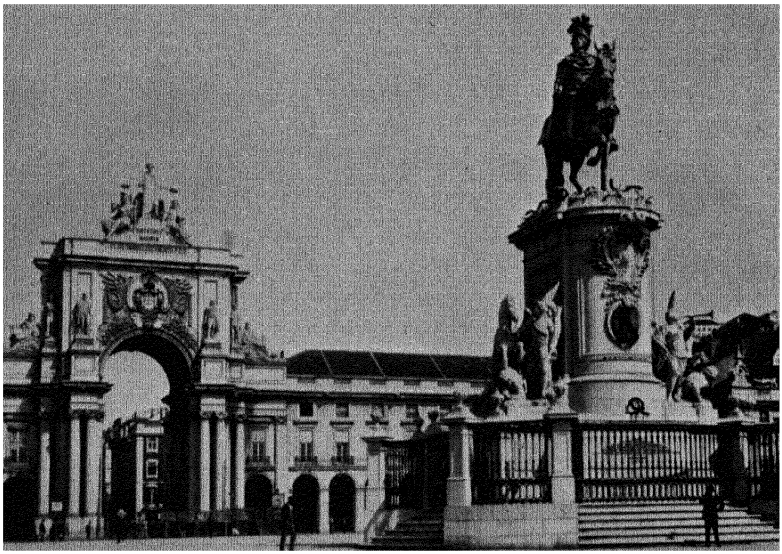
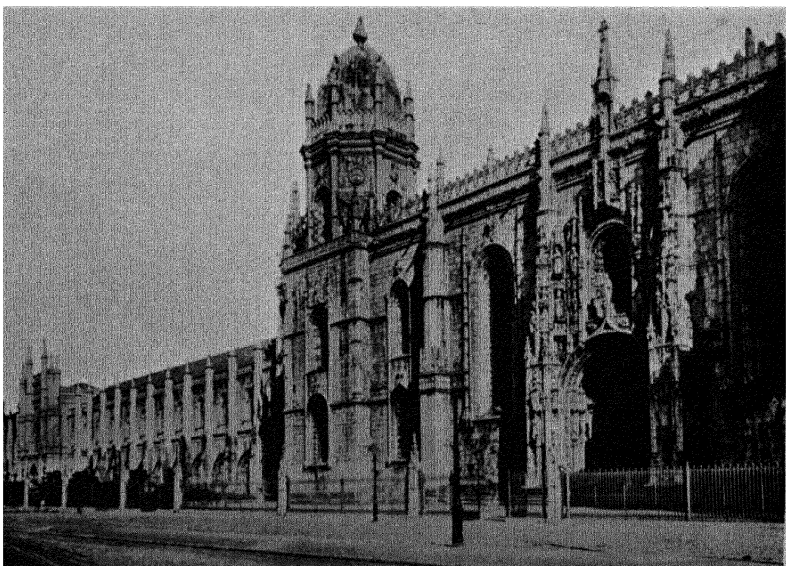


BLACK HORSE SQUARE—LISBON



CHURCH AND MONASTERY OF JERONIMOS—LISBON

A climb of several rather steep streets brought me one afternoon to the Palacio de Cristal, a restaurant and theatre surrounded by beautiful palm gardens, situated on one of the hills overlooking the city. Here I dined on fish covered with a sauce made from tomatoes and chillies, together with an ample supply of excellent wine. Then, after listening to a Portuguese children's choir singing national songs, I watched the pinkish-mauve sunset glow creep slowly up the valley of the Douro and the lights twinkle in rows from the streets below.

Oporto, which in regard to both population and commerce is the second city of Portugal, has a very large English colony, most of whom are engaged in the wine-shipping industry. The great cellars, at Gaya, on the left bank of the Douro, just opposite the town, are certainly worth a visit. The whole of northern Portugal can be reached by railway from Oporto. It is a region not only of vineyards but also of fields bordered by chestnut and cork trees. Ferns grown in the open often attain the height of trees.

Vintage time in Portugal lasts from the middle of September to the end of October, and in the making of the famous port wine the same methods are employed as in the days when this sunny country was the Roman province of Lusitania. The vines are pruned to within three feet of the ground and are trained on short sticks. Women and children are mostly employed to gather the grapes, which are placed in tall baskets. These are carried on the backs of the men to the great stone tanks, or *lagars*. Then comes the treading out of the juice by entire families, who literally dance on the grapes to the accompaniment of folk-music played on guitars and

mandolines. When first made the wine is of a thick consistency and dark purple in colour. For two or three months it is left in large vats, or *tonels*, and then drawn off and allowed to remain undisturbed for a short time before being sent to the city of Oporto for the all-important refining process. Wine accounts for over half the total value of the exports from Portugal.

At a little place called Bom Jesus, about three miles from the old town of Braga, I came across what must surely be one of the most extraordinary of the many places of pilgrimage. Situated on top of a hill, and surrounded by trees, there was a beautiful old church. Leading up to this edifice were a series of broad steps, lined on both sides with chapels and sacred fountains. Although it is possible to ascend this hill by means of an elevator, most Portuguese Catholics feel that they should make a pilgrimage there and climb these stairs on foot at least once in their lifetime. The view from the top of this hill is particularly fine. Another interesting place hereabouts is the buried city of Citania, where many Roman antiques were found during the work of excavation. Only the walls now remain, however, the more interesting specimens recovered having been removed to the museum in the little town of Guimãraes. Citania is often referred to in the writings of Valerius Maximus.

The roads in Portugal are extremely bad, and travel either by motor car or train cannot be considered comfortable. It was for this reason that I did not take the seventy-five miles' journey south from Oporto to the ex-royal palace of Busaco, a magnificent building, situated amid mountains and valleys, which has been converted into a large country hotel. The

old monastery, founded in 1268 by Carmelite monks, is still to be seen in the extensive grounds of the palace. It was here that Wellington defeated the French under Massena and Ney in 1810. It is said that one of the rooms of the monastery was occupied by the Iron Duke on the eve of the battle.

CHAPTER XXI

THE CAPITAL BY THE TAGUS

I MADE the journey from Oporto to Lisbon by sea, and entered the mouth of the broad Tagus with the morning sun streaming on the little seaside places of Cascaes and Estoril, and lofty Cintra forming a background. With the passing of the beautiful white tower of Belem, built on the site where Vasco da Gama landed on his return from the famous voyage of discovery to the Indies, a vision of glistening white walls and red tiles, with quaint, almost Oriental towers, was suddenly disclosed. It was Lisbon, built on its seven green hills, above the busy and sunlit Tagus, which provides this city with one of the finest and most beautiful harbours in Europe.

Although the origin of Lisbon is lost in the dim unhistoried ages, we read of its subjugation by the Carthaginians in 300 B.C., and by the Romans just over a hundred years later. The Moorish invasion took place in A.D. 711, and lasted until Affonso Henriques, aided by a party of English and Flemish Crusaders, captured the city in the year 1147. The famous Portuguese navigator, Vasco da Gama, sailed from the Tagus to discover the ocean route to Hindustan, and in later years the Spanish Armada was anchored in its waters, making the last preparations for the invasion of England. Although destroyed

by an earthquake in 1755, it was soon afterwards rebuilt by order of the great Marquez de Pombal.

At the present time, besides being the Capital of Portugal, Lisbon is a busy commercial and maritime city. It enjoys a warm climate for about nine months of the year, but is subject to extremely heavy rains, which sometimes last for hours and cause floods in the low-lying quarters below the hills. I have been in this capital during midwinter on several occasions and the temperature has never dropped below fifty-two degrees Fahrenheit in the daytime. Snow is unknown and frost is of rare occurrence. It is not generally realised that the capital of Portugal is situated over 300 miles farther south than the famous pleasure resorts of the French Riviera.

Lisbon is interesting because it is different from other cities of Europe. The hardy Lusitanian sailors of the long ago returned to the Tagus from their adventurous voyages to Brazil, Africa, India, China and the South Seas. Their ships were laden with the produce of these distant lands, and in the rich soil and warm sunshine of Southern Portugal these exotics found a new and congenial home. Much of the old architecture has a strange, unfamiliar appearance, which is a legacy from the Moorish empire. Such places as the bull ring and the tessellated pavements of the squares and streets are both relics of a romantic and picturesque, although somewhat barbaric past.

In the great days of early oversea adventure, Portugal played a leading rôle, and this I found reflected in such magnificent buildings as the Church of Jeronymos, where many kings are buried and the ashes of Vasco da Gama rest in fitting surroundings.

Even the grim Royal Mausoleum, where the embalmed remains of the Emperor Pedro II. of Brazil and (until recently) of Dom Carlos and the Crown Prince lie, in glass-lidded coffins, into which the curious peer with the aid of flickering candles, is indicative of the soul of Portugal. In the churches and statues this same evidence of departed glory and atmosphere of almost world-wide dominion adds charm to what is architecturally poor and dilapidated in many cases. High above the streets of Lisbon stands the Church of the Estrella, built in 1779, and supposed to be a small replica of St Peter's, Rome. In it there is, besides the black marble tomb of its founder, Dona Maria I., the embalmed remains of some unknown Italian prince of the seventeenth century. The view from this lofty Church of the Star extends far over Lisbon and the Tagus to the Estramadura Hills in the centre of Portugal. In the beautiful gardens around a regimental band plays every Sunday afternoon. The statues of this city, in nearly every case, show figures or groups from the glorious days of Portuguese oversea adventure.

This morning I found myself in the Praca do Commercio, or Black Horse Square, which overlooks the Tagus, and contains some of the finest buildings in the whole of Lisbon. It is not pretty, like the Rocio—another open space more in the centre of the business quarter—and it is paved with uneven stones, but tragedy has more than once lurked in the shadow of its arches. In 1755 the adjoining stone quay was swallowed up during an earthquake, and in 1908, at the corner where the Rua do Arsenal joins the square, King Carlos and the Crown Prince were murdered by an assassin who fired at the royal carriage with

poisoned bullets while hidden from observation in the deep shadows of the columned arches. One of the principal streets of Lisbon, the Rua Augusta, is connected with this square by a magnificent white arch surrounded by marble statues. In the centre of the Praca is the statue of Dom Jose I., showing this monarch mounted on a black charger. It was erected in 1755, and the allegorical groups on the sides of the pedestal represent Portuguese achievements in Africa and Asia.

Passing through the little rectangular blocks forming the shopping centre, where gloves and filigree gold and silver work appear to be the most attractive products, I entered the Praca Dom Pedro, which at one time was entirely paved with mosaics of undulating pattern, and became known as the Rocio, or "Rolling Motion Square." Here I found excited crowds gathered round several small black and white posters which had been affixed overnight to the walls of public buildings and to the base of statues. It was one of those fiery proclamations which generally precede a revolutionary outbreak. The atmosphere in the Rocio was sufficiently electric to make me expect every minute to see mounted Republican Guards appear in the square, and to hear the zipp, zipp, zipp! of bullets striking the walls. Experience of street fighting and revolutionary tactics generally, gathered while acting as War Correspondent in many Latin countries, caused me to seek the broad avenues of what is known as new Lisbon, rather than the popular squares in the overcrowded centre of the city. Although the alarm was a false one, as the revolt did not occur until several weeks later, it is seldom wise to get mixed up in the first clash of forces

without being able to distinguish friend or foe, or knowing from what quarter danger is likely to come.

In the Avenida da Liberdad, a tree-bordered promenade extending for about a mile from the Rocio, everything appeared to be so quiet and orderly that I dismissed from my mind the probability of immediate trouble. This boulevard is one of the finest in Lisbon. The houses on each side are handsome and regular, while the palms and Judas-trees give welcome shade to those walking on the mosaic pavements. Another feature is the ornamental canal, and at the extreme end there is the beautiful garden of Edward VII.

Continuing towards the outskirts of Lisbon I reached the bull-ring in the Campo Pequeno. Although, in size or magnificence, nothing like those of such cities as Madrid, Barcelona or Lima, this little ring is one of the few places of its kind where any consideration is shown to the unfortunate beasts who provide the so-called sport. Bull-fights in Lisbon differ entirely from those held in Spain. The scene is equally as brilliant but far more humane. It begins with a march round the arena by gaily dressed toreadors to the accompaniment of a band. From eight to ten bulls are usually played during each day. The fight is opened by *cavalleiros* placing darts in the bull's neck. Only the finest breed of horses are used, and great courage, skill and horsemanship are necessary for this performance. The next event is the placing of more darts in the neck of the unfortunate bull by *bandarilheiros*. The lives of these men on foot depend upon their courage and agility. The next item on the programme is the teasing of the bull with red cloths, which leads to the

mock killing. Finally, the matador has to face the bull with his arms outstretched and allow the animal to charge him. He must then cling to the bull's head until the *bandarilheiros* succeed in holding the animal down and he is able to extricate himself from his precarious position between the horns. Owing to the fact that the horns of the bull are encased, there is danger only to the fighters, who may be trampled on, tossed, or even crushed. Perhaps the most amusing part of the whole proceeding is the way in which the infuriated bull is ultimately rendered docile. Tame oxen, with bells around their necks, are driven into the arena, and the bull, knowing by experience that he is quite safe, returns with them to the stall.

In the old part of Lisbon there is the Sé Patriarchal, or cathedral, which was once a mosque, and was transformed into a Christian church in 1150. It is curious to note that the first bishop was an English crusader who assisted Dom Affonso Henriques to capture Lisbon from the Moors. There can be no doubt, however, that the most imposing church in Lisbon is that of Jeronymos, the foundations for which were laid in the year 1500. It is built of a pinkish-yellow limestone, but the vaulted roof of the nave is supported by marble columns handsomely carved. Attached to this church there is a convent with some wonderful cloisters and a Casa Pia, or orphanage for boys. Inside the church there are the tombs of several kings and also that of Vasco da Gama.

One of the most interesting places in Lisbon is the Museum of Ancient Coaches. These ornate vehicles date back for at least four centuries, and, having belonged principally to the royal family, some of them are very handsome specimens. They came,

originally, from the royal palace of Belem. On the floor above that on which the coaches are situated one can see the saddles, whips, spurs, and other trappings of bygone methods of transport. Then there is the Museum of Fine Arts, which contains valuable collections of religious objects from despoiled convents. Here, also, may be seen ancient Court jewels, dresses, porcelains and sculptures. Those interested in old military relics should visit the Peninsular War section of the Artillery Museum.

CHAPTER XXII

ABOUT CASTLES AND KINGS

OUT beyond the city there is picturesque little Cintra, with its lofty castles of Moorish design, and its views over beautifully wooded, semi-tropical gardens, hill-side and rock-village. By road from Lisbon it is about seventeen miles, and the surrounding country is very picturesque. Southey refers to Cintra, once the summer resort of the Portuguese royal family, as "the most blessed spot on the habitable globe"; and Byron has called it a "glorious Eden." Although it is certainly beautiful, I think these terse descriptions exaggerate its charms. The Cintra palace was once the residence of the Moorish kings, and the tiles are particularly fine. In one room there are the escutcheons showing the coats of arms of the knights of later years, and the design of the famous Magpie Hall was intended as a rebuke for talking scandal to the ladies of the Court of Dom João I. In the chamber where Alfonso VI. was held prisoner for eight years—until he died—the floor is visibly worn down by this unfortunate man's constant pacing to and fro.

Leaving Cintra palace, I drove in an old-world carriage, with three horses, up the steep incline through glorious woods to the lofty Pẽna palace, over 2,000 feet high. This building, perched on

the summit of a rocky hill, with walls rising sheer from the brow of a precipice, is most imposing. It has Gotho-Arabic towers, battlements, walls and drawbridges. The view from its turrets extends along the little Portuguese Riviera from Lisbon to the Burling Rocks. It was here that the royal family used to live during the months of July and August, when the heat of Lisbon is very trying. Many of the rooms have been left exactly as they were in the days of the monarchy. The late King Manoel's apartment still contains the books and papers as they lay when he made his secret exit from the country. It is not difficult to realise the sense of insecurity and isolation which the boy king must have experienced during his last night in Pĕna palace, when the integrity of his guards and servants could no longer be relied upon.

In the little church which forms a portion of the palace—reconstructed and enlarged many times since it was originally built by the Moors—there is an altar of opaque Italian alabaster and ivory. From Pĕna there is a road to the beautiful tropical gardens of Monserrate. The palace of Oriental appearance in the midst of these exotic plants belonged, at the time of my visit, to the Visconde de Monserrate—Sir Frederick Cook. Descending to the sea-coast from the lofty ridge of hills, I reached Cascaes, the first of the two small resorts on what is called the Portuguese Riviera.

The Cintra Ridge, immediately to the west of Lisbon, slopes down to the sea just north of the Tagus, sheltering some miles of sandy shore and flower-clad hinterland on which has been built the little fishing and bathing place of Cascaes. This beautiful little

spot, in the days of the monarchy, was the bathing resort of the royal family, who occupied the ancient fortress overlooking the bay. The Portuguese Riviera enjoys a far warmer and more equable climate than that of the Côte d'Azur. Although the best season along this stretch of coast, with its many excellent hotels, is during the autumn and spring, I found it delightful even in midwinter. It was quite possible to bathe in comfort at Christmas-time despite the fact that the evenings were often cool. Cascaes has a rather picturesque bull-ring, and a public garden and promenade bordered by fine old palm trees.

What makes this part of the Portuguese coast so exceptionally attractive is the presence of ornamental rocks interspersed with long stretches of golden sands washed by the tide, and the extraordinary fertility of the soil which is literally covered by tropical and semi-tropical vegetation and flowers. One sunny afternoon I walked from Cascaes past the old tower of St Sebastian and along the sea-coast to the Bocca do Inferno. It is called the " Mouth of Hell " because of the fearful appearance it presents in rough weather, when the huge Atlantic rollers rush through its vast chasms and blow-holes. Walking on the Portuguese Riviera is quite a pleasant occupation, except during the summer months, because of the variety of scene presented by every turn of the road. Its one drawback is the dust caused by recklessly driven motor cars. As on the French Riviera, the little resorts of this coast are connected by a beautiful marine drive. A few miles along this coast road, shaded in places by eucalyptus, pepper and palm trees, with every wall and projecting rock supporting a blaze of golden begonia

or purple wisteria, is the more popular resort of Mont' Estoril.

My first discovery in this place was the delightful climate which it enjoys the entire year round. Such trees as the cherry, orange and pear not only blossom but also bear fruit twice during each twelve months. There is no autumn or winter. The people of Mont' Estoril know the period from the end of September to February as the "First Spring," and that from the end of February to early May as the "Second Spring." During my stay here in mid-December the temperature was seldom below fifty-three degrees Fahrenheit, which presumably accounts for the entire absence of either fireplaces or any other form of heating in the rooms of the excellent hotels and picturesque private villas.

Estoril was a Monte Carlo in the making until a variation in the interpretation of the Portuguese Gambling Laws caused its little white casino to be sometimes closed and on other occasions open. To find an explanation of this ridiculous state of affairs one has only to understand something of the peculiarities and the "niceties" of Portuguese politics. There are, however, other amusements, such as tennis, golf, and racing, during the season. As this coast obtains the full benefit of the Gulf Stream, the bathing along the sandy shore is exceptionally good.

Sometimes one hears these places referred to as "The Estorils," by which is meant the town of Mont' Estoril and the older village of S. João d'Estoril, which extend in straggling fashion along about two miles of coast and are difficult to describe, because they depend for their attraction upon Nature's

supplies of colour and sunshine. The view seawards comprises the busy mouth of the Tagus, with its shipping and dangerous surf-covered reefs. Rising up behind this Riviera coast is the lofty Cintra Ridge, with its colourful gardens and imposing great stone castles. Before leaving Estoril I visited the Capuchos, or Cork Convent, a unique spectacle on one of the hills of the Cintra Ridge. It is an old convent, formed by natural caves, which was founded in 1560 and used by the Capuchins. The interior is lined entirely with cork obtained from local trees.

During several journeys to and fro across Portugal I have come upon some remarkable sights, often far from the beaten track and with nothing to make them known to the outside world. Once, in the old town of Evora, which is said to have been founded 2,000 years before the Christian era by an ancient tribe called the *Eburoneo*, I chanced upon the Convent of St Francisco, and through the kindness of a local priest was able to see its subterranean chapel, with columns and walls most artistically ornamented with human skulls and thigh bones. Here, also, is a Roman temple, in a fairly good state of preservation, which is erroneously called "The Temple of Diana."

Near to the little town of Torres Vedras, about forty-two miles from Lisbon, there are the impregnable "Lines of Defence" built by the Duke of Wellington to repel the invasion of Napoleon's armies under Massena in 1810. "Among all the suffering millions of Portugal not a spy had been found (by the French) to warn the invaders of the existence on his line of march of fifty miles of new fortifications, comprising 126 closed works and mounting 247 guns." Despite

the passage of nearly one and a quarter centuries, these earthworks remain a monument to the genius of the Iron Duke, who, at this point, finally turned the tide of war against the world conqueror of the last century.

Although not generally known, Portugal is a country possessing many beautiful old buildings situated in the most inaccessible spots. One such is the Monastery of Batalha, six miles from the railway station at Leiria. It is the national monument of victory, commemorating the independence of Portugal, although the original structure was commenced in 1388 by Dom João I. and his English wife Philippa, who was the daughter of John of Gaunt. It is said that it was due to her influence that portions of this monastery were built in English style, and that even the name "Batalha" was suggested to this English Queen of Portugal by William the Conqueror's Battle Abbey. So ornate is the carving of this vast building that it is often considered to rival the Alhambra in this respect. The cloisters and chapels are particularly beautiful, and although I do not profess to any expert knowledge of antique stone work, I am inclined to agree with the local assertion that the "Unfinished Chapels" are examples of the most florid carving which has ever been attempted by the chisel of a sculptor. The founder and his queen lie buried in this monastery, beneath the arms of Portugal and England.

