

Popery in Algiers may be seen in many of its peculiar forms. For example, over a doorway in one of the public streets there is a sign-board with the following inscription in French : " O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee." One of the churches is called *Nôtre Dame 'l'Afrique*. It is situated on one of the spurs of the hill of Bourzarea, overlooking the sea. Above the altar is a statue of the Virgin Mary represented as a *black woman*, and there is this inscription, also in French : " Our Lady of Africa, pray for us and for the Mussulmans." At Biskra, in the Sahara Desert, there is a large new establishment erected by Cardinal Lavigerie for his soldier monks, *les frères du desert*. On the whitewashed walls there is the inscription that the building has been erected in honor of the immaculate Virgin. But it is not by these Romish pretensions that the weary and heavy-laden tribes of Africa will be won for Christ.

How strange is the way in which North Africa has been overlooked by the churches ! So recently as 1880 there were only three missionaries at work between Egypt and the Atlantic. Why is it that North Africa has been thus overlooked by the churches of Britain and North America ? No satisfactory reason can be given. Steamships carrying the commerce of the world sail in sight of those African shores *en route* for India and China and Australia. Missionaries going to and returning from their spheres of labor have passed along that coast for half a century, yet almost nothing was done, almost nothing was even attempted until some twelve years ago. There is not even the excuse that can be alleged in regard to Central Africa, that we did not know of the existence either of the country or of its inhabitants, for we possessed very accurate knowledge indeed regarding the Barbary States. The different countries of Europe and even the United States of America had made political treaties with the Deys of Algiers long before the coming of the French. In 1816 the British fleet under Lord Exmouth bombarded Algiers, and the Dey was forced to sign a treaty by which Christian slavery—*i.e.*, the enslaving of the subjects of Christian countries—was brought to an end. Even the thirty-two gun frigate *George Washington*, of the United States of America, was requisitioned by the Dey to carry his tribute to the Sultan at Constantinople ! It was not because nothing was known of North Africa that it has been so strangely overlooked.

Even for many years after the coming of the French in 1830 no attempt was made to bring the Gospel to the Arabs ; but those times of great and culpable neglect are passing away. A beginning of gospel missions has been made. The providence of God has given a wide door of entrance. The country is everywhere open. Communication is cheap and easy. There are railways running both east and west from Algiers, as far west as the large city of Oran, in which there is no missionary to the natives, or as far east as Constantine and Tunis, and reaching even the Sahara Desert on the south. The railway system is being still further extended. The Atlas Mountains are being pierced with tunnels for the locomotive. A railway