

"The black colt was at length seized by the neck by his more vigorous adversary, who, pressing him to the ground, held him there till men came to the rescue, and separated the combatants."

Our author's father, the Consul-General, was afterwards fortunate enough, during a mission to the Sultan's court at Fas (or Fez), to procure a horse of the description required, which now forms one of the ornaments of Her Majesty's stables.

The incidents of this journey were not very numerous or varied, but Mr. Hay's principal object was "to portray the character and manners of the wild tribes which inhabit this fertile but neglected country," and he has accomplished this, not only by giving his own description of men and things, but by recording the wild and fanciful stories which were related by the Arab companions of his journey.

One of these stories—the adventures of Alee the six-fingered, a Moorish freebooter—occupies a large portion of the work, and presents a vivid and animated picture of life in Barbary; but is of course too long for quotation.

We have already noticed the insecurity of property in these wild regions, an evil of which many striking instances are given by Mr. Hay. When the intended victims resist this spoliation, or show any reluctance to reveal the place where the coveted property is (or is at least supposed to be) concealed, they are subject to the most remorseless cruelty. Well might the Sheikh of Ibdowa exclaim, as he did to our author—"Wealth, in this land of tyranny, is a crime."

"The most horrible tortures are resorted to for forcing confession of hidden wealth. The victim is put into a slow oven, or kept standing for weeks in a wooden dress; splinters are forced between the flesh and nail of the fingers; two fierce cats are put alive into his wide trowsers, and the breasts of his women are twisted by pinchers. Young children have sometimes been squeezed to death under the arms of a powerful man, before the eyes of their parents.

"A wealthy merchant at Tangier, whose *'auri sacra fames'* had led him to resist for a long time the cruel tortures which had been employed against him, yielded at length to the following trial:—He was placed in the corner of a room wherein a hungry lion was chained, in such a manner as to be able to reach him with his claws, unless he held himself in a most constrained and unnatural position."

The character of the Moors, like the kindred Oriental nations, is marked by the fiercest passions; and so far from endeavouring to restrain them, their indulgence is considered an absolute duty. Such, for instance, is the custom of blood revenge: the nearest relation of any person who is killed, is bound to pursue the slay-

er—intentional or undesigned—and never to rest satisfied till he has compassed his death; the duty of revenge then falls upon the next relative of the latter, and so the horrible chain lengthens, link by link, till it reaches some one too isolated in the world to have any one to avenge his death.

These are the dark features of Moorish character, but it often presents those touches of feeling that "make the whole world kin."

"I remember on one occasion, travelling in this country with a companion who possessed some knowledge of medicine: we had arrived at a *dowra* near which we were about to pitch our tents, when a crowd of Arabs surrounded us, cursing and swearing at the 'rebellers against God.' My friend, who spoke a little Arabic, turning round to an elderly person, whose garb bespoke him a priest, said—'Who taught you that we are disbelievers? Hear my daily prayer, and judge for yourselves:' he then repeated the Lord's prayer. All stood amazed and silent, till the priest exclaimed—

"May God curse me, if ever I curse again those who hold such belief; nay more, that prayer shall be my prayer till my hour be come. I pray thee, O Nazarene, repeat the prayer,* that it may be remembered and written amongst us in letters of gold."

"We then pitched our tents in peace, and shortly afterwards were visited by the priest, who entering our tent with a sorrowful face, told us his child was sick in bed, and begged we would come and cure him. We went to the tent, and found the invalid in a burning fever. My friend prescribed some harmless medicine, which was immediately taken in our presence: an hour afterwards the boy was a corpse. A murmur ran through the village that the Nazarenes had poisoned the child; so ere the following morning dawned we had struck our tent and were hastening our departure, fearing the fanaticism of the inhabitants; but before we had time to depart, the father came to us bringing a bowl of milk. 'Accept this, O Christians,' he said, 'in return for your kindly feeling towards my dear child; and think not that I join the ignorant in supposing you caused or wished his death. His hour had come; he is now happy; and God's will be done.'"

The intercourse with Europeans in the interior has been very slight, and they are almost universally reputed to be in league with the spirits of the nether world—a very convenient mode of accounting for their undeniable superiority, and saving the national and religious pride of the Moors.

"A camel led through a country town in England could not have excited more curiosity and astonishment than the appearance of my Spanish friend and myself in the wild village through which we were passing. At each door stood whole families gazing with amazement; whilst the younger children shrunk in terror at beholding such strange apparitions. One youth, bolder than the rest, having approached our party, demanded of the Hadj* what kind of beings we were.

* A Mahomedan of Mr. Hay's party.