In Coimbra, the old capital of Portugal and now the third city of the Republic, one sees the black-coated and guitar-strumming student, for in this ancient city is situated the only university of the country. Here, also, is the tomb of Dom Affonso

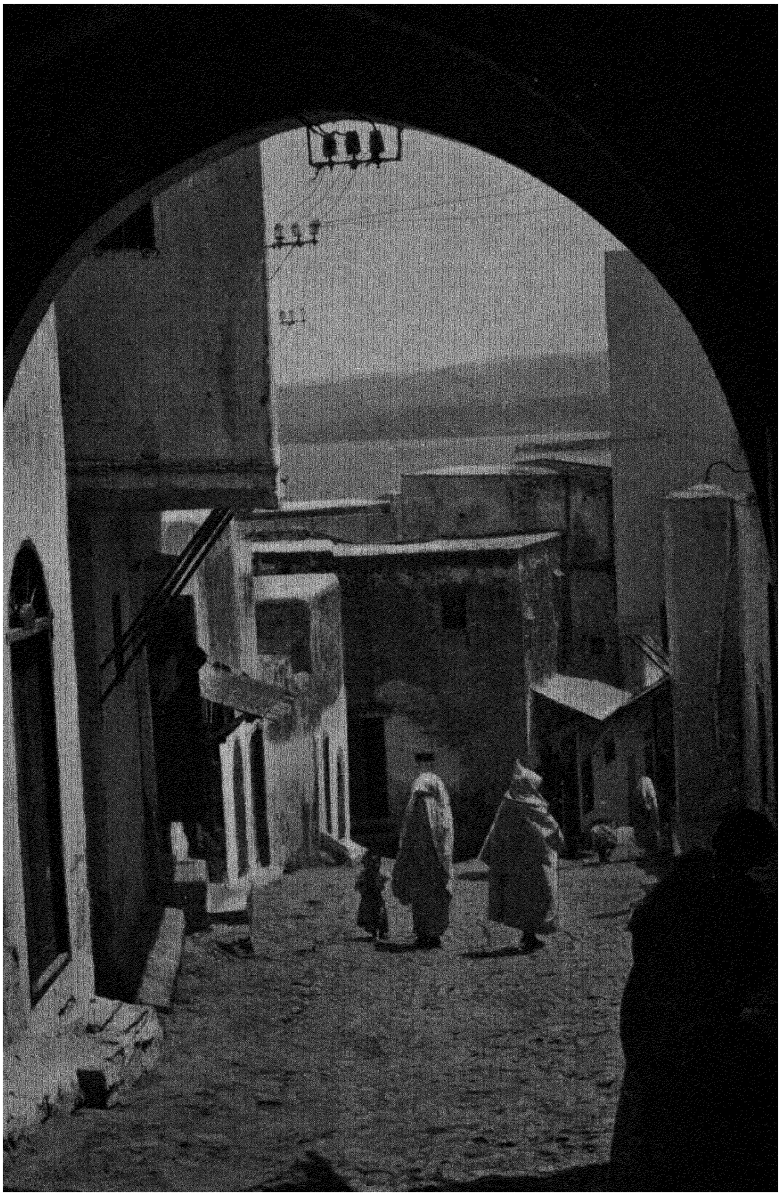
Henriques, and the Santa Clara Convent, so closely associated with the romantic story of Inez de Castro, the murdered Portuguese princess, whose body was disinterred and crowned seven years after her death. The world of to-day seems very remote in old Coimbra.

CHAPTER XXIII

TANGIER AND ITS PROBLEMS

YELLOW-WHITE houses, blazing in the African sunlight; narrow tortuous streets and alleys looking like misty caverns in the dusty shadows; horseshoe gateways affording glimpses of blue sea, minarets or tessellated towers; and all this, so typical of the Orient, is but half of the walled city of Tangier, into which I have just plunged by way of the Beb-el-Marsa, or port gate. The other part, even more eloquent of the East, and affording a still greater contrast to the little town of Gibraltar, which I left only an hour or two ago, is a fascinating panorama of Moorish life.

Ethnologically Tangier is a medley of 70,000 people belonging to all the tribes of this north-west corner of Africa; Genouah from distant Timbuktu with headdresses of shells and clanking cymbals; Susi in coarse brown *jelabas*, white-skinned mountaineers from the Atlas; fierce-looking Riffs; men from the Gharb, or fertile plains of Morocco, enveloped in the multifarious folds of their coarse *haiks*; haughty-looking Moors, swarthy, bearded, and aquiline, with a dignity lacking in all other types; black-robed Jews; and donkeys everywhere. Unchanged through the centuries, and still unchanging despite the placing of their city within an international zone: the



A TYPICAL STREET TANGIER

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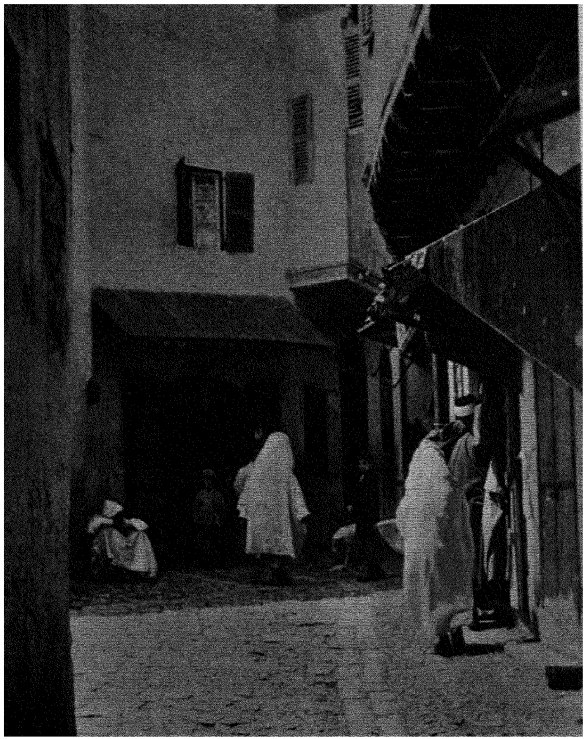
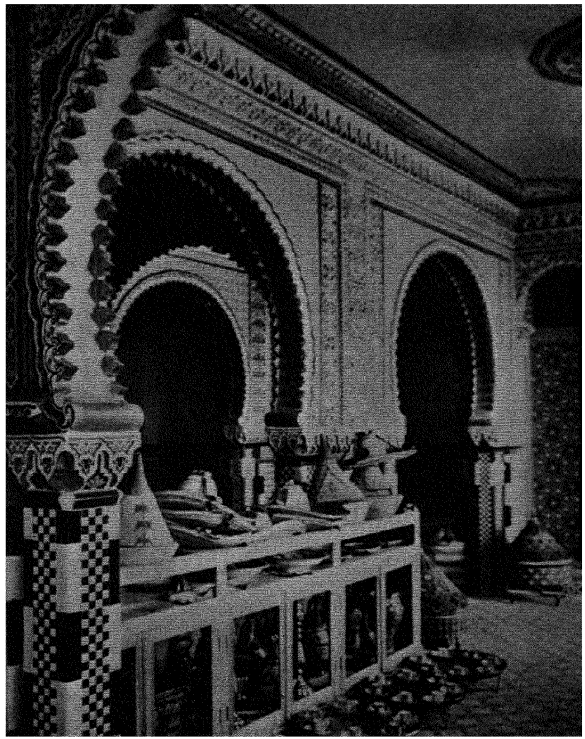


SUNLIGHT AND SHADOW IN A MOORISH STREET—TANGIER



HARRAR PALACE—TANGIER

presence in their midst of several thousand Europeans, and the growth of a suburb which is typically, almost painfully Western, with broad boulevards, clubs, hotels, legations, golf and all the paraphernalia of our stereotyped civilisation.

Tangier is no ordinary Eastern city. It has been an international problem for over two and a half centuries. It is a Moroccan seaport, fourteen miles east of Cape Spartel and situated in the Straits of Gibraltar. Potentially it is one of the keys to the Atlantic entrance to the Mediterranean. It is these geographical facts which have perpetuated what Samuel Pepys described as " the dammed business of Tangier."

Forming, with Bombay, a part of the dowry of Catherine of Braganza on her marriage to King Charles II., it became an English possession in 1662. Repeated attacks by the Moors caused it to become very costly to maintain, and it was definitely abandoned twenty-two years later. Undoubtedly it was the intention, at that date, to make it a naval base, from which the " Turkey Trade " and the English merchant ships sailing the Mediterranean might be protected against the dreaded Barbary corsairs. It was during this brief occupation that English sailors plucked small oranges from the trees growing close to the town and called them " Tangier-ines."

This place, soon after its abandonment, became a nest of pirates acting in co-operation with the Deys of Algiers, who were able to levy a heavy toll on merchant ships attempting to pass in and out of the Mediterranean. Not only was booty taken, but the crews of captured vessels were sold into slavery.

This state of affairs existed for well over a century. In 1814 the slavery of Christians was nominally abolished and piracy was prohibited in 1817. Then, in 1829-30, France became involved in a war with Morocco over questions relating to the partitioning of Algeria. Two years later Tangier was bombarded by the French fleet. Then came a war with Spain, but, owing to the jealousy between the European powers of the Mediterranean, the Sultans of Morocco were able to maintain not only complete independence but also an aloofness such as that practised by Turkey, China, Tibet and other Eastern states during certain periods of their history.

" In or about the year 1902 the name of Raisuli became prominent in connection with the Tangier region. He detained several foreigners and held them to ransom, his conduct eventually rendering necessary the intervention of the European Powers. In 1905, at the time when France was generally regarded as being the dominant Power concerned with Moroccan affairs, Germany ' butted in,' the Kaiser landing at Tangier and conferring with representatives of the Sultan, to whom he promised ' protection.' There followed the famous Algeciras Conference, in which war was narrowly avoided. After much delicate discussion certain reforms were introduced in which Tangier shared, a police force being instituted and the custom-house control passing into European hands.

" In 1906 a Franco - Spanish demonstration off Tangier secured the removal of Raisuli from the governorship. In 1907 Raisuli carried off Sir Harry Maclean, keeping him for seven months, and only letting him go on payment by the British Government

of a ransom of £20,000. The repayment of this sum was secured later, £15,000 from Raisuli and the rest from Mulai Hafidi, the Sultan of Morocco. In 1909, a Franco-German agreement with respect to Morocco was eventually arrived at.

"Since that time, the main fact emerging from the complex politics of this country, so near in space to Europe but removed from it in time by centuries, has been the rising of the Riff tribes, the emergence of Abd-el-Krim and the hopeless defeat of Spain until the assistance of France was secured. During this time the port of Tangier has been the centre of a knotty problem in which Great Britain has been interested by the fact of its proximity to Gibraltar. Britain could not view with indifference the establishment of another Power with practically unlimited influence just across the narrow strait" *

In 1923 Tangier and a small area of the surrounding country was proclaimed an international zone, and is administered by Great Britain, France, Italy and Spain. The remainder of the 300,000 square miles of territory and its eight millions of Moors, Berbers and Jews, which formed the old sultanate of Moghreb-el-Aksa (meaning "The Extreme West"), was divided between France and Spain. Morocco in ancient times formed part of Mauretania, and about A.D. 43 was incorporated with the Roman Empire. Towards the end of the seventh century the Arabs spread over North Africa and took possession of Mauretania.

The most remarkable natural features are the great Atlas Mountains, a series of ridges extending across the southern portion of Morocco and the

* Extract from a newspaper report.

northern half of Algeria for over 1,400 miles. There are peaks in this range which, although encompassed by the Sahara and its hinterland, are covered with snow in winter and attain a height of from 15,000 to 18,000 feet.

The inhabitants of this wild range are Kabyles, or Berbers, generally believed to be the oldest white race. They came, long before the dawn of written history, from South Europe, and in Egypt I came across records of a people living in these distant mountains and having fair skins, blue eyes and pink cheeks, 1,280 years before the Christian era. They were conquered in turn by the Phœnicians, Carthaginians, Romans, Goths and Vandals, but always found a safe retreat among the fastnesses of their African mountain home. About the Kabyles and their country I shall have more to say in later pages.

The principal coast towns in the French zones of Morocco are Rabat, Casablanca, Mazagan, Saffi and Mogador. In the Spanish zone there are Melilla and Ceuta on the Mediterranean and Larache on the Atlantic Ocean. The chief interior towns in French Morocco are Fez, Meknes and Marakesh, several of which I visited during my travels through this region—which is not a desert country, like Southern Algeria, but a picturesque and diversified land comprising mountains, hills, sandy plains and small forests. The flora includes the esculent oak and cork oak in the higher regions of the Atlas Mountains; the cedar, Aleppo pine, date palm, dwarf palm and the walnut tree to the east and south of the Atlas range.

Tangier, the capital of the little international zone, stands on a slope, and is built in terraces sur-

mounted by towers and minarets, which were constructed during the many centuries of its existence by the Berbers, or Kabyles, the Phœnicians, Carthaginians, Romans, Portuguese, Arabs, English and French. Its climate is pleasant and extremely healthy, being influenced by both the Atlantic and Mediterranean wind and sea currents which help to maintain a fairly even temperature.

My first impression was of a gleaming white city bordered by the green of trees and framed by foothills rising tier upon tier, to the blue heights of the Jebela Mountains. During my first morning walk from the Bab-el-Marsa to the Bab-el-Sûk, or entrance to the market-place, I passed, in the welcome shade of the principal mosque, which is said to have been built on the site of an English cathedral, chattering groups of dark-skinned natives, men in rags sprinkling the streets with water from dripping goatskins, and veiled women showing only their eyes when approaching, but a considerable expanse of bare ankle from behind. There were overburdened donkeys being goaded unmercifully by men and boys—who seemed to take a delight in poking their sticks into the raw spots on these wretched little animals' flanks and backs—and open booths piled indiscriminately with the merchandise of both East and West ; from all of which I knew that around me stretched the almost limitless tracts of Oriental Africa, a wild and pitiless realm which has scarcely emerged from the centuries of slavery, murder and oppression into which it was born.

It was the colour and movement more than the town itself which attracted me, and I made my way to the centre of commerce on the outskirts of the city.

It happened to be a market day in the Great Sûk, and the scene afforded innumerable little pictures of Moorish life. Here was a juggler producing the smallest of chickens from the folds of his robe, much to the delight of a group of children dressed in what resembled white nightdresses surmounted by grimy red fezes. Making my way between camels laden with produce from the interior, and through the piles of vegetables, bread, fruit and fish, I came upon a story-teller surrounded by a group of literary enthusiasts, and I wished very much that I could have understood the apparently eloquent descriptions of people and scenes which this coal-black *raconteur* was giving to his enthralled audience. It is extremely difficult to obtain any idea of what is passing through the mind of an Oriental by a study of his expression, but I rather fancy that the tales being told by this bearded son of the prophet corresponded to those one hears in some of the principal clubs of London and New York.

On my homeward journey I tried to obtain a peep into the great mosque of Tangier, which possesses no striking external features, but evidently Christians are not allowed even a glimpse of the interior, screens having been placed across the inside of the doorway. Later in the day I passed into a Moorish café, and there drank a glass of green tea flavoured with mint in true native fashion, while musicians played and sang weird Arabic songs.

One of the most interesting sights in Tangier is the walled Cashbah, or Citadel. Perched about 240 feet above the town, and dating from the fifteenth century, it adjoins the old palace of the Sultan with its Moorish patio, and the *Bit-el-Mal*, or treasury,

all of which are merely relics of a departed glory. The Cashbah is a noisome prison in which the half-naked criminals are chained together and sleep on the stone floors. Unless supplied with food by their friends, these wretched beings would starve on the rations given by the authorities.

Around the Citadel are the old quarters of Tangier. On my return to the shore, where most of the European hotels and houses are situated, I passed through the Bab-el-Aza, and from the steep descent which followed obtained a fine panorama of the town and anchorage. It surprised me to discover that there are no less than 12,000 Europeans living in new Tangier, which has sprung up with the creation of a police force and the placing of the Government under European control. Tangier, at the time of my visit, had two casinos, the "Florida" and the "International," but I had not come to North Africa to spend my time in these essentially French institutions. The beach promenade and the sea-bathing, however, afforded a welcome means of ridding myself of the dust accumulated in the narrow streets and alleys of the native town.

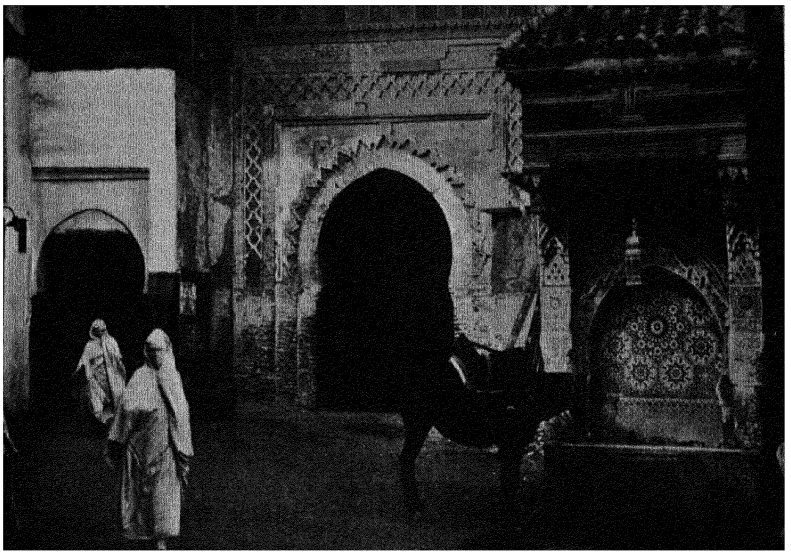
CHAPTER XXIV

FEZ TO MARAKESH

MY car is approaching Fez, the mysterious capital of old Moghreb, which, until quite recent years, had been jealously guarded from the pernicious influence of the infidel and the world at large for over two centuries. Excellent motor roads now connect it with the coast at Tangier and Rabat, but, thanks to Maréchal Lyautey, the old city still remains undisfigured by modern Western buildings and ways of life. It retains an atmosphere of mediæval Islam, the new French residential quarter forming a separate little town.

The approach to Fez is through well-irrigated gardens. "Here are the city walls of baked mud, crenellated and loopholed, stupendous in bulk. Yonder the vista of this city of 120,000 people spread in a vast oval like a multi-coloured carpet—the green roofs of the holy places, the tender blue tiles of the minarets, white terraces, the whole bordered by the deep green of the gardens and the almost black cypresses of the Moslem cemeteries." Somehow I had imagined Fez to be a city of the desert, like Omdurman in the vast Sudan, and its green fertility came as a pleasant surprise.

It was early evening as we entered this city—the solemn hour of prayer—and the shrill cry of the



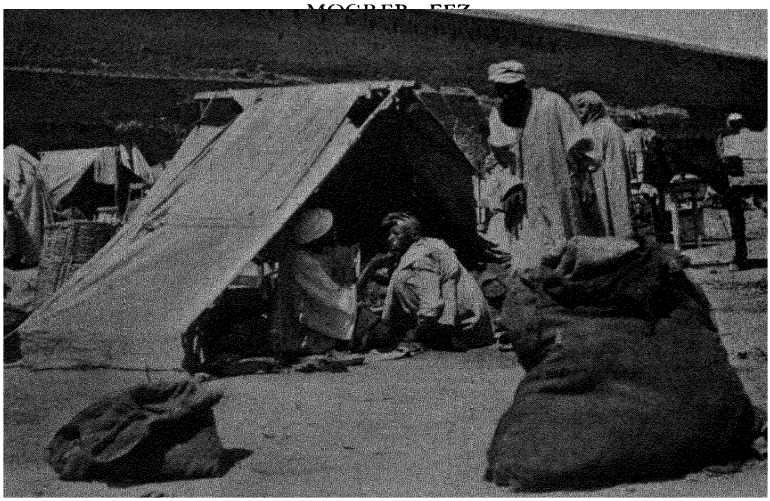
A SQUARE—FEZ

Showing one of the Old Drinking Fountains inside a Gateway in the City Walls.

A NATIVE FESTIVAL—FEZ

The Sultan is Riding beneath the Royal Umbrella.

TYPES AND COSTUMES IN THE CAPITAL OF OLD MOORISH FEZ



NATIVE BARBER IN TENT OUTSIDE THE WALLS—MARAKESH

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Muezzin came down from each of the lofty minarets into the hushed streets below. A golden half-light still tinged the domes and towers, but chattering tongues were silenced, and there brooded over the African metropolis an almost uncanny silence.

"Fez affords, without resource to imagination, a picture of a fourteenth-century Moslem city," says a French publication. "The streets are but narrow winding alleys, interlaced without plan, slippery with mire, evil-smelling, and yet teeming with vigorous life. Along these choked streets, often incredibly steep and leading down to the *Oued Fez*, the semi-underground river, passes an impetuous crowd of sandal-shod men of all shades, barefooted children, donkeys tottering beneath bundles and bales. The beggars, motionless at the street corners, alone personify the somnolent dreaming Fez of but a few years ago. In the region of the Sûks and trades the animation amounts to a frenzy. Endless rows of open-fronted booths fringe the streets, their gaping fronts a rainbow of the colours of the East—carpets, rich harness, silks, copperware, strange fruits—the whole speckled with the sunlight that filters through the rush screens above. The interiors, in deepest gloom, look like great mouths ready to swallow up passers-by who, all the time, are hustled and jostled by the never-ceasing stream of donkeys, camels, water-carriers, veiled women and audacious Fez urchins. From the manufacturing streets arise an incessant din of beaten copper and brass, and one gets a vision of wool dyers, their bare arms stained bright red, blue or saffron. In the midst of all this turmoil stand the silent places of prayer and learning, the splendid mosques and *Zaouias* of days now gone, *Karouiine* or *Moulay Idriss*,

as well as the *Medersas* of sumptuous interior with courtyards embellished by marble columns, beautiful mosaics, and doorways of cedar and lemon wood most wonderfully carved. At the end of many an obscure alley open the doors of some magnificent palace, its tiled gardens cooled by a bubbling fountain, and its windows guarded by elaborate wrought-iron screens."

Such is a picture of modern Fez by one who lives there, and to me, as a casual traveller, it appears to convey particularly well the atmosphere of this old Moroccan city. Even in the Palais Jamai (now an hotel) this same Oriental atmosphere prevailed. One of the most attractive corners of Fez is around the Nejjorine Fountain, a marvellous piece of mosaic work beneath a roof of red-fluted tiles, partly subdued by age and a parasite growth of sage green. Adjoining this fountain is one of the old gateways, mellow and yet full of colour. Another beauty spot is in the gardens surrounding the Grand Mosque Karouiine.

The life of this city can best be studied either in its somewhat sordid and yet gaudy bazaars, or at one of the many gateways which pierce the old walls, such as the Bab Guissa, during the hour before sunset or after sunrise, when the caravans are arriving and leaving, and the people of the countryside are moving their laden donkeys to or from the Sûk. The Jeloud Gate is certainly the most picturesque. It gave me the impression of having been recently repaired, however, for it was in a more perfect condition than any of the others which I saw. Through the main crenellated archway the white minarets of two mosques, standing out sharply against a background of blue sky, made a picture which was not merely pretty but

typical of the fascinating glimpses which are everywhere obtained in this old Moorish capital.

Leaving Fez by road I passed through the ruins of Volubilis, a mass of broken columns and pavements on the top of a broad hill. There is little of interest now to be seen in the remains of this ancient city, which marked the extreme western limit of Roman expansion in the African continent. Then came the Holy City of Moulay Idriss, perched "like an eagle's nest" on a lofty peak of the Zehorn Mountains. It is one of the sacred places in the Moslem world, and an infidel is still prevented from wandering at will in its mosques and holy places.

After crossing the Segotta Pass the city of Meknes came into view. Seen from the distance its numberless towers and minarets against a flaming sky made a truly remarkable picture. Passing through the finely tiled and decorated Bab Mansour, the centre of this beautiful city, famed for its pale blue tiles and mosaic work, "suggesting gigantic pieces of Eastern jewellery," was soon reached. Although very narrow, the streets are level and clean compared with those of Fez. Most beautiful of all, however, are its elaborately carved and coloured booth-fronts, which line the passage-ways of the bazaars. These facings call to mind the illuminated pages in a book of Eastern fairy tales. The interiors of some of the buildings are masterpieces of Moorish architecture and artistic decoration. The Moulay Idriss, the Dar Djamai, and the wonderful patio and fountain of the Bu Inania Medersa, are ornamented all over with delicate mosaics, fluted arches, quaint little Moorish windows and relief work. Many of the buildings are of fantastic proportions, and convey some idea of the

ambition of the city's builder, the tyrant Moulay-Ishmaël. This Moroccan Sultan demanded the hand of a niece of Louis XIV.

After crossing the plains I reached the Atlantic port of Rabat, the residence of the Sultan and also of the French Governor-General. It consists of two portions, one on each side of the river Bou-Regreg. Rabat itself is quite a pretty town, with many new buildings, nearly all of which have been constructed in the Moorish style. It stands on cliffs of red and grey rocks, and is surrounded by the green of foliage. There are several fine examples of Moorish architecture, such as the Cashbah des Oudaias, the Hassan tower, and the Great Mosque. The place used to be, and is still to a certain extent, the centre of the Moorish carpet trade. On the northern side of the river stands the town of Sallee, which is entirely Moorish, and consists of terraces, one above the other, of flat-roofed white houses. It was once a city of learning and art, and is now a peaceful old Arabic town, seemingly encompassed by trees. Wandering down some lanes to the east of Rabat, beyond the Hassan Tower, I came first upon a beautiful orange grove and then upon the ruins of Shellah. Many white tombs and saints' houses appeared among the luxurious vegetation, and I discovered that nearly all the sultans are buried in this delightful spot.

About Casablanca, the next town that I visited on the Moroccan coast, much could be written were I attempting a study of French colonial methods. The old town of Dar-al-Baida, which was built in the sixteenth century by the Portuguese and was enclosed by a wall twenty feet high, has almost entirely disappeared. Casablanca, to-day, is a cosmopolitan city

with considerable maritime activity. Of its 100,000 inhabitants over half are European, and of these the greater proportion are of French nationality. The climate here is mild even in winter, although often very damp. The modern portion of this town has been built alongside the maze of old and narrow streets. The show places include the Jewish quarter, the native market, the mosque of Qued El Hamra—which possesses a door dating from 1204—the sanctuary of Sidi-El-Karouiine, the ramparts, the Sultan's Palace, the bull-ring, and the boulevard Front de Mer. Casablanca is interesting, because it shows the vitality which still characterises French colonial activity. About twenty miles along the coast to the north of this port stands the little seaside resort of Fedhala, with its casino and its palm trees.

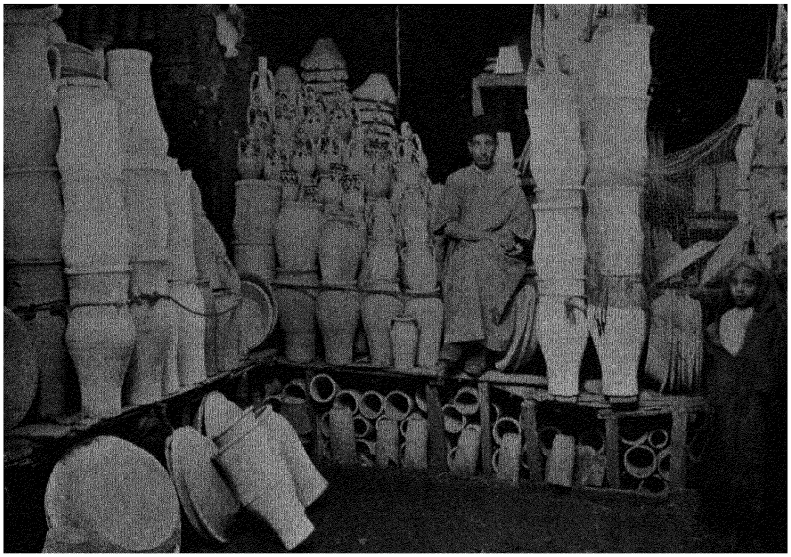
As I proceeded south along the coast of Morocco the country became very flat and sandy, with only a few trees here and there. Nevertheless some fine gardens were to be seen, surrounded by hedges of cacti and prickly pear. On reaching Azemmour, where the coast lands become more fertile and there are well-watered gardens with a profusion of pomegranate bloom, I noticed that the native houses appear to have their backs turned towards the street, with narrow slits in the walls to allow daylight to filter into the interiors. Not so many years ago it was decidedly risky for strangers to enter this little town, which is typically Moorish in appearance. Mazagan, which was built by the Portuguese, has been increased in size by the addition of a new town outside the old walls. The beautiful sandy beach and the quaint little harbour are the only attractions of this place.

The road to Marakesh now turns inland and runs

parallel with a camel track. While crossing a monotonous plain many caravans coming from the Atlas Mountains and the Sahara Desert were passed. Somehow our motor car seemed incongruous beside the swaying " ships of the desert," with their loads of merchandise and balloon-like tents. The dust was so thick that I was beginning to wonder whether my decision to continue by car to the southern capital of Morocco had been a wise one. The rugged plain had become very monotonous, and the heat of the sun was considerable. Suddenly the scene changed ; the air cleared somewhat, and the horizon was broken by a vast wall of blue-grey—it was the abrupt western slope of the great Atlas Range.

Some miles farther on an isolated clump of palm trees made their appearance ; and then came the peculiar halo of flame-coloured dust which hovers always over *Marakesh the Red.* When the massive walls, loophole towers and tall palms which surround this city came into view, I knew that " Morocco City," as it was once called, would be worth the slight discomfort experienced on the desert road. The gates are not handsome like those of Meknes, but the whole city is enclosed by a wall eight miles in circumference, which is far more perfect and solid-looking than that which surrounds Fez.

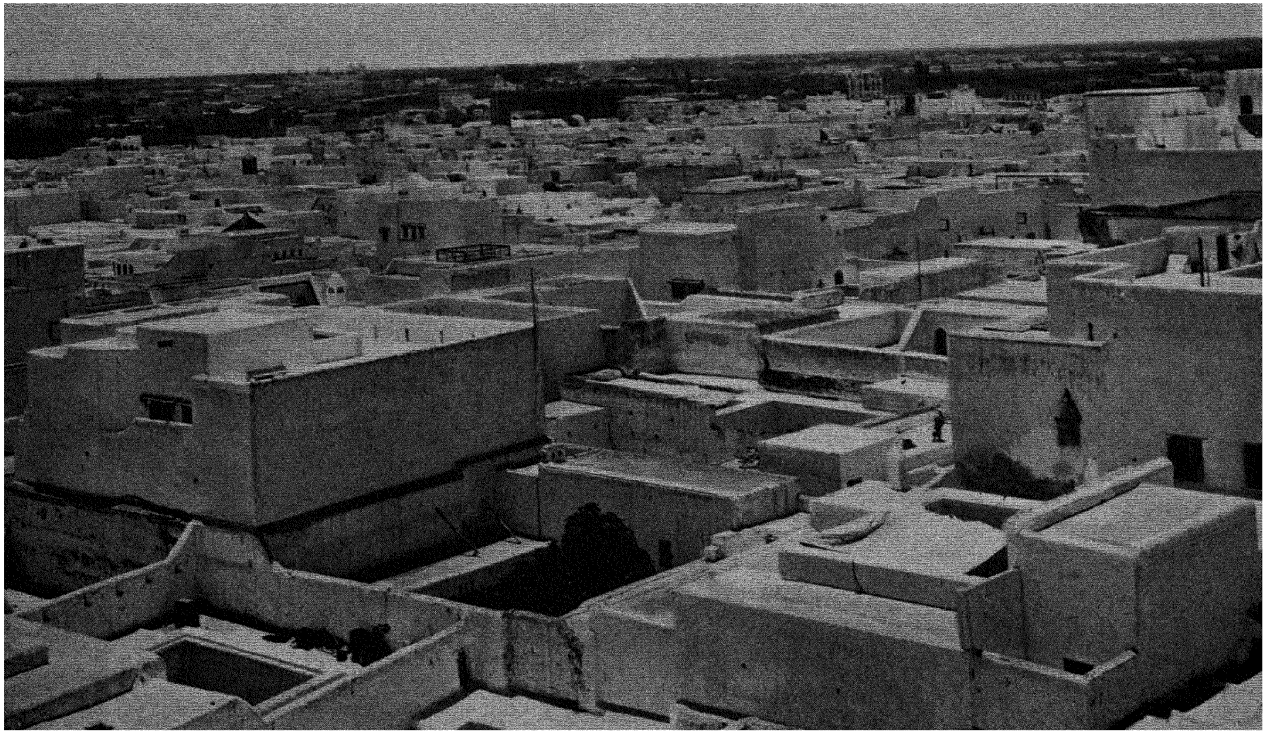
Marakesh is built almost entirely of mud and brick, which is decidedly red in colour. The exceptions are, of course, the palaces, which have graceful arabesques of cedar-wood and plaster intaglio work. One of the most noticeable features is the red-stone tower of the Matoubia Mosque, which is 200 feet high. In this city there is the usual labyrinth of tortuous streets and narrow alleys where primitive native



POTTERY FOR SALE IN THE SÛK—FEZ

AN OPEN-AIR CAFÉ—MOROCCO

Facing page 172—2.



CASABLANCA
Bird's-eye View.

artists work with still more primitive tools. Unlike Fez, however, Marakesh has several vast squares, such as that of the Djemâ el Fna, where merchandise from overseas as well as the produce of local fields and gardens is sold in the midst of a vast throng of purchasers, idlers, tale-tellers, fire-eaters and jugglers.

In the bazaars of Marakesh beautifully inlaid daggers, guns, and other curios may be purchased at the open booths beneath the matting-covered roof. The town is full of pale-skinned but fierce-looking Berbers from the castle-like strongholds of the Atlas Mountains, where the feudal life of the Middle Ages still continues. Marakesh is a city of palaces, and one of these, the Babia, is now used as a French Residency. The interior of this place is marvellously beautiful and gives one the impression of looking at coloured-stone embroidery. Some of the *medersas* are, however, still closed to the infidel.

I went one afternoon to the mausoleum of the Saadian sultans. The very existence of these tombs was unsuspected until quite recent years, as they had been cleverly concealed. The finely decorated interiors, which are in a perfect state of repair, exhibit some of the most intricate patterns which I saw in Morocco—the land of mosaics, tiles and arabesques.

CHAPTER XXV

GLIMPSES OF SPAIN

ANCIENT waters in which the empires of the past were cradled, with encircling shores crowned by innumerable Grecian temples, Roman theatres and Moslem mosques—a *potpourri* of Europe, Africa and the East, with all the changes of scene caused by the difference in race, custom and continent—these are the things which constitute both the interest and the lure of the Mediterranean.

This sea is the coupling which joins three continents, and it can only be studied at first hand. Glance at a map and you can see that its waters, shores and islands appear very small, yet I have crossed and cruised this sea many times only to find on each occasion something different : new and unexpected scenes and interests.

When rounding Cape Trafalgar into the bay where Nelson made history, the portals of this amphibious realm stretch away ahead, from the great pointed rock-fortress of Gibraltar, yellow in the sunshine, to where, far across the blue foam-flecked Straits, can be seen the dim grey outlines of Cape Spartel, and the white towers, walls and cupolas of the international city of Tangier.

To see with another's eyes needs imagination, but this should not be difficult in the case of the great

Rock—one of the Pillars of Hercules—which we are slowly approaching with the light of the westering sun tinting its steep slope with orange flame. Here is the changing panorama as I see it from the deck of a liner which is making her way towards the artificial harbour in the shadow of Britain's greatest sea fortress. The breeze which so often blows through this neck of the Mediterranean bottle—varying from fifteen to thirty miles in width—is causing a succession of little white-topped waves ; and the smoke of other steamers besides our own blows ahead as if anxious to come to rest inside the great stone breakwaters stretching out their glinting arms into the blue of the sea. The distance from the shore is decreasing rapidly, and it needs a tilt of the head to bring the sharp point of the 700-feet-high rock into view, while far away in the haze beyond there is the faint outline of purple mountains, the westernmost heights of the Sierra Nevada, on the mainland of Spain. Looking seawards across the Straits, a white blur in the dark grey coastline shows where the sunlight is catching the stucco houses of Oriental Tangier.

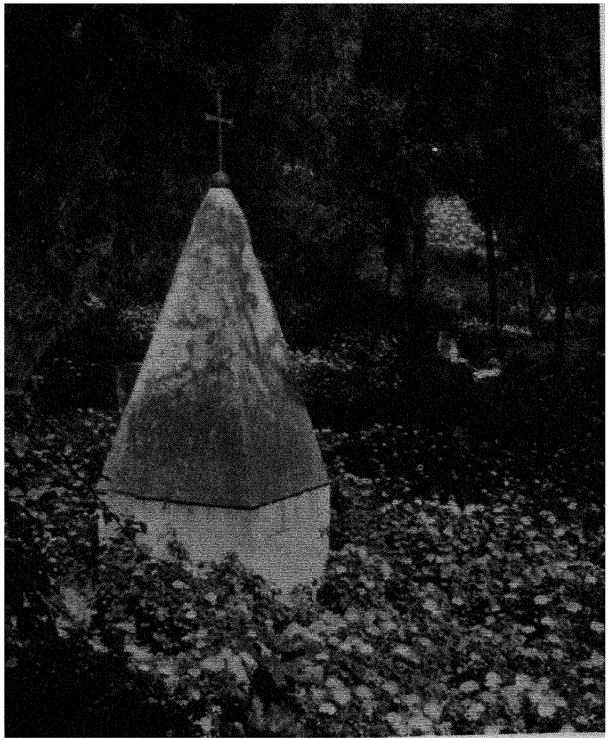
An hour ashore in Gibraltar is enough to make any Englishman feel at home, because of the presence of so many khaki-clad and blue-suited men and the number of football grounds which occupy every square yard of waste land that can be called level. The Rock is only three miles in length from north to south, and is not more than three-quarters of a mile broad at its widest part. It is, consequently, the smallest of the British possessions, but its early history was stormy because so many nations struggled to obtain possession of this key to the Mediterranean. During the last six centuries it has withstood thirteen

sieges, but only three of these, however, occurred during the British occupation.

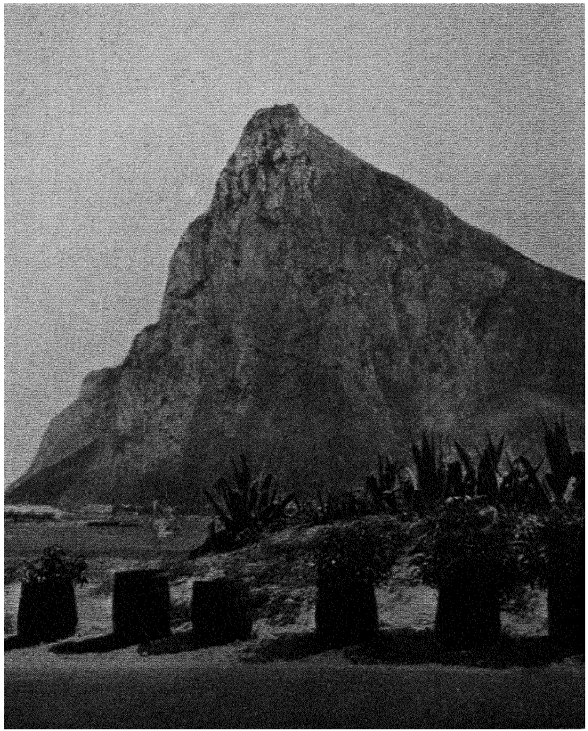
Standing in one of its many galleries—a series of passages tunnelled in the rock during the great siege —and looking out over the narrow Straits, it is not difficult to understand why this rock, which juts out into the water but is joined to the mainland of Spain by a narrow isthmus, holds the key to the Central Sea. Unlike the other towns bordering the Straits, it is an elevated rock-peninsula with extremely precipitous slopes. It possesses a fine harbour, and has been more heavily fortified than any other spot on earth. Above all, it has a powerful fleet as its mobile ally in both the Mediterranean and the Atlantic.

The streets of what is known as North Town are very crowded during the daytime with people who come across the causeway from Spain to do work or business in the little town. Those born on the Rock are called "scorpions," but they are comparatively few, and in the evening, at gunfire, the bulk of the civil population seems to pass out through the landward gate and cross the neutral zone of the isthmus to the town of Linea in Spain.

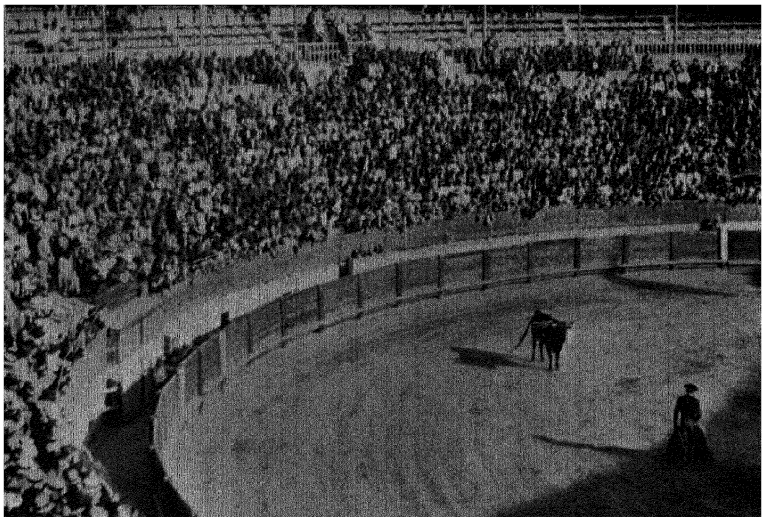
It does not take long to see all that Gibraltar has of interest for anyone who is not a soldier or military engineer. There are a great number of itinerant vendors of scarves, shawls and embroideries, which are supposed to be Spanish and hand-made, but are generally machine products from Manchester. The Roman Catholic cathedral was rebuilt by Ferdinand in 1502, on the site of a Moorish mosque. The Anglican cathedral dates from 1821. In the cemetery, just outside the Southport Gate, are the graves of



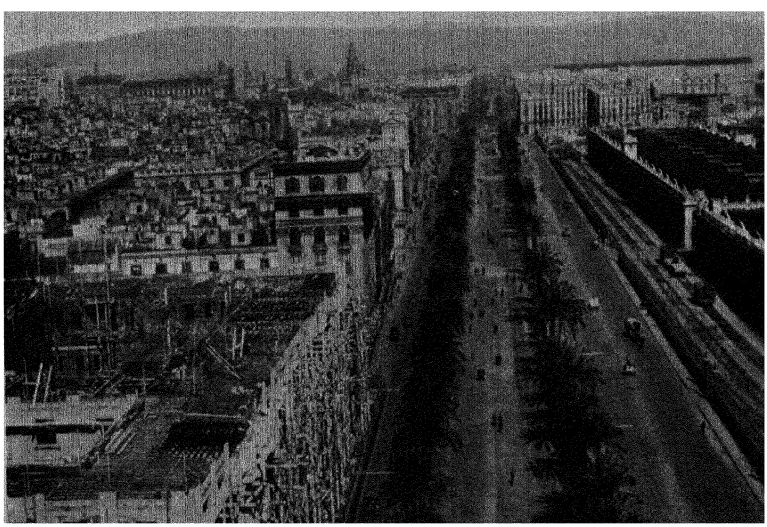
THE NELSON, OR TRAFALGAR CEMETERY—GIBRALTAR



GIBRALTAR



A BULL-FIGHT BARCELONA



ONE OF THE PRINCIPAL AVENUES—BARCELONA

British seamen who fell at Trafalgar. Then there are the beautiful Alameda Gardens, the stalactites of St Michael's Cave, a drive round the Rock to Rosia Bay, and possibly a glimpse of the only wild monkeys remaining in Europe.

After a day and a night in calm waters, which catch the fires of sunrise and sunset, with the glittering and usually snow-capped peaks of the Sierra Nevada breaking the northern skyline, the beautiful Bay of Palma is reached. Here, in the Island of Majorca, olive groves, mountains, sleepy red and white villages, Roman fortifications, and gay little bathing beaches are the attractions.

The town of Palma, which has about 90,000 inhabitants, nestles in one of the most beautiful of Mediterranean bays. Its old Lonja, or Stock Exchange, the Almadane Palace and the Arabian-looking houses all seem to be surrounded with palms and semi-tropical foliage and flowers. As the ship approaches the shore the object which at once catches the eye is the cathedral, with its towers and pinnacles rising high above the huddle of roofs at its base. Although Palma is both interesting and picturesque, especially the pine-clad slopes leading up to the fortified castle of Bellver, I was more impressed with the beauties of Majorca after a drive to the ruined Carthusian convent at Valldemosa, where the cell temporarily occupied by George Sand was proudly exhibited. The road back to the capital of the island, by way of Miramar and through endless orange groves to the famous Soller Harbour and Pass, was still more beautiful. While at Palma I also visited Inca, renowned for its potteries, Mandacor, a tiny,

fanciful little town near some gloomy grottoes, and Pollensa, with its harbour and picturesque lateen-sailed fishing craft.

Romantic Majorca is the island of which the immortal Chopin wrote : " Here I am in the midst of palms and cedars, cactuses, olives, lemons, aloes, figs and pomegranates. The sky is a turquoise-blue, the sea is azure, the mountains an emerald-green. . . . All day long the sun shines and it is warm ! " Unfortunately I visited Palma in early June and so missed the picturesque annual celebrations of the inhabitants of Soller, on May 11th and 12th, commemorating a victory which their ancestors achieved over the Barbary pirates in 1561. It is curious to observe in all parts of the world the survival of old memories and customs for much longer periods among isolated groups of people, such as those of Majorca, than among city dwellers.

Before this land of *manaña* had become monotonous a small and extremely inexpensive steamer had carried me across the intervening waters into the finest harbour and city of south-eastern Spain. Gay, bustling Barcelona is divided by its old walls into the ancient and the modern. The streets of the former portion of the city are narrow, and redolent of old Spain, with many historic monuments, churches and mansions of a bygone but romantic past. Modern Barcelona, however, shows another sight—broad avenues, laid out on a uniform plan and flanked by imposing buildings. One such boulevard is over seven miles in length !

The cathedral, with its beautiful stalls, sculptured shrine and tomb of St Eulalia, coats of arms of the

Knights of the Golden Fleece, and its jewels and silver ornaments; the Town Hall, with its fourteenth-century façade; the great theatre of the Lisco, one of the finest in the world; the gay ring of "blood and sand"; the extraordinary towers of the Holy Family; the Court of the Orange Trees in the Government Palace; above all, the gay and colourful *Ramblas*, so typical of Spanish everyday life, are the sights which charmed me in this great Catalonian city of over a million people.

The walls of old Barcelona were demolished in 1845 and the area covered by the citadel was then laid out as a beautiful semi-tropical garden. That portion of the old town which still remains consists very largely of brick buildings with flat roofs and a decidedly Oriental appearance. In striking contrast to these streets are the broad and straight tree-lined thoroughfares of the new town, flanked by fine modern buildings of hewn stone.

One of the most noticeable characteristics of Barcelona are the exquisite gardens. Regarding this colourful feature of almost every Spanish town, enlightenment came from a national publication: "There are gardens of the most varied styles, the conditions of climate and soil in many regions being peculiarly favourable to the art of cultivation. Spain possesses, too, a special type of garden—the Arab. The Moors left in the peninsula their poetic conception of the garden as a place of silent peace, shut in by *patios* from the busy world without, shaded by tall cypress trees and lulled by the music of flowing water."

While journeying from Barcelona to Madrid, I obtained from local sources some of the essential

facts in the story of Spain. According to one authority, it is the geographical situation which has been largely instrumental in determining the vicissitudes of its history. "Situated on the extreme west coast of Europe, accessible by sea, and famous for its wealth and fertile soil, it has known many migrations throughout the various ages. From this arises the complexity and variety of everything Spanish, a variety which makes itself manifest in the scenery and in the typical characteristics of the art, literature and customs of the country. The sea which surrounds it on almost every side has opened the way to successive invasions. Ligurians, Iberians and Celts figure in the pages of its early history. Phœnicians, Greeks, Carthaginians and Romans arrive as colonisers by way of the blue Mediterranean. The rapid Romanisation of the peninsula makes of Spain a Latin country, while the invasions of the barbarians—more especially the Visigoths—add a new element, the Germanic. In the eighth century comes the invasion which was to leave a deeper mark on the spirit and soil of Spain. The Arabs took almost complete possession of the country, leaving only two small centres of resistance—one in Asturias and the other in the Pyrenees."

For eight centuries these Christian centres slowly expanded and, later, were instrumental in bringing about the unity of Spain. "The struggle which culminated in this unity, however, was by no means an incessant one. Arabs and Christians fraternised on many occasions, and to such a degree that the Moslem element came to penetrate the whole of Spanish life and to characterise all its art and customs. A Moslem caliph of Córdoba is quite as much a Spaniard as any *hidalgo* of Leon or Castile.

Unity is achieved in the fifteenth century during the reign of the Catholic monarchs. It is then that Spain undertakes the greatest enterprise of her history : the discovery of a new world, to which she gives her blood, her civilisation, her language. During the sixteenth century the glory of Spain dazzles the world ; it triumphs on the battlefield ; it leads the intellectual world. Cervantes creates the Spanish type, *par excellence*, in Don Quixote."

The capital of Spain has a population of about 700,000 and stands on an elevated plateau adjoining the almost treeless tableland of New Castile. The highest point in the city is about 2,400 feet above sea-level. Owing to its altitude the climate is somewhat treacherous, being liable to sudden variations of temperature. The daily range sometimes exceeds 50°, and on the summer morning of my arrival not only was the thermometer showing 106° F. in the shade but a dust-laden wind was blowing from the barren plateau around.

In winter a cold breeze often blows down on to Madrid from the heights of the Sierra Guadarrama, bringing frost and snow to the city, and skating is by no means an unknown pastime during these months. It was the rapid variation of temperature between day and night which proved my undoing before I had been many days in the Spanish capital, and eventually prevented me from completing my investigations in this really fine city. There is a Spanish proverb which, unfortunately, I did not hear until too late : " The wind of Madrid will kill a man when it will not blow out a candle."

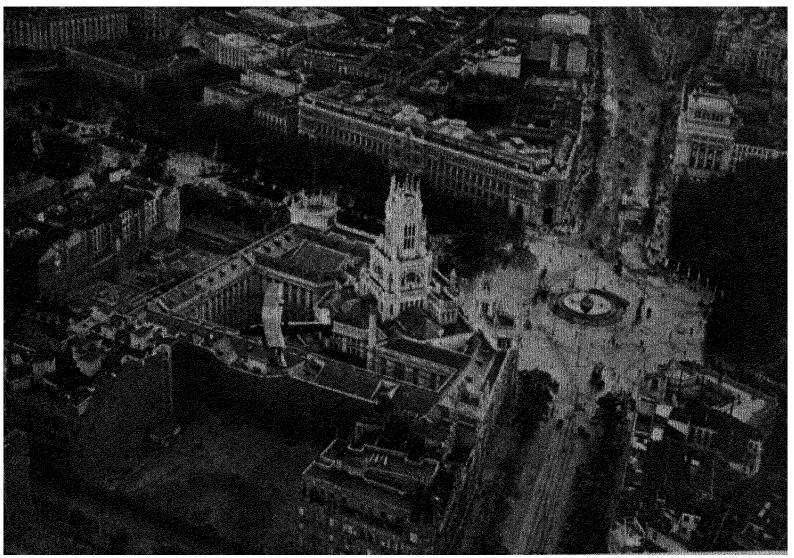
Although several of the old gates of this city still

remain, the walls no longer exist, and the Puerta del Sol, which now forms the busy centre of the capital and its largest plaza, derives its name from what was once the East Gate. This was decorated on the outside with the emblem of the Sun. From this point many of the principal streets of Madrid radiate; among them is the fine Calle de Alcalá, which is bordered on both sides with acacias. Here is the Academy of Fine Arts, containing some of the best-known works of Murillo. In the Plaza de las Cortes I found the Spanish Parliament buildings, almost facing a fine bronze statue of Cervantes. The principal shopping thoroughfares are the Calle de Carretas, San Jeronimo and the Montera.

In this central part of Madrid there is the Plaza Mayor, where all the principal events in the city's stormy history have taken place, including the *autos-de-fé* of the Inquisition days and the early bull-fights of more recent times. Not far away stands the house in which Cervantes lived from 1606-16. Curiously, Madrid has but few public buildings of outstanding interest. The old royal palace occupies the site of a Moorish citadel, but it is neither ancient nor particularly imposing. It was constructed about the middle of the eighteenth century.

Close to the royal palace there is an Armoury containing one of the finest collections of arms and armour in the world, and the Royal Picture Gallery is also interesting because of its 2,000 pictures by Titian, Tintoretto, Velasquez, Van Dyck, Rubens, Raphael and others. It was, however, in the Prado and in the Paseo de Recoletas that I saw most of everyday life in the Spanish capital. These fine promenades still retain some of the national character-

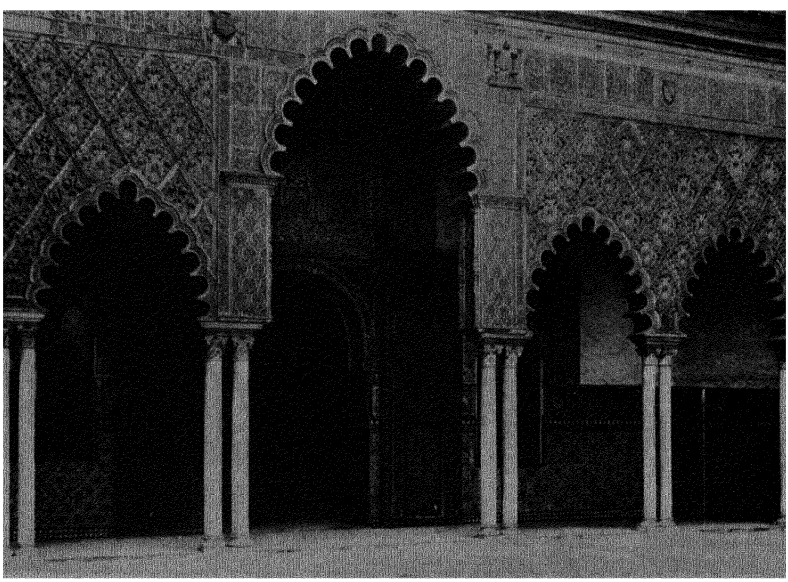
PUERTA DEL SOL MADRID
Business Centre of the Spanish Capital.



PLAZA DE CASTELAR AND ALCALA STREET—MADRID

Facing page 182—2.

ROMERIA. A RELIGIOUS FESTIVAL—SEVILLE



ALCAZAR: PATIO DE LAS DOUCELLAS - SEVILLE

istics which are sadly lacking in the new parts of the city. In the Buen Retiro gardens Madrid lazies beneath the trees, walks round the ponds or looks at the menagerie. Down in the Paseo de la Virgen del Puerto one sees the excitable, shawl-enshrouded, and otherwise gaily clad people of the poorer quarters of the city.

Perhaps it was that I looked at Madrid through the blue glasses of a pessimism created by the extremely changeable climate, and to correct any false impression which may be reflected in my description of this city, it is necessary to give here the opinion of a more enthusiastic observer: "Madrid's peculiar elusive charm consists, perhaps largely, in its isolation and in its clean transparent air and the nearness of the sky that enfolds it. The subtle atmosphere, the enveloping canopy of sky, are familiar in the deserted uplands of Castile, but Madrid is the only large city in which their presence is felt. Madrid thus, besides being a great capital of splendid streets, has something of the hospitable aloofness, the *gallardia* of a mountain village; it is a Vienna nearly two and a half thousand feet above the sea. The clear light throws everything into sharp relief, the sky comes pressing down into the street, and a shower of hail in a white and blue March day, or a sudden view of mountain crowned with snow, or the luxuriant foliage of a park outlined, artificial and motionless, on the glowing serene summer sky, have the strangeness of a new experience. They are common things seen in a new light, and the same unusualness attaches to the buildings, the banks and shops and central post office, all on a magnificent scale (their solid, sensible architecture contrasts favourably with the tawdry

design of some of Barcelona's modern buildings), so that the Calle de Alcalá, without containing any great churches or ancient colleges, is certainly now one of the most splendid and beautiful streets in Europe." *

About thirty-one miles north-west of Madrid, on a barren slope of the Sierra de Guadarrama, at an altitude of 3,433 feet, stands that amazing building, part convent, part church, and yet a palace and a mausoleum, called the Escorial. Its situation is bleak and forbidding, but it owes its existence to Philip II., who made a vow that if the Spanish army defeated the French forces at the battle of St Quentin, he would erect the largest monastery in the world as a thank-offering. It was duly commenced in 1563 and completed in 1584. During these twenty-two years over eight millions sterling were expended upon it. Contrary to that which has usually occurred, its founder not only had the pleasure of seeing it completed but also was buried within its walls.

To describe the Escorial is difficult, because the impression it creates is merely that of a building of great size, height and solidity, amid a group of bare and steep mountains. Some idea of its dimensions may be gathered from the fact that the buildings occupy 40,000 square yards, that the rooms and corridors, if placed end to end, would extend for over fifteen miles. There are said to be nearly 12,000 windows and doors. The most imposing edifice is the church, which belongs to the Doric style and is elaborately furnished with pictures, bronzes and marbles. Beneath the high altar is the royal mauso-

* A. F. G. Bell, "A Pilgrim in Spain."

leum, containing the black marble sarcophagi of kings and mothers of kings only. For other members of the royal family there is the Panteon de los Infantes.

In one place there is the apartment, or really cell, of Philip II., who, when too ill to leave his bed, could see through an aperture in the wall the celebration of Mass. The library, which contains one of the finest collections of books in Europe, possesses among its treasures the Arabic manuscripts taken from the palace of the Emperor of Morocco early in the seventeenth century. Fires and pillage have robbed the Escorial of many of its art treasures, but the number of paintings by famous old masters, the statuary and other objects is still very large. It is really a complete royal city, with forty chapels, courts and rooms.

While in Madrid everything seemed to conspire against my studying the life and ways of the capital ; first came illness and then a widespread and long-continued strike of the transport and other workers. It was, in fact, with great relief that I found myself in the more congenial atmosphere of the chief city of Andalusia.

Seville is the fourth largest city of Spain, and it is certainly the most joyous and colourful of them all. Situated on the banks of the Guadalquivir River and surrounded by a fertile and almost garden-like plain, it formed a pleasing contrast to barren and dusty Madrid.

It so happened that I entered this city during one of the religious festivals for which it is famous. The streets were gay with flowers and the people, many of whom had come in from the surrounding

country, were dressed in the vivid and picturesque costumes of old Andalusia. The city still retains its Moorish appearance, and there are many narrow and winding passageways bordered by old houses. In one quarter, or rather suburb, that of the Triana, live many picturesque gipsies.

Seville, with its memories of Columbus, Cortes, Pizarro, Murillo and Velasquez, is a city of sunshine and colour, with much that is historic still in evidence, including that wonderful specimen of Moslem architecture, which, from the twelfth century up to quite modern times, has been the residence of both Mohammedan and Christian kings, the exquisite Alcazar.

This palace with its wonderful gardens, almost unsurpassed in the world, is entered through the gay Court of Flags. The Alcazar in the time of the Romans was an acropolis, or citadel, which was afterwards occupied and embellished by the Moors. In later years it was altered by Pedro I. of Castile and, finally, enlarged by Charles V. It now bears traces of all these periods and rulers. It was once surrounded by walls and towers, of which the principal survivor is the Torre del Oro.

Among the more interesting features of this building are the Hall of Ambassadors, the Court of the Maidens and the Patio de las Muñecas (dolls), all exquisitely decorated with coloured tiles. In the Salon of Charles V. there is a fine collection of tapestries, and the whole building stands in the most beautiful of semi-tropical gardens.

Another relic of the Moorish Empire is the Giralda, a bell-tower, 295 feet in height. It was originally the minaret of the Great Mosque erected by the

Moors in 1184. Unfortunately, the upper part, above the belfry, was added in the seventeenth century. The site of the Great Mosque is now occupied by the famous cathedral, which was commenced in 1403 and completed in 1505. The ashes of Christopher Columbus are preserved in this building, and his son, Ferdinand, is buried in the royal chapel. The treasury contains jewels of great value. It is, however, the marble floor and the seventy-four windows of painted glass which give to the interior such a striking appearance.

Many kings and queens are buried in this cathedral of Seville. The body of one, Don Fernando, the conqueror of Seville, lies in a casket of embossed silver. Among the more curious features there is the life-size image of the Virgin presented by St Louis of France in the thirteenth century. It is a wooden figure, with movable arms and hair of spun gold, which is seated on a silver throne. During the festivals of Corpus Christi and the Immaculate Conception the choir boys perform a dance with castanets before the altar. The origin of this curious custom is unknown.

The platform on which the cathedral stands is surrounded by a hundred columns from the mosque which originally occupied the site. After St Peter's, Rome, it is one of the largest Christian churches in the world.

Walking one day along the banks of the Guadalquivir, which has often been called the "Spanish Rhine," I was reminded by the comparatively large ships alongside the quays that Seville has always been closely associated with foreign adventure, although distant over fifty miles from the sea. Just

before reaching the beautiful Exposition Grounds and the fine Plaza de España, there appeared the Tower of Gold, which was constructed by the Arabs in the eleventh century. It is a most artistic structure which is now used by the port officials. In the Calle de Santander there is also a Silver Tower; but the places of most interest, apart from mere sightseeing, are, undoubtedly, the Archives of the Indies, wherein are stored thousands of interesting documents and maps concerning the history of the early Spanish oversea possessions; and the Colombina Library, containing all the documents referring to the discovery, conquest and colonisation of the Americas. Yet another interesting building is the Palace of the Dueñas, the seventeenth-century residence of the Duke of Alba, which has a magnificent *patio* and collection of painted tiles. Seville exhibits all the colour and old-world elegance of Andalusia.

There can be no doubt that the most striking characteristic of Spain is its Oriental aspect. "It may truly be said that Spain is an Eastern land, so deeply has the Oriental spirit permeated the whole country," says one national authority. "Ages of intercourse with the Arabs have left unmistakable traces on the Spanish soil and spirit, and in this respect Spain presents a special physiognomy which distinguishes it from the other countries of Europe."

"From one end of the peninsula to the other Spanish art betrays a marked Oriental influence. In architecture we have examples of the Arab art of the Emirate, such as the marvellous Mosque of Córdoba, while that of the Caliphate is represented by the splendid additions made to this building, and by the

tenth-century palace of Medina Azahara. Fine examples of the art of the Taifas kings are the 'Cristo de la Luz' at Toledo, and the 'Aljaferia,' or pottery factory, at Zaragoza; from the Almohad period we have the Tower of Gold at Seville and the lovely Giralda, a twelfth-century work; from the days of the kingdom of Granada the peerless Alhambra, the last monument of Spanish Orientalism, rising up in the midst of a marvellous panorama, with its gorgeous apartments, its romantic *patios*, its gardens, its pools and its fountains."

It was to Granada, on the north-western slopes of the Sierra Nevada, that I journeyed from Seville. This lofty little town of about 80,000 people stands on a spur of the great range overlooking the fertile lowlands of the *Vega de Granada*, and almost in the shadow of the snow-capped Veleta and Mulahacen, both over 11,000 feet high. It comprises three different little towns—the quarter established by refugees in 1410, the town itself and the *Albaicin*, or Moorish city, which was once a favourite place of residence among the Arab nobles, now largely composed of tortuous, ill-paved and narrow streets, flanked by buildings which still retain a decidedly Oriental appearance. In the old Bibarrambla were held the Moorish tournaments. Apart from the cathedral, which is much ornamented with jasper and coloured marble, there is the beautiful Generalife Gardens, in which the Oriental is mixed with the orthodox Western element.

It was, however, to see the Alhambra, one of the wonders of the world, that I had come to Granada. It occupies a plateau to itself and is enclosed by sturdy walls with thirteen towers. Below, on one side, is

the beautiful Alhambra Park. Great doubt exists regarding the origin of the name, although the explanation which appeals to me most is that the word *Alhambra*, in Arabic, signifies " the red," and was given to this palace-fortress of the Moorish kings of Granada because of the reddish colour of the sun-dried *tapia* bricks with which the outer walls are built. However this may be, the palace took over a hundred years to construct, from 1248 to 1355, and much of the interior decoration is ascribed to Yusef I.

After the expulsion of the Moors, much damage was done by the new conquerors of the country, and in later years many additions were made which now cause the Alhambra to represent a variety of periods and tastes. The park below is full of nightingales, many of the trees are English elms planted by the Duke of Wellington, and the woods are rendered musical by the sound of cascades and fountains. The oldest remaining part of the Moorish Palace are the massive walls and towers of the citadel, above which was first raised the royal standard of Ferdinand and Isabella after the conquest of Granada in 1492.

Despite the often ill-advised work of alteration and restoration, the Alhambra remains the finest example of Moorish architecture existing to-day. Most of the rooms open on to central courts, and their airy lightness and colouring contrast with the extreme severity of the exterior. Arabesques, marble pillars and arches, fretted ceilings and filigree work in stucco and tiles, with gold, blue and red as the predominating colours, form the principal interior embellishments. The walls are composed of painted tiles in the form of panels, and the patterns wrought into arabesques are of almost incredible intricacy.

In the exquisite Court of the Myrtles, with its goldfish pond in the centre, the half-encircling colonnade, the myrtle trees, the beautifully decorated arches and windows—and, again, in the Court of the Lions, with its balcony supported by white marble columns, its dado of blue and yellow tiles, the amazing arabesques and alabaster fountain—I felt in complete agreement with Washington Irving, who, in his "Tales of the Alhambra," ascribes the charm of this dreamy old palace to its power of calling up vague reveries and picturings of the past.

"Here the hand of time has fallen the lightest, and the traces of Moorish elegance and splendour exist in almost their original brilliancy. Earthquakes have shaken the foundations of this pile and rent its rudest towers; yet see, not one of those slender columns has been displaced, not an arch of that light and fragile colonnade has given way, and all the fairy fretwork of these domes, apparently as unsubstantial as the crystal fabrics of a morning's frost, yet exist after the lapse of centuries, almost as fresh as if from the hand of the Moslem artist."

"Everything here appears calculated to inspire kind and happy feelings, for everything is delicate and beautiful. The very light falls tenderly from above through the lantern of a dome tinted and wrought as if by fairy hands. Through the ample and fretted arch of the portal I behold the Court of the Lions, with brilliant sunshine gleaming along its colonnades and sparkling in its fountains. . . . It needs but a slight exertion of the fancy to picture some pensive beauty of the harem loitering in these secluded haunts of Oriental luxury."

To admire the halls and courts of this beautiful

building is but natural, although the human suffering caused by its erection can be better judged when one reaches the outlying Palacio de Generalife, or " Villa of the Architect," with its pretty gardens. Near-by stands the Villa of the Martyrs, which commemorates the Christian slaves who were confined in subterranean dungeons beneath this place and were employed by day and by night—with the aid of torches—to build the original Alhambra.

CHAPTER XXVI

IN AND AROUND THE WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN

THE ship progressed through calm waters, with everybody on board playing deck games and swimming in the canvas tank erected on the fore-deck. In the evenings we danced beneath a gloriously clear Mediterranean moon, and then, early one morning, the ragged outline of the Isle of Corsica appeared from out of the blue haze where sea and sky blended indefinitely. Extending in a half-circle round a small bay lay the white city of Ajaccio, the capital. In the background, ridges of hills seemed to have been placed in the correct order to support the towering 8,000-feet-high crest of Monte d'Oro.

Directly one lands, two things become noticeable: one is the fragrant smell of the many almond trees and the little flowers of the distant *maquis*, and the other is that Ajaccio was the birthplace of Napoleon I. —quays, streets, houses, statues and relics of whom are almost as numerous as the almond trees. Here is an island with an equable climate the year round, so long as the highlands of the interior are avoided. The vegetation and flowers which grow within the shelter of the mountain wall are mostly of the sub-tropical variety, and form masses of colour against the grey-green rocks and white houses.

Although the monument of Napoleon and his brothers—all of whom are shown in Roman garb—which stands in the Place du Diamant is particularly hideous, the Casa Bonaparte, on the little Place Loetitia, where the Emperor was born in 1769 and spent most of his early days, is alone sufficient to justify a visit to Ajaccio. In this unpretentious four-storeyed house, with its simple furniture, there still lingers an indefinable atmosphere which compels reverence in all who enter. One sees the room in which the erstwhile Master of Europe was born, the trap-door in his bedroom through which he escaped from the Paolists, and many of those little personal relics which strike a note so different, so much more human, than that of his impressive tomb in the Invalides.

Ajaccio was founded by the Genoese in the same year as Columbus discovered America, and still possesses a citadel almost as old as the town. The streets in which the leisurely life of Corsica can best be studied are the two principal thoroughfares—if such a busy-sounding name can be applied to sleepy Ajaccio—the Cours Napoléon and the Boulevard Grandval. This latter promenade follows the sea-coast for a considerable distance. The flat-roofed houses often have gardens filled with palms, mimosa, oleanders, oranges, roses, geraniums and almond and eucalyptus trees. Old walls everywhere support a mass of blooms. Perhaps the Corsican saying, "Time is made for slaves," best describes the life of this town, which was created the capital of the island by Napoleon in 1811 in order to please his mother—Madame Loetitia Ramolino Bonaparte, or "Madame Mère," as she is still affectionately called in Corsica.

The interior of the island is very mountainous. Many of the roads are mere ledges of rock. One of the most beautiful districts is that of the Forêt de l'Ospedale, with its villages built on terraces in the hillsides. I noticed that the peasant women of Corsica, who dress mostly in very full, dark-coloured clothes, carry water on their heads in Grecian-looking vessels, and that the donkey is most decidedly the beast of burden. The hills are covered with the *maquis*, a kind of shrubbery which forms a matted undergrowth into which it is impossible to penetrate. When the Corsican peasant becomes a brigand, he takes to the *maquis* and cuts secret paths to his stronghold. There are still quite a number of such outlaws living in almost feudal state in their rocky castles, surrounded by the low Corsican jungle. From time to time they are hunted and besieged by troops and police, but the capture of one or two merely means the creation of others, who desire to enjoy for at least a few years this lucrative and free life.

While in the amazing old town of Bonifacio, which appears to overhang the sea from the top of a wave-worn cliff, I learned that the fragrant smell noticed on landing at Ajaccio was not so much the scent of almond blossom, as I had supposed, but of the plants in the *maquis*, which are often aromatic. The most interesting sight of Bonifacio, apart from the old walls, narrow streets, citadel, and coat of arms above its doors, is the Staircase of the King of Aragon, which is said to have been built in a night during the siege of 1420. A woman heard the noise made by the storming party, who were cutting the steps in the rock, and alarmed the defenders of the citadel. Another interesting feature is the wonderful grotto of

Sdragonata, the floor of which consists very largely of lapis lazuli.

I have grown accustomed to being told that by omitting to visit a certain spot—usually in a very remote part of every country—the finest or most interesting sight of all has been missed. This intelligence, given by a local resident, is usually accompanied by many sighs, indicative of his or her longing to again visit the scene that a mere stranger has wantonly, criminally neglected ; and so it was when I arrived in the mountain city of Corte, situated almost in the centre of the island. I met a forest officer who, when he heard that my intention was to leave Corsica as soon as I had seen Bastia, the only other town of importance, exclaimed, " Oh, but you must see the Red Rocks of the Calanches in the Gulf of Porto." He described how blood-coloured rocks, scattered far and wide over the blue sea, and rising upwards in tiers to the summit of a lofty cliff, covered by the green of trees, form the most striking contrast of natural colouring to be found anywhere. At the time I considered this an exaggeration, but discovered some months afterwards that his description was correct.

However, Corte, with its old castle perched on a lofty rock and its house in which lived Paoli, who freed Corsica from the rule of the Genoese, compensated for what I unwittingly missed. Then came Bastia, decidedly the most prosperous and energetic town in the island, with its irregular white houses facing the water-front, and the busy little harbour. It was from this place that I said good-bye to Corsica, one of the most interesting islands in the Western Mediterranean.

CHAPTER XXVII

IN AND AROUND THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

PASSING the still active volcano-island of Stromboli, which rises steeply from the sea and casts red glows every few minutes on the sea around whenever a burst of flame comes from its molten lava far down below the ocean bed, the little French steamboat in which I was travelling to Athens made a brief call at the old city of Syracuse, in the Island of Sicily. Here are the ruins of a great theatre, probably the most ancient in the world, which was constructed nearly five centuries before the Christian era, and is hollowed out of the solid rock. It is capable of seating 24,000 people.

From Sicily we crossed the Ionian Sea, and caught the wind which so frequently blows down the Adriatic and makes the waves run high off the coast of Crete. However, the blow was only of short duration, and we were soon cruising through the jewel-like Grecian islands, with their interesting sponge fisheries. The little white houses on the shore, almost on the brink of the sapphire sea, seemed to have sponges drying on all their flat or slightly inclined roofs. Then came the Piræus, the ancient port of Athens, which city, although beyond vision from the sea, can be reached in less than half an hour from the landing-place.

It is not my intention to enter into a lengthy description of all that is to be seen either in old or new Athens. The latter is a modern capital with many fine buildings, including a splendid opera house, national museum, cathedral and university, but it pales into insignificance beside the ruins of the Ancient City, with the glamour which must for ever surround all that is left of what was undoubtedly the most artistic civilisation the world has yet known.

Modern Athens, with its streets, cafés, and its kilted soldiers, who appear almost grotesque, suffers too much by comparison with old Athens—or, more correctly, with one's ideas of what this city was like in the golden age of Pericles, between 500 and 400 B.C., when many of its famous buildings were constructed.

The crowning glory of Ancient Greece was undoubtedly the Acropolis, and it was towards the gigantic ruins on this famous hill that I made a kind of "pilgrim's progress" from one shrine to another. After the Royal Gardens there was the Arch of Hadrian, and the massive columns of the Temple of Jupiter. Later on I came to the Theatre of Dionysius, then the Odeum of Herod Atticus, which, unlike the original Greek theatre, once had a cedar roof. About the Theatre of Dionysius we read that, "The actors had in view the cliffs upon which stood the Parthenon and the gleaming statue of Protective Pallas. The whole was open to the air." Remembering these facts, we are able to understand the peculiar grandeur and propriety of those addresses to the powers of the earth and sky, to the temples of the gods, to the all-seeing sun and glittering ocean waves, which are so common in Greek tragedy.

After the Theseum, which is now a museum, I made my way to Niké Athena, or the Temple of Wingless Victory, so called because the builders believed that Victory would never fly away. Unfortunately, this temple is not now in its original state, the broken and scattered fragments having been collected and re-erected into that which one sees to-day.

The Acropolis is entered by way of the Propylæa, which once possessed a roof of white marble and was, in part, a picture gallery. Aristophanes gives it that Athens was celebrated for "myrtles, honey, the Propylæa and figs." From this ruin I wandered into the Parthenon, and, while standing in the silence between its massive fluted columns of Pentelic marble, I tried to reconstruct the picture of twenty-five centuries ago. There can be no doubt that the grey stone one sees to-day is but a colourless skeleton of former times. In the museum at Constantinople there is a magnificent sarcophagus with coloured reliefs, which came originally from this Grecian temple. Colour was no doubt also used to ornament the statues and other objects with which it was adorned. There are many reasons why this artistic civilisation should be extremely difficult to picture in the imagination, with all its colourful pageantry, after the lapse of such a great period of time. It was ancient even when Saul of Tarsus passed among the Athenians, and was greeted as a "setter forth of strange gods." Then, after a period of darkness about which so little is known, the veil was lifted early in the sixth century, when the Parthenon was in use as a Christian church which had been dedicated to the Virgin Mary. In the year 1460 it came under

Turkish dominion, and was converted into a mosque with a tall minaret rising from the south-west angle. In the middle of the seventeenth century it was used as a powder magazine, and Venetian shots caused an explosion which damaged some of its columns. On many occasions it has been plundered of its more interesting relics, which now repose in distant museums, and so this temple to-day is but the shell of a lost glory, which only a student of the past can invest with detail and colour. Looking down upon the blue waters of Phaleron Bay, this ancient pile of immortal stone is a monument to the glory of Ancient Greece.

The view from the top of the Acropolis is surely unique in the world. One gazes down upon ancient history, on the ruins of a city which gave art to the world. There, in a patch of sunlight, is the incomparably beautiful porch of the Caryatides marking the Erechtheum, once a vast temple where the cult of Athena had its origin. In an area of momentary shadow, cast by a fleecy cloud, stands the prison of Socrates and the Tower of Wind. Rising boldly above the chaos of columns and pavements is Mars Hill, from which St Paul admonished the pleasure-seeking Athenians; and away beyond the Llyssus stands the great Stadium and the Temple of Zeus.

When old Athens had shown me her treasures I drove away to the broad Plain of Marathon, and between the olive trees of the Sacred Way to the Pass of Daphni and the Bay of Eleusis, from which the most entrancing views of both city and countryside are obtained. Athens is a city which must be *studied* as well as *seen* to be properly understood, and I left it with only fragmentary mental pictures and a very incomplete knowledge.

This dissatisfied feeling comes eventually to most people who journey from place to place around the shores of the Mediterranean. It is due very largely to the dramatic change of scene and to the almost inconceivable variation in the different civilisations which flourished around this central sea of the old world. Crossing the island-filled Ægean Sea to Smyrna, I passed in a few hours from the Ancient West to the threshold of the colourful East.

Smyrna is not only one of the chief ports of the new Turkey, but it is also the centre of the dried fruit and carpet industries of Anatolia. True, it lost much of the importance it once possessed during the great fire of 1922, an episode of the last Greco-Turkish War. This event resulted in some of the most spectacular expulsions of people foreign to the soil on which they lived ever recorded in world history.

The fire destroyed a large portion of the business section of the town, which remained a charred ruin for some years. At the time of my visit it had not been properly rebuilt, but within a quarter of a mile of the debris-filled space there were the thriving bazaars of a typical Turkish town. Even the making of a small purchase, if value for money is required, necessitates much bargaining and finesse in Smyrna, as well as the drinking of more than one cup of black coffee.

The change from Asiatic Turkey to the Island of Rhodes created another mental hiatus, for here I was back once again in the mediæval Western world. This island, which was occupied by Italy during the war with Turkey—another almost unnoticed campaign

that occurred after the Great European War—has been converted into an attractive winter resort by the building of a first-class hotel with a golf-course and private bathing beach. This portion of the town of Rodi is interesting only to those intending to make a long stay in this beautiful island. With the few days at my disposal I explored the city itself, which in both aspect and origin belongs to the Middle Ages. The history is largely that of the Knights of St John, who took possession of Rhodes in 1310. These soldier-priests then became known as the Knights of Rhodes, and remained masters of the island up to the year 1523 when, after a long siege, they succumbed to Turkish assault.

The town has now a mixed population of Italians, Jews, Moslems and Arabs, each of which have their own quarters. Many of the streets and buildings are much as they were in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The "Street of the Knights," a long, broad and particularly straight thoroughfare, possesses many old houses, on the fronts of which may be seen the coats of arms of these old Crusaders. During the Turkish dominion the House of the Grand Master became the Palace of the Pasha, and the Church of St John was converted into a mosque. Among the beauties of the island are its rose gardens, and beyond the city there are the ruins at Lindos. Driving out into the range of hills which run from north to south of the island, I obtained a wonderful view over this portion of the Cyclades Archipelago, and also of Mount Ida in the more distant island of Crete.

From one scene of beauty to another. I am now at Famagusta, in the Island of Cyprus. It is a

beautiful city quite apart from its great historical interest. It stands on the site of *Arsinoe*, and was captured by Richard Cœur de Lion from the Byzantines in 1191, and passed successively under the sway of all who gained maritime supremacy in this unknown sea—the Genoese, Venetians and Turks —before it was annexed by Great Britain in 1914. Much has been accomplished during recent times to repair the ravages of three centuries of Turkish misrule.

Of Famagusta, Rider Haggard wrote, "Everywhere are the gaunt skeletons of churches, the foundations of walls of long fallen houses, and around, grim, solid, solemn, the vast circle of brick-hued fortifications." The town is walled and moated, and contains the ruins of 366 churches. Although the most interesting remains are those of the Cathedral of St Nicholas, and of the Church of St Sophia, with its amazing circular minaret and pointed archways, it is in Desdemona's Tower that romance comes upon the scene. According to my local guide it was in this grim edifice that the fair Desdemona was strangled by the Moor. Although I believe there is some considerable doubt as to the authenticity of the story, it certainly invested the ruin with an interest out of all proportion to the broken walls of the hundreds of churches.

A few miles outside Famagusta are the ruins of *Salamis*, the ancient capital of Cyprus, which was founded in the eleventh century B.C. Still farther afield lies the St Barnabas Monastery, where St Mark's Gospel was discovered. Motoring across a small section of the island from Famagusta, past the Salt Lake and its flamingoes, I reached the little port of Larnica. One of the chief features of interest is the

Church of Faneromeni, just outside the town. In this underground place of worship the Christians used to hold their services in secret during the Turkish persecutions. The Teke is a mosque which is visited every year by thousands of Moslems because it contains the tomb of Mohammed's aunt. It is, in fact, a secondary Mecca.

During conversations with many well-informed people in Cyprus I learned that at the time of its annexation by Great Britain those of its inhabitants who so desired were permitted to retain their Turkish nationality without the imposition of any irksome restrictions or formalities beyond a simple declaration. Not a single Cypriote elected to do so, but, on the other hand, over 12,000 immediately applied for special certificates of British nationality.

Much has been done to bring this backward island into line with the more progressive countries bordering the Mediterranean. Quarantine, education, the drainage of mosquito-breeding lakes, and the building of roads and railways have done much in this direction. Although motors of all types are to be seen everywhere on the white and somewhat dusty roads, the mule cart, the laden donkey and the lordly camel still form the usual means of transport between the villages.

It is interesting to record that Queen Elizabeth granted a charter to what was called the Levant Company, which established a British Consulate and "factory" in Cyprus some years before the creation of the first East India Company. It was, in fact, the pioneer enterprise of this character in the East, although operated on similar lines to the still more ancient League of the Hanse. Each factory, as the

posts of the company were called, included in its personnel a consul, a doctor, a chaplain and a chancellor. Each of these little communities lived a simple and austere life. It is said that several of Nelson's ships, on their way to the battle of the Nile, were provisioned by the Levant Company.

Although English is the official language, both Turkish and Greek are permitted in Council and the Law Courts. Italian, French and a corrupt form of Arabic are also spoken by certain sections of the cosmopolitan population of both town and country-side. In the little bazaar of Famagusta, and at other places on this beautiful island, I came upon veiled Moslem women and Turkish-looking men, Greeks in national costume, with many priests—who appeared to be the only discontented element in the population —and congeries of races which defy analysis because of their mixture. In these quiet little bazaars, and in the older quarters of most towns, the streets are usually narrow—so built almost throughout the Near East to afford shade from the sun—and the houses constructed of stucco with the open-fronted booths of past centuries. During recent years, however, new sections have sprung into being adjoining the older towns, and these contain not only modern hotels and houses but also glass-fronted shops.

Cyprus is a land of flowers during the months from March to June, and there is a small summer hill-station on the pine-covered slopes of Troodos. In winter the climate is seldom uncomfortably cold or unduly wet. Kyrenia, on the coast, is excellent for bathing and archæological research, while, of course, Nicosia, the capital, is the reat centre of social life on the island.

It is, however, the orange groves, the beautiful views across country to the Karpass Mountains, and the quaintly dressed peasant women with their striped skirts, bright-hued kerchiefs, and laden donkeys, which appeal to one's sense of colour and the fitness of things amid the white walls, the oleander, the mediæval ruins, the Turkish houses, and the pink cyclomen-covered mountain sides beneath the blue skies of Cyprus.

"Malta has great memories," said the Prince of Wales on a recent historic occasion, and it is towards this island, the principal naval station of the British Empire in the Mediterranean, that I am now voyaging on a sea which is literally without a ripple.

"In ages long past the Maltese islands formed part of one of the land-bridges that united Europe to Africa. In those days the hippopotamus swam in the rivers that flowed down the sides of the mountains now submerged; the elephant roved about the groves in the valleys; the bear hunted the deer; gigantic swans and other aquatic birds lived in the lakes which swarmed with huge tortoises."

"Then a cataclysm took place; pinnacle after pinnacle disappeared beneath the waves, landslide followed landslide, and the large animals found themselves in surroundings ill-adapted to their development. They diminished in size and disappeared altogether. The now extinct pigmy elephant became a native of Malta."

Man appeared early in these islands. By the later Stone Age he had learned to build beautiful temples to his ancestors and to his gods. The neolithic temples of Malta stand out among the wonders of

the world. The definite history of Malta begins at about 1450 B.C. The Phœnicians were then at the height of their power and their ships scoured the Mediterranean. Malta naturally became Phœnician, and when Phœnicia fell and Carthage rose, Malta passed to the daughter state. Rome obtained possession of this island during the Second Punic War and gave it a period of great prosperity, as evinced by the existence of magnificent temples. In the year A.D. 58, St Paul was shipwrecked on its shores and converted the island to Christianity. After the downfall of the Roman Empire the island underwent the varying fortunes of the south of Europe until the end of the eighth century, when it was captured by the Arabs. In the year 1090 the island became a mere appendage of Sicily, and although heavily attacked by the Moors in 1429, the brave inhabitants succeeded in holding their own.

The glorious days of Malta began in the middle of the sixteenth century. At this time the Mediterranean was the scene of the struggles between the Cross and the Crescent. The chief defenders of the Cross were the Knights of St John, who, from their home in Rhodes, were a thorn in the Sultan's side. Soliman decided to drive them out, and after repeated attacks he succeeded in 1522, after meeting with a most stubborn resistance. The knights were then homeless. They wandered from one Christian court to another. At last, in 1530, through the intervention of the Pope, the Emperor Charles V. gave Malta to the Order. As soon as the knights set foot in the island the wrath of the Sultan was turned against it, and he immediately set about the formation of a vast armada to effect its capture.

The siege of Malta by overwhelming hordes of Turks under their pirate chiefs, in 1565, and its heroic defence by the people of the islands under the leadership of the knights, makes one of the brightest pages in the records of Christendom. The victory of the Cross over the Crescent was decisive, and in the year following this siege the foundation stone was laid of the fine city of Valetta, built as an impregnable bulwark against the Turks. Sir Walter Scott has compared this place to a dream, Disraeli called it a city of palaces, and both Nelson and Napoleon described it as " the greatest stronghold in Europe."

For two and a half centuries it was the home of chivalry. The eyes of all the Christian nations of Europe were turned towards it because their scions belonged to the illustrious Order, and the island was the centre of a pageant without parallel elsewhere or in other ages. Every stone in Valetta possesses a history. On the way to Egypt, in 1798, Napoleon captured the island and drove out the Order. Leaving a garrison of 4,000 men he hurried east. The Maltese rose against their French oppressors, and Nelson, who was returning victorious from the battle of the Nile, was asked by the people of the island for help. The French were eventually forced to surrender, and by the wish of the people this island became a dependency of the British Crown.

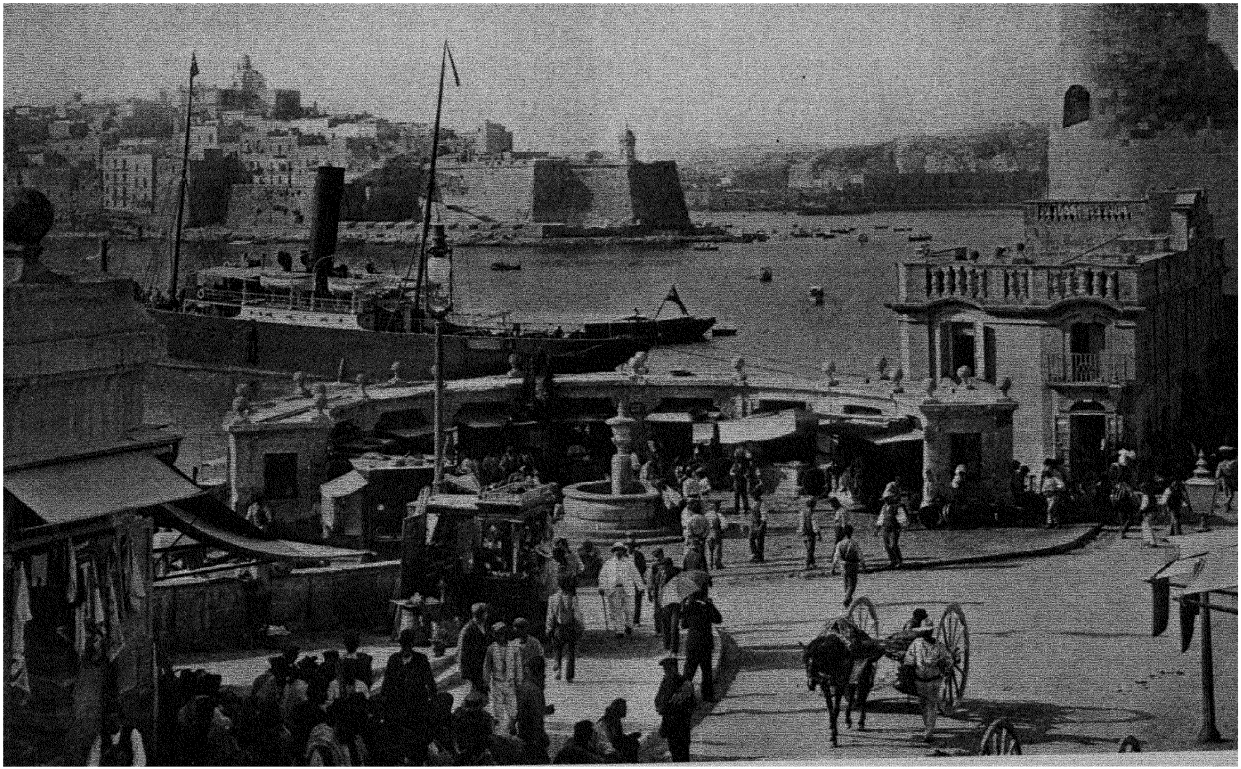
This glimpse into the past, mostly derived from official records, is necessary for the full enjoyment of the romantic atmosphere which still lingers around its old-world battlements, palaces, and buildings of the Order. It was the Grand Harbour of Valetta which first impressed me with the maritime fame throughout the ages of this little Mediterranean

island. Malta has ever been what she is to-day—the great link between the East and the West on the track of the everlasting voyages of mankind between the rising and the setting sun. I gazed at this marvellous harbour, about two miles in length and with inlet after inlet ; at the battlements rising from the water's edge to the skyline, surmounted by pergolas of green, with jutting bastions carrying quaint old sentry boxes ; at mighty battleships riding on the waters, and I realised that the secret of Malta was the mastery of this central sea.

A brightly painted boat, aflame with colour in the sunshine, which somehow caused my spirits to rise, carried me to the stone steps on shore ; and within an hour of settling in the comfortable hotel I was back in the Middle Ages with the chivalrous Knights of St John. On one side of the principal square stands the Palace of the Grand Masters, now occupied by the Government. It was completed in 1574, and is of the subdued style one would expect of this militant Christian Order. One of the most historic rooms is the Armoury, which contains 5,721 genuine pieces, among which I noticed the suits of armour worn by Grand Master Garces in 1599, which are of German make, and the magnificent panoply for man and horse of Grand Master Alof de Wignacourt, which is inlaid with gold and was made in Milan in the first year of the seventeenth century. Another magnificent set is that presented by King Henry VIII. of England to L'Isle Adam, the first Grand Master of Malta. The most striking things in the Council Chamber, which is now used by the Parliament of Malta, are the magnificent tapestries which hang all round the walls. They are among the most famous

productions of the Gobelins factories. The Hall of St Michael and St George, which was formerly the Reception Room of the Grand Masters, is now a State Ballroom, and takes its name from the British Order of Knighthood instituted by George IV. in 1818.

Undoubtedly the most ornate building connected with the Knights of Malta is the Cathedral Church of St John. Every Grand Master took a pride in beautifying this edifice, while the knights of each nationality—or really language—into which the Order was divided vied with one another in adorning their own chapel. In marked contrast with the austerity of the exterior is the magnificence which strikes the eye as one enters the building. Sir Walter Scott declared it to be the finest interior he had ever seen. The vast nave opens out before the eyes with a magnificence which appals. The arched roof is covered with beautiful paintings, the walls and pilasters with rich marbles and gilt carvings, and the floors with innumerable mosaic slabs. The impression created is that of a vast and richly adorned palace more than the interior of a church. The paintings on the arched roof are the work of Mari Mattia Preti, and show remarkable treatment of perspective foreshortening. There are about 400 memorial slabs recording the achievements of various knights, and these are emblazoned with the arms of the princely houses of Christendom. The Gobelins tapestries are hung only during certain religious festivals. In the Chapel of Our Lady there are two magnificent silver gates on a balustrade of marble; but the jewelled sanctuary lamp and the chain of gold, weighing nearly 2,000 ounces, were carried away by the French under



VALETTA—MALTA

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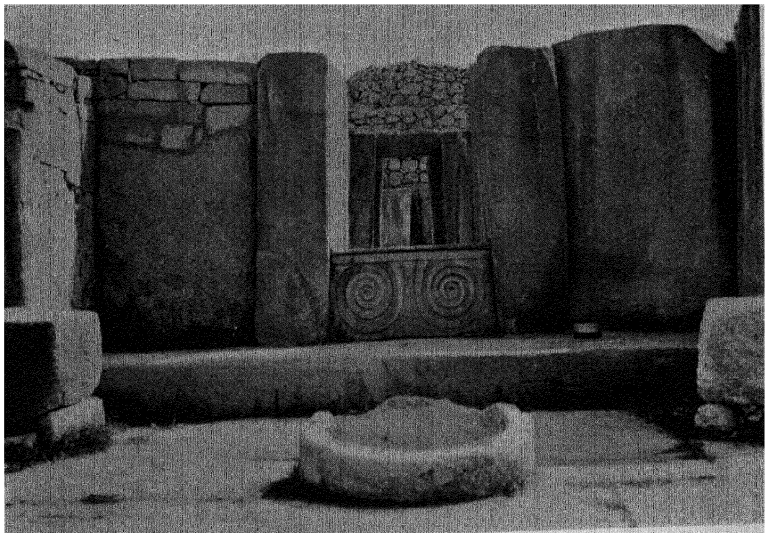
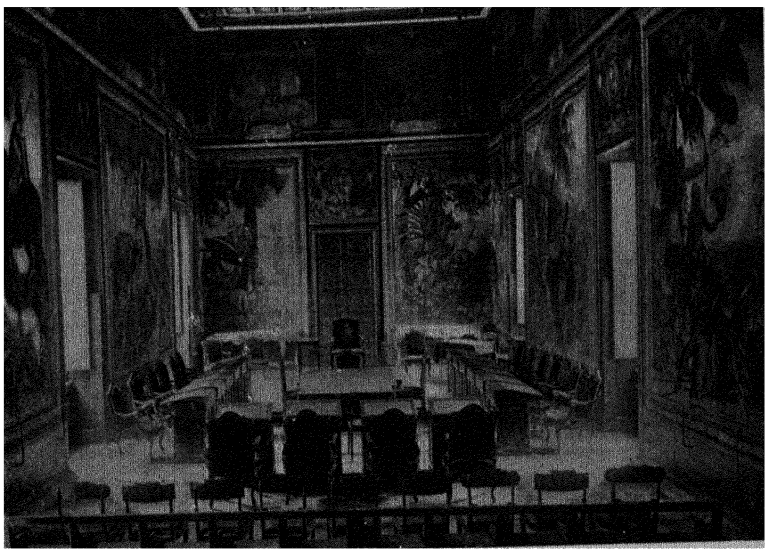


PREHISTORIC ALTAR—MALTA



COUNCIL ROOM IN THE PALACE, VALETTA—MALTA

Napoleon. Lapis lazuli and bronze are the materials used for the decoration of the high altar. This Cathedral of St John is, without doubt, one of the show places of the world.

It would be impossible to give here a description of the many finely decorated *auberges*, or houses of the Order, which I visited while in Valetta. Each language was allotted separate quarters, where the young knights were trained, and where lived also such of the older knights as did not maintain a number of men-at-arms or high estate. There is the Auberge d'Angleterre overlooking the Marsamuscette Harbour and the *auberges* of Provence, Italy, Castile, Aragon, France and Auvergne. Of these the most beautiful is that of Castile.

The forts guarding the entrance to the harbour have witnessed some of the most heroic episodes in the stormy history of the Middle Ages. It was from the walls of Senglea that the women of Malta poured boiling pitch on to the Turkish invaders. In the Public Library there is a collection of finely illuminated volumes and original manuscripts bearing the signatures of the great rulers of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Apart from the prehistoric temples of Malta—some of which are said to date from 3000 B.C., and about which nothing is definitely known—there is Notabile, the old capital of the island. While motoring to this place I noticed that the interior of the island is somewhat bare, although the quaintly terraced hillsides, the rugged valleys and the glimpses of blue water prevent the scenery from becoming monotonous. Notabile is one of the oldest towns in Europe, and it stands on a high hill, usually bathed in sunshine. It

was flourishing when St Paul lived there in A.D. 58. On the crest of the hill stands the cathedral, one of the most ancient in Christendom, as it is in part the church dedicated by the Apostle himself on the site where he performed his first miracle. In the choir there is a tall silver cross, brought from the Island of Rhodes by the knights, and said to be the one carried into Jerusalem by Godfrey de Bouillon, the leader of the First Crusade, whose castle I had seen, and who actually sold Antwerp and a portion of what is now Belgium in order to obtain the funds for the conquest of Jerusalem.

It must not be imagined that Malta is devoted entirely to things mediæval. Valetta is a bright little town with many lace and curio shops, and a remarkable street of steps. There is a fine seaside drive out to a point beyond Sliema, where good bathing in the bluest of blue water can be enjoyed nearly the whole year round. Some of the more modern palaces and gardens are also delightful places, and I spent several hours beneath the shady trees of the Maglio.

It was in the Island of Malta that my European travels came to a natural end. Southwards the great continent of Africa stretched away towards the bottom of the world; in many parts and to many people almost as mysterious now as in the days of Livingstone, Speke, Stanley, Baker, Gordon and the early pioneers of the nineteenth century. Africa called, but I did not realise then what the Dark Continent exacts as the price of its secrets.

CHAPTER XXVIII

A CITY OF THE ARABIAN NIGHTS

HAVING an eye for colour and a spirit receptive of romance, Port Said, with its inferno of chanting and begrimed natives carrying bags of coal from dust-enveloped barges to a fleet of ships waiting to pass through the Suez Canal, and its one little Bazaar street, crowded with touts, was a sad disappointment. Nor was this feeling dispelled some four hours later as I drove through the bizarre, cosmopolitan streets between the railway station and the Opera Square in new Cairo.

The glamour of the real land of the Pharaohs came later and remains with me still. I felt its first magic touch when watching the after-glow veil the great Pyramids—the enigma of the ages—in the characteristic rose-coloured haze of an Egyptian sunset. Then, again, on moving out into the surrounding world of silent sand to gaze up at the monstrous Sphinx, uncannily still and dark in the dim yellow light shed by a crescent moon hanging like a Chinese lantern in the purple void above.

Egypt, as all the world knows, is a narrow strip of verdant sedge which borders the Nile, one of the world's largest rivers. Palm groves, cotton-fields, curious mud-brick villages and gleaming white mosques and tombs, stretch from the fertile, irrigated

delta, with its wonderful flower and fruit gardens, to the arid, yellow desert. On the edge of the sand, which extends south, east and west from old Cairo for hundreds of miles, there are numerous ancient and shadowy temples and gorgeously decorated tombs. Its brilliant sunshine, which, during the winter months, infuses just the right amount of warmth and colour ; its majestic palms, silhouetted like green starfish against the yellow of the sand and the blue of the African sky ; the shimmering waters of the Nile, pearl-grey and limpid, broken only by the great white sails of the gyassas ; the tawny desert, painted every evening by the magic of the sunset hues ; and the amazing 4,000-year-old temples and tombs, are the things which fascinate in this open book of ancient history. Pervading all, both cities and monuments, there is the mystery of the East combined with the glamour of a wondrous past.

Cairo, where East meets West in a blaze of colour, is half ancient and half modern. It is the successor of Amru's city of El-Fostât, founded in A.D. 641. Its lines were marked out by Gawhar, the commander-in-chief of the Caliph's army. In A.D. 970 it was named El-Kahira, " The Victorious," owing to the planet Mars being in the ascendant at the time when the foundations were laid. The city of to-day has the Opera Square, with its shops, theatre, gardens, many-storeyed buildings, and its lines of speeding motor cars ; it has Shepheards, one of the world's most famous caravanserai ; it has the Semiramis, which is noted for its brilliant dinners and dances during the season, when the city of the caliphs is the rendezvous of international society ; it has the Gezira Club, with its tennis courts, polo grounds and

swimming-pool ; it has Mena House, the desert hotel in the shadow of the Pyramids, which in point of luxury rivals the best in Europe ; it has palaces, boulevards, electric light, taxis and palm-filled gardens.

A walk through the main streets is interesting enough in itself. One passes Shepheards, its balcony crowded with curious and amused travellers. Hawkers of all sorts are yelling or coaxing possible purchasers, offering post cards, ornamental fly-whisks, walking-sticks, shawls, *antikas* and scarabs, fresh from the factory. Snake-charmers, and boys with tame monkeys, are performing their tricks on the sidewalks. Motor cars and pedestrians throng the roads and pavements. At the open-air cafés are sitting crowds of Egyptians or, in the evening, foreigners of all kinds. The street widens out at the Opera Square; to the right hand are the shops, opposite them the Opera House, and to the left the railed-in Esbekieh Gardens, designed by the man who laid out the Bois de Boulogne ; straight ahead is the wide Midan Abdin, close to the royal palace.

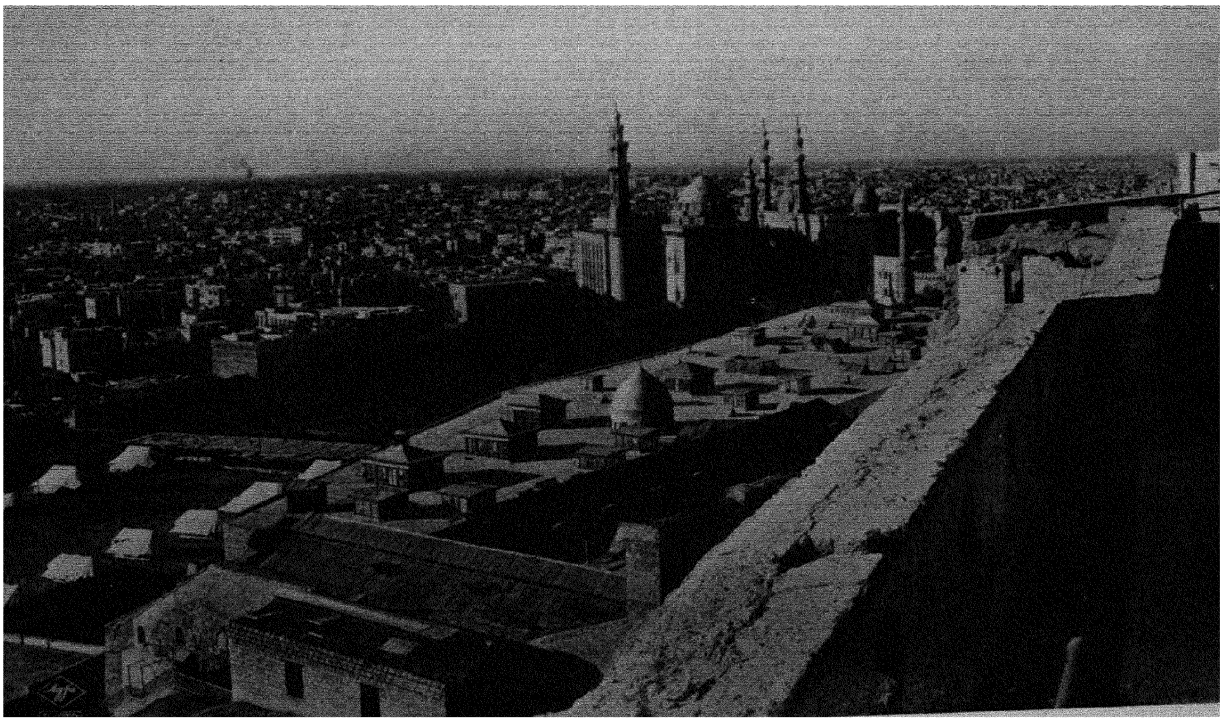
Above all, however, Cairo has the wonderful Museum of Antiquities, with its marvellous treasures from Tutankhamen's jewel-filled sepulchre. In this great building has been concentrated one of the finest collections possessed by any nation of its own antiquities. Hall after hall is filled with statues of rulers and gods covering a period of thousands of years. " There are altars and utensils from the temples, vessels and implements of the household and of the crafts, the jewellery and the toilet-boxes of royal ladies, the swords and axes of the soldiers, and an overwhelming multitude of other objects which the ancient Egyptian workman produced for the use

of his fellow-men," says Dr G. A. Reisner, the famous Egyptologist.

In the Hall of Tutankhamen I saw the black and gold statues which guarded the Pharaoh's tomb for 3,500 years, and all the intimate things of life in the royal household of ancient Egypt before the dawn of written history. There is the thrill of discovery when one enters this historic building.

Let us walk towards the quaint bazaars and old Cairo will show another sight. About half a mile up the Mousky—the oldest commercial street in Cairo—amid a haze of dust and in an atmosphere heavy with aromatic scents, one is surrounded by the jostling, white-robed and swarthy-faced peoples of many Eastern races. There is the lean-faced Bedouin, aloof and dignified ; the almost blue-black negro of the southern Nile ; the sturdy *fellah*, or Egyptian peasant ; the veiled Moslem women, with their black robes, crescent-shaped gold ear-rings, nose ornaments, and massive silver anklets ; thousands of tarbooshed children, black-coated shopkeepers, and European travellers from all parts of the world. It is a curious thing, but no one looks "just ordinary" in the bazaars of Cairo. To each there seems to cling some of the mystery and the glamour of the Orient.

Into the midst of this motley throng, with cracking whips and shouts, come laden camels, carrying their sneering faces high above the whirl of dust and agitated humanity. In this part of the great bazaar there are many open-fronted native restaurants, with steaming dishes of beans between their walls covered with lurid prints. Here, also, are booths showing Western wares, or rather things for everyday use by the poorer classes, which are Japanese copies of



CAIRO
General View from the Citadel.

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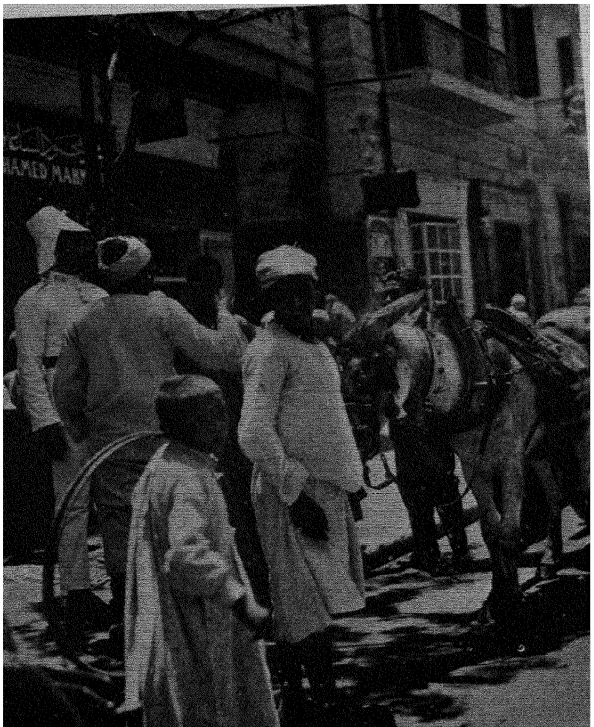


NATIVE POLICEMAN AND PORTERS—CAIRO

NATIVE WOMAN BIRDSELLER—CAIRO

European goods. Turn to the left, however, and in the narrow tortuous passages are the more Eastern-looking booths of the jewellers and the copper vendors.

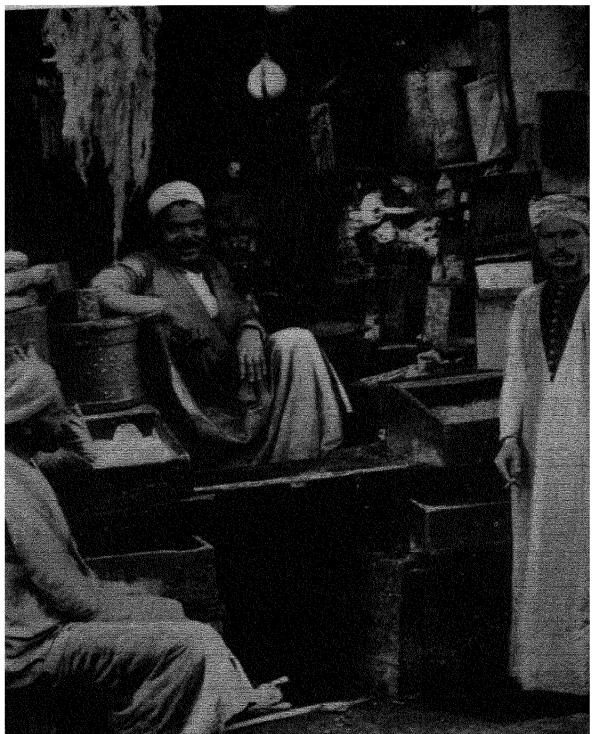
Then comes the *Khan Khalil*, or Turkish Bazaar, the largest in this vast and tortuous labyrinth of Eastern marts. It is very narrow, and parts of it are covered in. Its devious paths lead past gay-coloured booths displaying every kind of merchandise, gaudy and artistic, squalid and refined. Carpet sellers, shawl vendors, jewellers, amber and ivory turners, purveyors of costly perfumes which are measured by the drop from a glass rod, Indian and Persian merchants with gleaming silks and glittering gold and silver embroideries, sellers of curios from Cathay to the Sudan—all offer the same pressing invitation to enter one or other of the Aladdin's caves. To see —" there is no necessity to buy "—the blue turquoise, the peridots, the cat's-eyes, the soft Persian carpets, the prayer-mats, the swords of fine workmanship, the crude spears and the cruel *courbash*, or rhinoceros-hide slave whips. One has always to bargain, but it is a unique if somewhat tiring experience, with suitable intervals for cups of thick and sweet Egyptian coffee, scented Persian tea, sherbet, Turkish delight, or elaborately gilded cigarettes.

From the subdued light and peace of a shop one emerges again into the kaleidoscopic human maelstrom of the narrow streets. Walls and minarets rise up to where the hawks are wheeling against the blue-gold sky. Uncounted thousands pass in an hour or two through the never-ending maze of passages, and the noise of human speech rises and falls in crescendos of sound. To right and left are tiny courtyards steeped

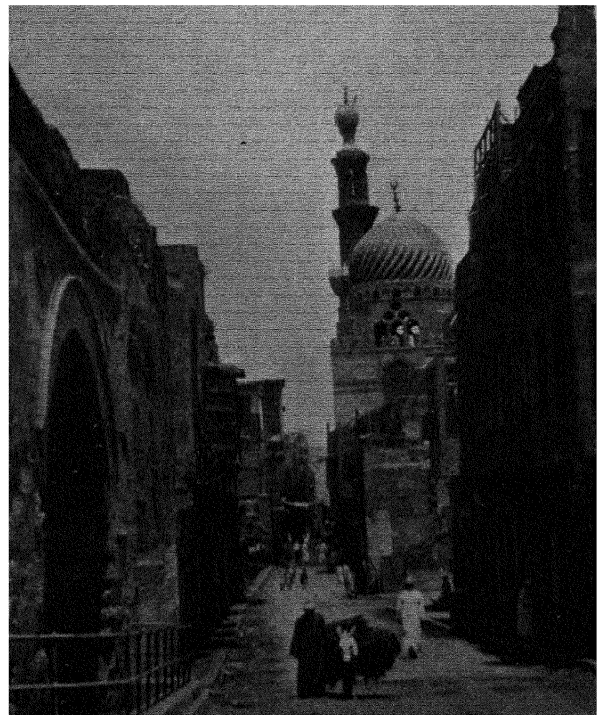
in gloom. The lintels of old doors, carved balconies, mural arabesques, crazy wooden staircases, tattered Arab signs, iron-barred windows and *mashrabia*, help to tone the line of tinsel-filled booths into that amazing assemblage of the old and the new—an Eastern bazaar.

In the midst of these hundred and one quaint, picturesque and often sordid, but always interesting, glimpses of Egyptian town life stands the exquisite little Blue Mosque, with its azure tiles centuries old. Here, also, is the Arab Museum, with its wonderful collection of gilt and enamelled glass mosque lamps, of which there are said to be only 160 left in the whole world, with more than half of this number still remaining in Cairo. Most of these beautiful ornaments were produced in Syria during the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Then there are, in this interesting building, whole rooms devoted to carved woodwork relics from the ancient city of Fostât, including most ingenious clay filters, and a design on linen similar to the Teutonic double-headed eagle.

Ascending the hill which is crowned by the Citadel, there is the great carpeted circle of Mohammed Ali, which is often called the Alabaster Mosque. "Its domed cupola and two slender graceful minarets are more conspicuous than anything else in Cairo." It was built by a Greek architect from Constantinople. In the courtyard there is a beautiful fountain, and in the western tower a clock presented by Louis Philippe of France. The interior is decidedly imposing; the columns and walls, up to a certain height, are of alabaster. The tomb of Mohammed Ali is enclosed by a railing.



A NATIVE SHOP IN THE OLD CITY—CAIRO



AN OLD STREET AND MOSQUE—CAIRO

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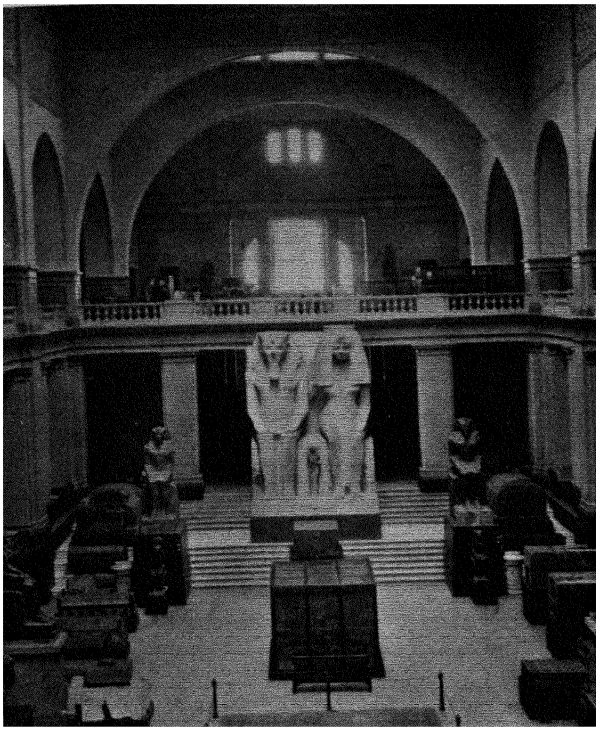
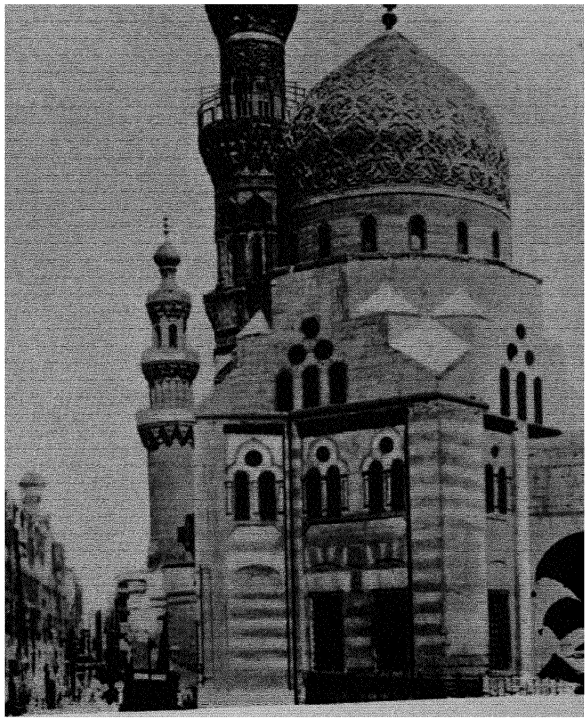


MUSEUM OF ANTIQUITIES—CAIRO



THE BLUE MOSQUE—CAIRO

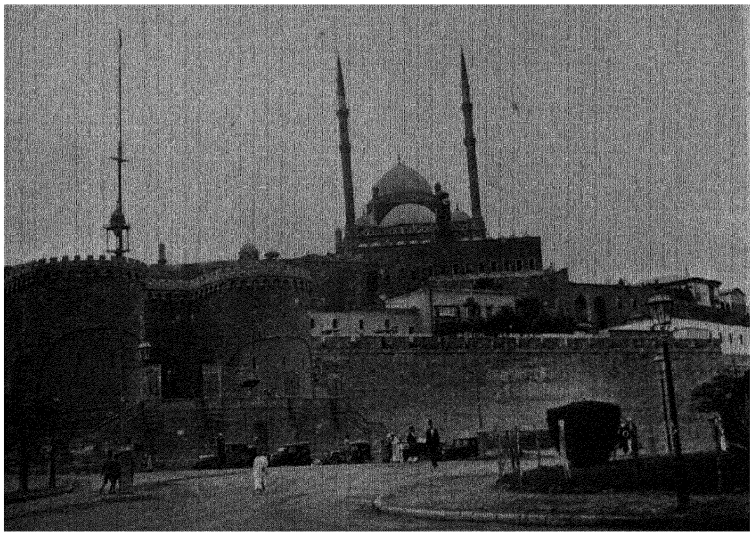
Not far away from this mosque, which is actually inside the precincts of the Citadel, is the so-called "Joseph's Well." It is 290 feet deep, and in former days the Citadel depended on it for its water supply. Winding round the shaft there is a passage cut out of the rock, and half-way down a platform from which a *sakkia*, or wheel, turned by oxen, was used in former times to raise the water to the surface. When the Citadel was built in the twelfth century Saladin Yusuf discovered this hole through the rock and had it cleared of sand. It has been named after him and not, as is generally supposed, in honour of the Joseph of Scripture.

The Citadel with its massive walls and towers, which was the scene of the massacre of the Mamelukes, remained the residence of the rulers of Egypt from the year 1207 to the days of Mohammed Ali in the nineteenth century. Just before sunset one of the most beautiful views in Egypt can be obtained from this castle, looking across the city with its hundreds of domes and minarets, to the Nile, the Pyramids of Giza and the distant hills of the Libyan Desert.

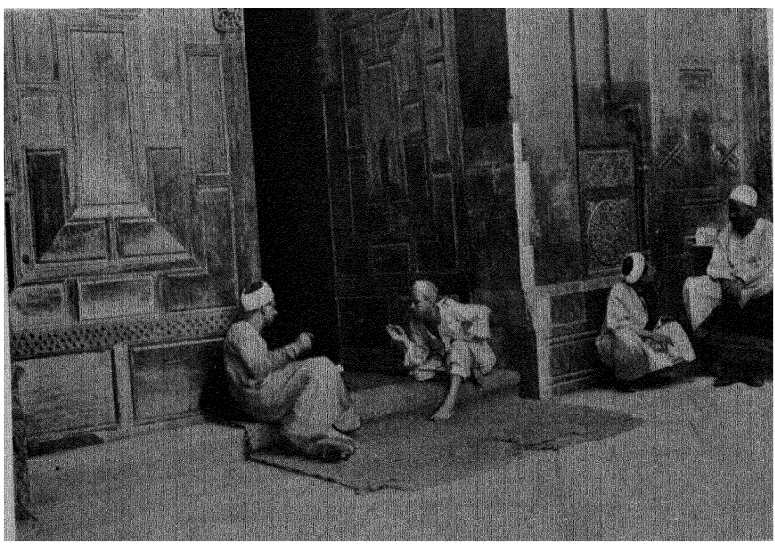
In a city like Cairo it is as impossible to describe even half that one sees as it is to draw comparisons between one building or view and another. For sheer beauty of outline, however, the tombs of the caliphs and those of the Mamelukes, with their fantastic old domes and minarets in a setting of low hills, seem difficult to beat ; and for living interest one has only to walk down the Sharia El-Halwagi to the University Mosque of El-Azhar, which dates from A.D. 972. About ten years later it was converted into a university, and is to-day the largest in the Mohammedan world. It has about 8,000 students

from all parts of the East and over 200 professors. "The subjects are first and foremost the Koran and its commentaries, and then the 'profane' subjects studied in the Middle Ages. All modern learning and knowledge is ignored. The religious education is entirely free." The *luwan* is the principal hall of instruction, and covers an area of 3,600 square yards. The students sit on their heels round their respective professors. In old Cairo there are a number of Coptic churches, dating back to the time of the Roman occupation and the introduction of Christianity into Egypt.

Edward Lane, in his translation of "The Arabian Nights," claims that Cairo was the scene of these adventures, and I think most people will agree with this verdict if they read "The Thousand and One Nights," which were put into writing in this city during the sixteenth century, and then wander in old Cairo beneath a desert moon.



CITADEL AND MOSQUE OF MOHAMMED ALI—CAIRO



TYPICAL SCENE ON THE STEPS OF THE MOHAMMED ALI MOSQUE—CAIRO

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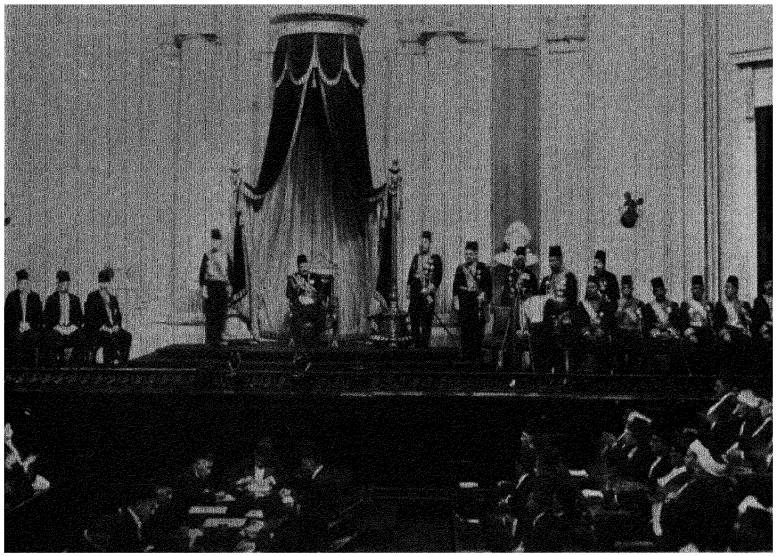


KING FUAD LISTENING TO SPEECH READ BY THE PRIME MINISTER AT THE OPENING OF A SESSION IN THE EGYPTIAN PARLIAMENT– CAIRO

INTERIOR OF THE FAMOUS EL AZHAR UNIVERSITY MOSQUE– CAIRO

CHAPTER XXIX

THE PYRAMIDS AND THE HOLY CARPET

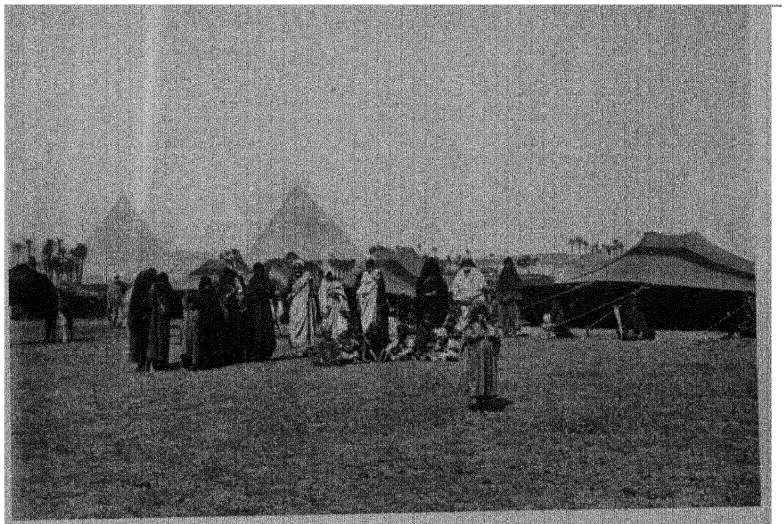
THE great Pyramids, built during the fourth dynasty, rise up from the desert only seven miles away from the gleaming white city of Cairo, which lies in the shadow of the Mokattam Hills. They mark the beginning of a line of temples, tombs and ruined cities, which stretches away down the Nile Valley for hundreds of miles to the desolation of the Nubian Desert, on the confines of the vast Sudan.

Only the size and form of the Pyramids remain to-day. "Stripped of their brilliant, white smooth casing, once covered with strange carvings and paintings, bereft of the huge precincts and stone gateways, they appear barbarous, rude, rugged, almost meaningless shapes of forgotten power. And the Sphinx is more wonderful, more mysterious still. No one can tell when the Sphinx came into being. There is a legend that it was in existence at the time when Chephren built his Pyramid. Thothmes IV. cleared away the sand in which it was buried, at the command—given in a dream—of Hermachis, who claimed that it was his statue. Probably a far greater antiquity belongs to it, for Princess Honitsen, daughter of Cheops (builder of the Great Pyramid), speaks in an inscription on a stele of a 'Temple of the Sphinx' as existing in her day.

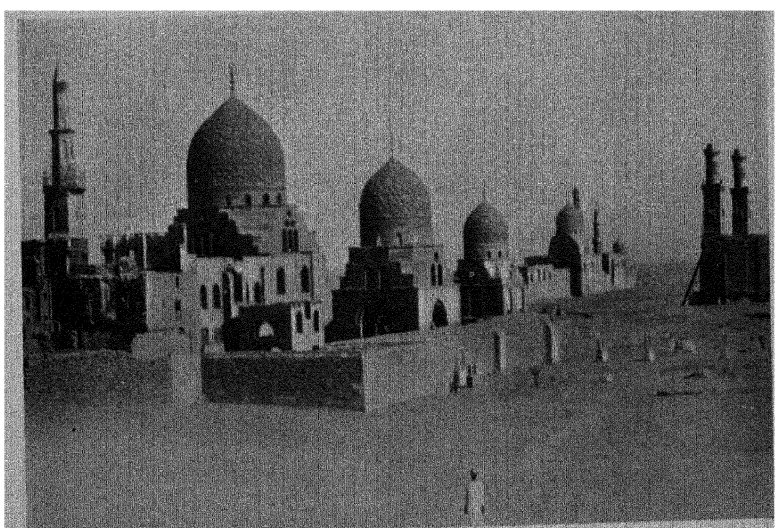
"We see the Sphinx now defaced and mutilated, though Arab writers speak of its once strangely beautiful features. A suggestion, this, that perhaps it is the sole survivor of a more ancient civilisation still, far beyond our ken; for the Egyptian craftsmen whom we know did not aim at beauty in itself; tied by convention, the keynote of their work was grandeur — immensity that disdained proportion. And yet, there, close to their most ancient monuments, is that figure, perfect in proportion, form and line, and once in beauty, a deeper, more mystical symbol than their most cunning gravings, more real in life than their most immense statues.

"But to return to the Pyramids themselves. There are three: the Great Pyramid of Cheops; the second, the Pyramid of Chephren, and the third, a smaller, of Mycerinus or Menkauru. They are all attributed to the fourth dynasty. The height of the Great Pyramid is 451 feet (formerly 482 feet), the sides are 750 feet long at the base (formerly 768 feet), and it covers an area of about thirteen acres. The second Pyramid is 447 feet high, and the third only 203 feet.

"The Pyramids seem to have been commenced with a nucleus of rock around which were built huge stone steps, finally filled in with smooth, polished stones. The outer casing has been wholly removed at various periods, and only a fragment of it remains on the second Pyramid. The smooth surface was covered with sculptures and inscriptions. The chambers and passages inside had their special uses as sepulchres, and were finally closed when the king for whom they were built had been entombed. There used to be a temple close to each pyramid devoted to the honour of the monarch."



ARAB ENCAMPMENT NEAR THE PYRAMIDS—CAIRO



TOMBS OF THE CALIPHS—CAIRO

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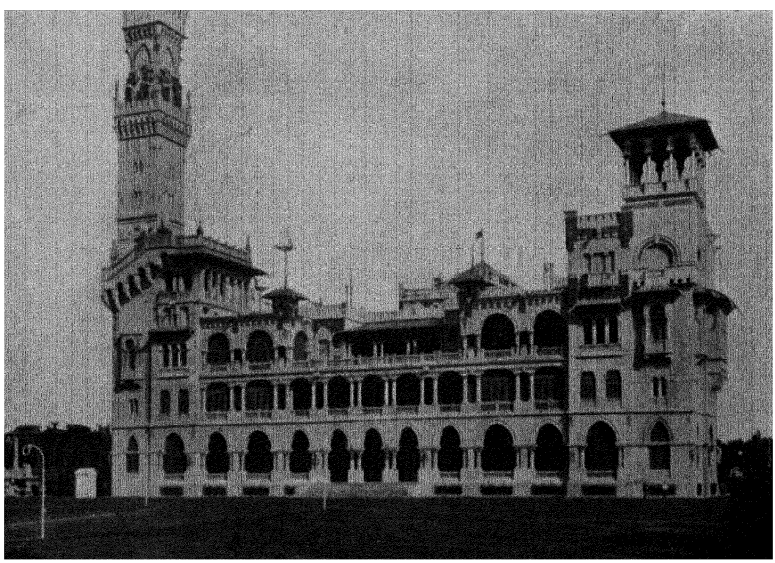
ALEXANDRIA
General View over City.



A MODERN EGYPTIAN ROYAL PALACE MONTAZA

These mysterious Pyramids, about which so much has been written and to which so many prophecies have been attributed, with the still greater enigma of the Sphinx below them, are best seen during the wonderful hour of sunset, when their summits are tinged with gold and the desert beneath is veiled in purple mist. The distant white minarets and cupolas of Cairo still gleam below the vividly illuminated Mokattam Ridge. The lines of camels are silhouetted against the orange sky, and there is no sound to disturb the serenity of the Egyptian night, for the feet of man and beast sink noiselessly into the sand.

The East is renowned for the splendour of its religious and other festivals, and although Cairo has its fair share of these picturesque happenings, many of them, like the passing of the Holy Carpet, take place during the hot summer months, when the city is almost empty of foreigners.

On one occasion I was returning from India, early in the spring of the year, and having some business to transact in Egypt, was fortunate enough to be in Cairo during this great ceremony. Although the telling of the story here is a departure from the strict sequence of events in Africa as they occurred, the religious and artistic significance of this procession is such that I feel it may help the reader to picture for himself something of the splendour of present-day Islamic festivals if I give here an excellent account of the event which appeared in an Egyptian publication.*

Of all the curious and interesting sights that meet the visitor to Egypt, that of the Holy Carpet procession is the strangest and

* *Egypt and the Sudan*, 1928, "The Holy Carpet Procession," by W. Stewart.

most beautiful. Weddings, circumcision processions, *zikrs*, and other fantasias there are in plenty, but it is only on the occasion of a great religious festival, such as the departure of the Holy Carpet (or Mahmal, as it is locally called) for Mecca, that one sees the real beauty of Oriental splendour of dress and trappings. All the various sects of Islam unite on this occasion with their banner-bearers, their sheikhs mounted on gaily caparisoned horses, often with harness-mountings of silver and silk, their incense burners, and their singing boys.

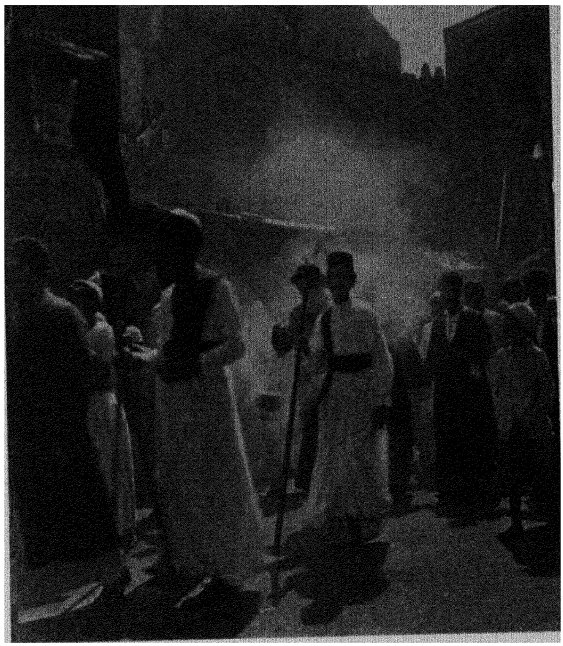
The Mahmal dates from the time of Queen Shagaret el Dur, who made the pilgrimage to Mecca in a covered palanquin, after the defeat of St Louis. The palanquin was a covered Hodaj of crimson embroidered silk, and in it sat the Queen, who took the Holy Carpet with her to cover the Kaabah at Mecca. This Hodaj has ever since been called the Mahmal, and the commander of the force escorting it has been called the Emir el Hag.

It is this Mahmal which is the principal feature of the wonderful procession which has for so many years been one of the great sights of Cairo when the annual pilgrimage leaves for Mecca.

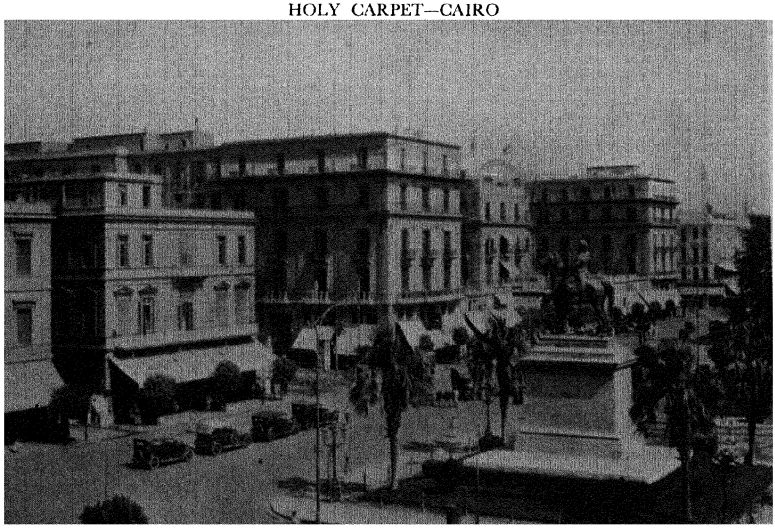
The Mahmal is received in the Citadel Square by H.M. the King and his Ministers, who kiss the long tassel hanging from the neck of the bearing camel and bless the pilgrimage before its departure. The procession slowly goes three times round the square, and then passes through the bazaars and out through the Eastern Gate of the city, through crowds of the adoring populace. The dresses and shawls of the sheikhs, and the embroidered banners of the different religious sects, make of this procession a marvellous display of Oriental colour, that in the narrow native streets and in the brilliant sunlight is a truly wonderful spectacle.

The cover of the Kaabah, described by some as a carpet, is really not a carpet at all. It is a black satin brocade of very stiff silk with a woven Arabic inscription containing the Mohammedan declaration of the faith. Portions of it are heavily embroidered with gold thread in relief, in the form of other religious inscriptions and arabesque ornament. The cloth is woven entirely by hand by methods such as were used in the thirteenth century. In fact, the looms are a curious and almost unique survival of the primitive draw-loom that was used throughout Italy and France before the invention of the Jaquard loom.

The heavy wooden hand looms have a complicated thread monture or harness, with six heddles in front to bind the satin



INCENSE BURNERS IN THE PROCESSION OF THE HOLY CARPET—CAIRO



THE OPERA SQUARE, PRINCIPAL MODERN THOROUGHFARE—CAIRO

Facing page 224—2.

BANNER-BEARERS IN THE PROCESSION OF THE HOLY CARPET—CAIRO

DEPARTURE OF THE HOLY CARPET FOR MECCA—CAIRO

ground, and two plain heddles to bind the figured inscription, which is designed across the cloth in the form of a chevron. The threads of the warp are lifted by a man using a forked stick, who sits above the loom and draws up the cords of the harness while the weaver passes the shuttle.

The work is slow and very laborious, and the men spend several months in weaving the long strips of cloth which are afterwards sewn together and embroidered. The silver-gilt thread for the embroidery is also produced by a tedious hand process. Ingots of silver are cast, about one inch in diameter, and carefully smoothed and rounded by paring them down with a knife. They are then wrapped in fine sheet gold, heated, and the gold burnished on to the silver. Then begins a long process of drawing these bars through a steel draw-plate by means of a winch worked by an ox, until the bars become thickish wires of several metres length. These are now wound on a pulley and drawn by hand-power through another draw-plate with holes of reducing diameter until the gold-covered wire is finally of the required thickness for the embroidery. During this long process of drawing down, the wire has to be frequently heated to prevent it becoming brittle.

The whole of the work on the Holy Carpet is carried out in a special building known in Arabic as Maslahat el Kiswa, and the men employed on it are the descendants of the old workmen who, generations ago, commenced the work. No outsiders are allowed to take part in it, and no change in any of the processes has ever been allowed. There is no doubt that the work could be done much quicker and much more economically by the use of modern Jaquard looms, and by the use of machines for the wire drawing, but the little workshop remains, a curious historic survival of mediæval systems, and it has always been the policy of the British officials never to interfere with it.

The atmosphere of the shop is one of quiet, unhurried industry and dignity, and one imagines must be very much like that of the Guild workshops in Europe of the Middle Ages, when the beauty of fine craftsmanship was considered of more importance than hours of labour or rates of pay. A visit to the workshop in the Sharia Khronfish is a delightful link with the past.

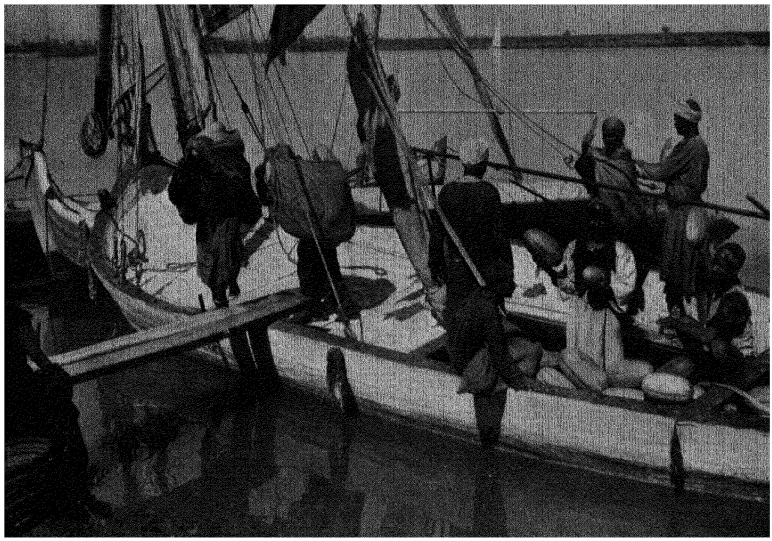
CHAPTER XXX

BY CAMEL TO THE FAYOUM

CAIRO is not Egypt. To see the real land of the *fellaheen* and the Bedouin—the people of the fields and the desert—one must journey away from the cosmopolitan cities, away even from the army of tourists, and get off the beaten track into the Libyan Oases.

Finding myself in Cairo with about two weeks to spare before continuing my journey south across Egypt and the vast Sudan into the wilds of Central Africa, I decided to get away from the now Europeanised city and visit the Fayoum, an oasis in the sandy wastes about fifty miles south of the capital. So different from the rest of Egypt, this land of the "River of Joseph," of the Sacred Crocodiles, and the Labyrinth of Herodotus, is, curiously enough, seldom visited by those who spend the winter in the gay city on the banks of the Nile.

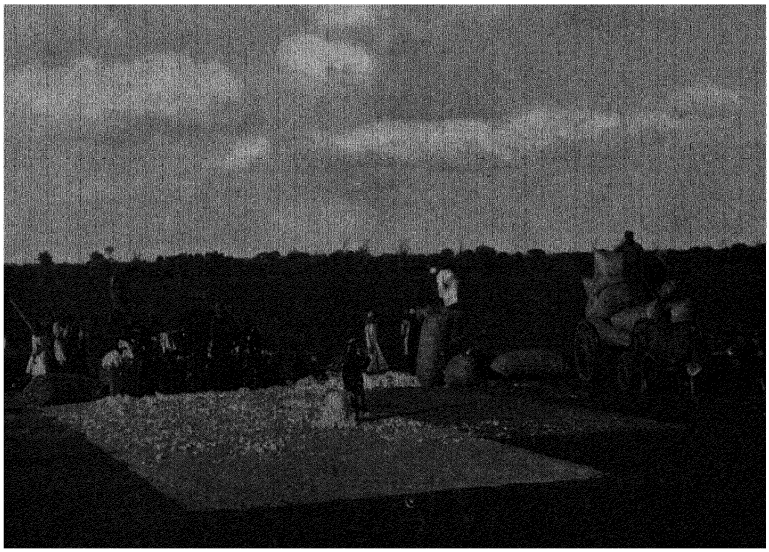
There are two ways of reaching the Fayoum: one is by railway to Wasta, from which little Nile-side station a branch line leads across the desert to Medinet-el-Fayoum, the only town of importance in this curious country; the other way is to travel across the western desert by motor car or camel caravan. By the latter mode of transport one enjoys a little of the thrill inseparable from a desert trail. Although the



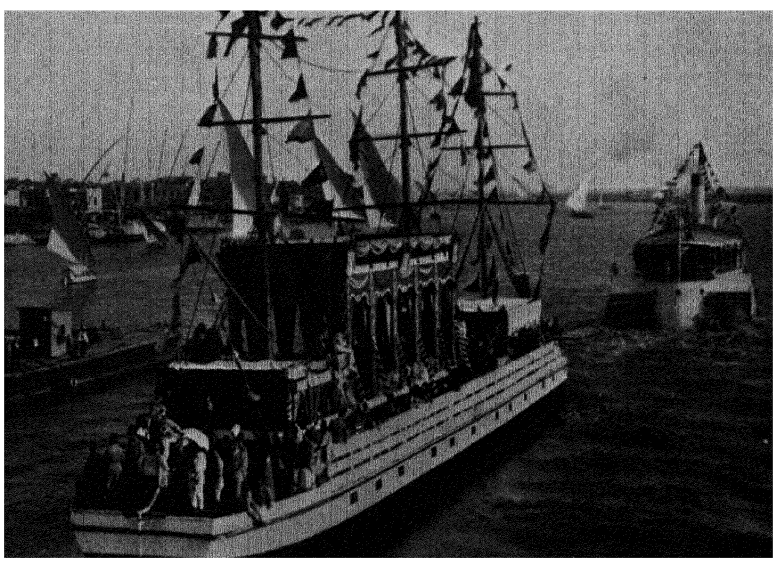
A NILE BOAT AND ITS CARGO

MUSICIANS ON CAMELS IN NATIVE PROCESSION IN THE FAYOUM

Facing page 226—2.



LOADING COTTON IN FIELDS BORDERING THE NILE



BRIDE OF THE NILE CEREMONY
The Boat which Transports the Nile's Bride.

ideal method of exploring this remarkable oasis is by camel, the all-important question of time compelled me to compromise. I decided to go by desert route and return to Cairo by railway, a journey of only four hours. After making arrangements for a ten days' caravan, with everything found, including tents, beds, camels, food and guides, at a cost of about £5 a day, I set out from Mena House, on the edge of the desert close to the Pyramids, in the golden glow of an Egyptian morning.

The way lies along the west bank of the Nile to the ruins of Bedrechen and Sakkara, which were reached in just under three hours. At first the camels plodded silently and easily over loose sand, then came patches of stony soil, and the jolting became so painful that it was a relief to dismount and walk beside the two Arab guides. Camel riding soon becomes inexpressibly wearisome, and for the first day or two every limb ached from the uneasy movement and frequent jolting of these curious and ill-tempered beasts. I did not know at this time that a kind of corset is often worn on long desert journeys.

From Sakkara and the ruins of the ancient city of Memphis, which I intended to explore later on, the trail strikes out in a south-westerly direction over the Libyan Desert towards a semicircle of hills. During the last night in camp, before reaching the oasis, we made a slight detour in order to visit a Bedouin encampment. When the crescent moon rose over the waste of sand a party of wild-looking nomadic Arabs, under a grey but cunning old sheikh, gave a wonderful display of barbaric dancing in the glow cast by our camp fires—made necessary by the cold night wind of the desert during the winter months.

On the morning of the fourth day we left the sand behind and entered a country of palms, rose trees, quaint mud-brick villages and canals. The Fayoum is entirely different in aspect from all the rest of Egypt. It is an artificial province about thirty-five miles broad and twenty-six miles in length, surrounded completely by the desert and brought into being, some 4,000 years ago, by the Bahr-el-Yussuf, or River of Joseph. This canal, for it is really one of the earliest and most wonderful of irrigation works, flows westwards from the Nile and divides into many little canals that supply water to the whole region, making it unusually fertile, even for Egypt. Cotton, corn, olives, figs, grapes, dates, apricots, roses, and honeysuckle grow in profusion. There is a special breed of large grey fowls which are supposed to have been introduced in the time of the Ptolemies. The people of the Fayoum are tall and more stately than the average Egyptian. Many of them are quite fair-skinned. There can be no doubt that the Greek civilisation, which existed for so long, has left its mark. The Bedouin influence is, however, very noticeable in the outlying villages. These nomads often settle in the oasis and become small farmers.

As I travelled southwards across the Fayoum, ranges of rugged, boulder-strewn hills appeared to the north, south and east, separating this isolated and picturesque oasis from the sun-scorched and waterless Libyan Desert. Palm groves, cotton-fields, primitive water-wheels and curious mud villages were all around. On entering the quaint, unspoiled Arab town of Medinet, which has many of the fanatical Senussi sect among its swarthy, white-robed population, I discovered the reason why so few travellers visit this

fertile region, which, for attractiveness, is unsurpassed in all Egypt. There is only one small and very indifferent hotel. It behoves those who visit the Fayoum to take with them all the little luxuries they may require, and also a sufficiency of bottled water or more palatable drink. Another essential item is a mosquito net, for these insects were very troublesome when camping in different parts of the oasis, owing to the volume of semi-stagnant water and the tropical vegetation.

Perhaps the most curious feature of Medinet is the Bazaar street. It is built on a bridge over the Bahr-el-Yussuf, and is partly roofed. It is an Eastern equivalent, on a small scale, to the old London Bridge, and is lined on both sides by ramshackle booths, selling quaint red leather slippers, tinsel cloth from Asyût, wonderful semi-tropical fruits, nose-rings, ear-rings, anklets and other trinkets. A canal also runs under the Kait Bey Mosque and several other buildings. In one place I noticed a large palm tree growing out of the centre of a mud-brick house. The whole town is haphazard, tortuous, inconsequent as the mind of the native architect who conceived it.

Not only is this typically Egyptian town connected with the main railway system traversing the Nile Valley, but it is also the centre of a network of light railways serving the cotton-fields, which enable almost every part of the Fayoum to be easily reached. The only serious drawback to this mode of transport is the difficulty of obtaining sufficient time at any of the interesting places, and of returning by train to Medinet without camping for the night. It was for this reason that I had come into the oasis by the long desert route instead of by the short and quick railway

service from Wasta. My camels were now available for sightseeing.

About six miles east of Medinet is the Labyrinth, a dilapidated ruin now, but, according to Herodotus, a mighty monument in its time. Planned as a vast place of assembly for the parliament of Ancient Egypt, it had twelve courts and 3,000 chambers, besides many halls and passages. Huge stone slabs formed the roofs of the apartments; and there were great red granite and white limestone monoliths, and wonderful sculptures and bas-reliefs describing the history, religion and affairs of the province to which each court was assigned. It was the legislative centre of one of the earliest empires so far known to have existed. To-day it is a chaos of fallen stones and sand. By tracing its courts, however, some idea of the original size and magnificence can still be gained.

A few miles away stands the pyramid of Hawara, the tomb of Amenemhat III. Many strange relics were discovered in the lofty chamber of this vast sepulchre, especially in the vault of Horuta, who was apparently a noble of the twenty-sixth dynasty. These splendid relics of an almost unknown age are now in the Cairo Museum.

Some fifteen miles to the north-west of Medinet, and on the fringe of the desert, stands Lake Karoun, the shallow sea of the Fayoum and the Mœris of the ancients. The journey to this wonderful sheet of water, which is eight miles broad and about thirty miles long, led through several mud-walled villages embowered in palms and fruit trees. The mosquitoes were, however, very troublesome until the more open country surrounding the lake was reached.

There is little doubt that this Lake of Mœris is

partly artificial, and at some remote period of history formed a great reservoir, supplying the water to all the northern part of the Fayoum. It would seem, from the few investigations so far made in this interesting region, that King Amenemhat III. (twelfth dynasty) was the first to cause it to be used for irrigation purposes. He built a regulator and other works, remains of which can still be seen. In these waters basked the sacred crocodiles worshipped by the dwellers in Arsinoë. The mummified remains of several of these reptiles have been discovered in a sacred tomb. Between the lake and the hills are the ruins of Dimâ, a Ptolemaic town of importance several thousand years ago.

To-day these ruins around the shores of Lake Karoun are of little interest, owing to their dilapidated condition, but some good jackal and hyena shooting can be obtained on the desert shore, and the lake itself is a beautiful sheet of limpid water, with numerous flocks of delicately tinted flamingoes.

From Medinet I returned to Cairo by train in four hours, leaving the camels and drivers to make their way back across the desert. During the journey from the oasis to the Nile, at Wasta, a distance of twenty-three miles, the line passed through two gorges, which formed a curious contrast to the surrounding eastern flank of the Great Sahara.

CHAPTER XXXI

A NILE VOYAGE TO THE VALLEY OF THE KINGS

IN Egypt there is always the Nile. Every drop of water flowing down from the Abyssinian highlands and from the great African Lakes is economised by means of dams and distributed to canals for irrigating the fields, which extend, east and west from both banks, for a distance of several miles into the desert. The Nile is a ribbon of calm water, with tall-masted, white-sailed *gyassas*, flowing with serene indifference, past swaying *shadufs* and creaking water-wheels, quaint mud towns and stucco mosques, and between endless palm groves. It was by this river road that I passed from Lower into Upper Egypt, to the wonderful relics of Sakkara, Memphis, Abydos, Dendera, Thebes, Karnak, the Valley of the Kings and Queens, Edfu, Komombo, Philæ and Abu Simbel —781 miles south of Cairo. This was the first of a long succession of journeys, both on and off the beaten track, in Central Africa.

It has been wisely said that Egypt is the gift of the Nile. Without this river there would have been nothing worth seeing in this desert land. As it is, however, there is no realm over which the thin veil of mystery hangs so enticingly. Nearly all the

monuments of the past are within a short distance of the river bank, usually on the desert sand or among the rocky hills beyond the broad belt of cultivation which flanks the life-giving flood. These temples, tombs and palaces, from which the long history of Egypt has been slowly deciphered, extend southwards from the Pyramids of Giza to a point far beyond the Sudan frontier in the sandy wastes of Dongola. To see or know the real Egypt one must voyage on the great highway of the ages, for Cairo, with its mediæval bazaars and its modern streets, hotels and shops, and its gay cosmopolitan social life, is only the gilded portal to the wondrous land of Kem.

The Nile voyage is something far more than a mere procession past the marvellous monuments of bygone ages which lie along the river bank. It is a journey through a land of enchantment, where each sunrise and sunset is a picture that no artist can truthfully portray, where each bend of the sunlit flood on its way across the desert reveals some new wonder to be visited and examined at leisure. The life on one of these great pleasure boats during the season from November to March is, in itself, most attractive. One glides away from the Kasr-el-Nil Bridge at Cairo in the midst of a happy party, far from the bustle and smoke of great cities, on a river yacht, floating through a realm of semi-tropical beauty and age-old romance. Each evening, during dinner, a silk-gowned dragoman describes the next day's programme of sightseeing. During coffee, on the illuminated decks, Nubian dancers give barbaric displays. Huge soft-slippered ebony giants, robed in white and wearing the inevitable scarlet sash and

tarboosh, attend to every want, answering the mere clapping of hands.

At least once every day the river bank is approached and a cavalcade of donkeys and camels departs for a desert ride to some near-by tomb or temple. Those who prefer the broad-wheeled sand-cart can travel without even the slight exertion of riding a donkey. On arrival at the monument the dragoman explains the mysteries of the 4,000-year old building with its hieroglyphics and paintings.

At each little stopping-place the palm-bordered river bank is filled with a motley throng in the nondescript garments of the African East. There is a snake-charmer playing with a hideous-looking hooded cobra, the seller of *antikas* (probably made during the previous summer and buried for a few months in order to obtain the right effect), and the vendor of native bead-work and ivory from the Sudan.* At Asyût the river bank is covered with samples of the curious and decidedly effective silver and gold cloth made in this large native town. Everywhere there is life, colour and movement. Only the river and the lines of laden camels pass silently on their way. Mud villages, clumps of palms, gleaming white mosques, and gold or crimson sun-tinted cliffs form an endless panorama.

Day after day I watched the naked bronze figure of a *shaduf* man watering the fields with his bucketful from the Nile, by infinite labour, in the same way as his forefathers did in the days of the Pharaohs. Then came a groaning water-wheel, turned by a sleepy old *gamoos*, with the slate-coloured skin of this type of

* Ivory often means "ivory nut" among these itinerant Egyptian vendors.

water-buffalo and the same ridiculous blue eyes—all details which go to make up the colourful and at times old-world life of the real Egypt.

From the little riverside village of Bedrechen I rode over the desert to Sakkara and all that now remains of the great city of Memphis. Here there is the Step Pyramid, a little tomb of exquisitely delicate colouring, and some 400 yards of vaulted subterranean passages with chambers in which are the granite sarcophagi of the sacred bulls—the embalmed remains of these animals had lain undisturbed for thirty-seven centuries. The village of Bedrechen stands on the site of the ancient city, and as this was situated in the Nile valley, covered each year by the inundation, little indeed remains of its former greatness. The ruins at Sakkara are those of the necropolis of Memphis. The Step Pyramid is the tomb of King Zoser of the third dynasty, and is consequently older than the Pyramids of Giza. It is about 200 feet high. In a near-by tomb there are coloured hieroglyphics which are among the oldest that have been found.

Here is an interesting extract from the report of Mariette, the famous French Egyptologist, who discovered the tombs of the sacred bulls: "Owing to some chance which it is difficult to account for, a chamber which had been walled up in the thirtieth year of the reign of Rameses II. had escaped the notice of the plunderers of the vaults, and I was so fortunate as to find it untouched. Although 3,700 years had elapsed since it was closed, everything in the chamber seemed to be precisely in its original condition. The finger-marks of the Egyptians who had inserted the last stone in the wall built to conceal

the doorway, were still recognisable on the lime. There were also marks of naked feet imprinted on the sand which lay in one corner of the tomb chamber. Everything was in its original condition in this tomb where the embalmed remains of the bull had lain undisturbed for thirty-seven centuries." *

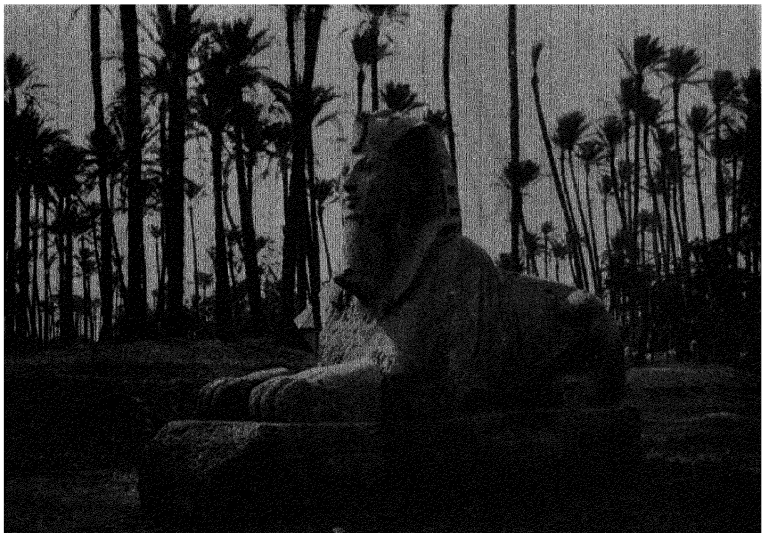
At Abydos there are the temples built by Seti I., decorated with the most wonderful hieroglyphics, bas-reliefs and paintings in all Egypt. Near Dendera there is a temple of the late Ptolemaic period in which I noticed many curious astronomical symbols, including a painted Zodiac. Then came the site of ancient Thebes.

Around Luxor, with its fine hotels, is concentrated more of interest and wonder than in any other part of Egypt. Here was Ancient Thebes, the 4,000-year-old city of Rameses the Great, and once the capital of the world. The massive columns of the Temple of Luxor serve only as an introduction to the wonderful ruins of Karnak, a mass of carved and decorated columns, pylons and statues, occupying an area about two miles in circumference. It is not one temple, but a city of temples, and an endless labyrinth covering 1,500 years of the history of Thebes.

Karnak, under the brilliant sun of Upper Egypt, is a never-to-be-forgotten sight, but in the mystic light of the desert moon, casting deep shadows in the silent corridors and courts, with stray gleams on the white robes and polished steel rifle barrels of the night guard, it is one of the great thrills of world travel.

Across the Nile, several miles from the west bank, lies the Valley of the Kings and Queens. " From the

* Extracts from an Egyptian Government publication.



THE ALABASTER SPHINX ON THE BANKS OF THE NILE

COLUMNS AND STATUES IN THE TEMPLE OF LUXOR

Facing page 236—2.

KARNAK

Temple of Seti, the path winds over the desert to the foot of the hills, then round the base of a spur into the Valley of the Dead. The hills rise higher and steeper, strangely shaped; here is a great peak, there a keen ridge, yonder a curious conformation, as of carven colossi high up the rock. All is infinitely arid, rocky, desolate; all life is shut out by the beetling red cliffs on either side of the pebble-strewn gorge. The way at last enters the very heart of the mountains and ends in a series of clefts, wherein the kings chose their place of sepulture."

Here are the painted tombs, among which is that of Tutankhamen. In another vault there are the bodies of slaves who were buried with their royal master so that their spirits might still attend on him in the life beyond. These subterranean chambers are, in some cases, illuminated by electric light, and their walls are a mass of coloured paintings depicting the passage of the king's soul through the underworld, his obeisance to the spirits and gods, and of the life in Ancient Egypt before the dawn of written history.

Nearly all the tombs are built on the same plan—a long series of passages, ending in three or four chambers, in one of which is the depression in the floor where the sarcophagus was placed. So great was the heat, and so oppressive the atmosphere in these passages deep in the heart of the mountain, that I could only endure a few minutes in the death chamber, and even then came out soaked through with perspiration. One of the great mysteries of these tombs is the manner in which the delicate colours and designs were applied to the walls, apparently without light. Some form of illumination, other than the smoky boat-shaped lamps, must have been

known to the Ancient Egyptians. Nowhere is there a sign of discoloration, even on the pale pinks, blues and yellows of the intricate patterns on the low ceilings. Many ingenious suggestions have been made to account for this, but nothing definite appears to be known as to how the artists—for such they were—overcame the difficulty of working in a subterranean chamber in the heart of a mountain and in Cimmerian darkness.

These tombs, of which there are about forty-one, although less than a dozen are accessible, originally contained the mummy of the king and sometimes those of his wife, children and servants ; also furniture, models of his soldiers, labourers and others. These accessories have long been removed. " Even during the height of Theban power there were tomb robbers, and in spite of repeated punishments, the pillage became so serious that the High Priest of Amen was at last compelled to remove everything, even the mummies, and hide them at Deir-el-Bahari, where they were discovered in recent years." In the tomb of Amenhotep II. the mummy of the king has, however, been left. Near to him there are three other smaller mummies, presumably female slaves, and beneath their heads I could still see curly black hair, dulled and dusty.

Life at Luxor in this twentieth century is gay, interesting and healthy. Riding, dancing and desert excursions form a pleasant contrast to the exploration of wonderful tombs and temples, unique in the world.

Assouan, with the partially flooded Temple of Philæ and the great but modern dam, stands about 140 miles south of Luxor. It enjoys the most equable climate in Egypt, and is certainly surrounded by some

of the most beautiful scenery. Before arriving at Assouan, however, I visited the Temples of Edfu and Komombo. The former appears to be the most perfect Egyptian temple existing to-day, and at Komombo I obtained striking evidence of the advanced stage of surgery in Ancient Egypt. On the walls are depicted many of the instruments then in use, which are similar to those employed at the present time.

From Assouan I rode out to the quarries one sunny morning—and every morning seems sunny, even in mid-winter. The history of this little town, which was *Syene,* is the story of its stone. "It was from these rocks that the slaves of the Pharaohs cut and shaped the great monoliths and statues for many a mighty temple: indeed, it was from Syene that all the red granite came. It was extracted by such primitive methods as were known in those days; in some cases wooden wedges were driven into the rock, and then soaked with water, and as they swelled the rock split and was detached from its bed. After being shaped it was floated down the river in barges or on rafts, then dragged by thousands of slaves on huge sledges to its resting-place." The proof of all this is still visible. There is an obelisk and two statues in these quarries still unfinished and attached to the living rock.

Away in the desert to the east of Assouan there is a Bishareen camp. In the somewhat dirty tents dwell these nomads of the sandy plains, with their famous breed of camels. The Bishareen are a queer people, still uncivilised. They wear their hair long, either in shaggy masses or else closely braided. Their eyes are fierce, and they burden themselves with few

clothes. Although they are terrible beggars and cluster round any chance traveller, it is possible to buy quaint beads and to induce them to perform a Bedouin dance, which seems to consist very largely of indiscriminate slashing with murderous-looking swords, and jabbing with equally barbarous spears.

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Printed in Great Britain at THE DARIEN PRESS, *Edinburgh*