

tended to interfere with their adherence to those principles in their foreign intercourse, which humanity and justice rendered imperative on every government.

In the same year a fleet was placed by the British Government under the command of Admiral Lord Viscount Exmouth, and that officer was directed to obtain from the several states of Algiers, Tripoli, and Tunis, if possible by negotiation, but failing that, by force of arms: the unequivocal abolition of Christian slavery; secondly, the recognition of the Ionian Islands as possessions of our crown; and lastly, an equitable peace for the kingdoms of Sardinia and Naples.

The appearance of the English squadron off the coast of Barbary apparently sufficed to obtain all these concessions. With regard, indeed, to the article respecting slavery, the Dey of Algiers demurred, and suddenly remembering his allegiance as a vassal of the Ottoman empire, which had long since become merely nominal in its character, suggested the necessity of obtaining the concurrence of the Sublime Porte.

Lord Exmouth, on the dey's first answer, which was a point blank refusal, had vigorously prepared for hostilities; but this latter proposal threw him off his guard. His lordship's honest English heart was no match for the cunning of the Algerine, whose only object was to gain time for finishing the defences of his capital. Unsuspicious of this ulterior object, he even placed a frigate at his command, in order that the desired permission might be more speedily obtained—and, contenting himself with stipulating for a final answer to his demands at the end of three months, sailed back to England, where the fleet was paid off.

Hardly, however, had this been accomplished, when tidings arrived of an outrage so cruel and unprovoked, that we scarcely know whether to admire the folly or the treachery of the dey under whose orders it was perpetrated.

The town of Bona, to the east of Algiers in the province of Constantina, has from a very early period\* been famous for the excellence and abundance of the coral found in the gulf of the same name on which it is situated. These fisheries had been formerly in the hands of the Catalans, then of the Genoese, and afterwards of the French, under whom the 'Compagnie d'Afrique' at one time rivalled in wealth and prosperity our own Hudson's Bay Company. Oregon however is not the only debatable territory in the world, and those coral banks often changed masters. At length, in 1807, England was duly invested by the dey with the seigniorial possession of this fishing station; and at the time of Lord Exmouth's expedition it was occupied for the most part by Genoese, Neapolitan, or Sardinian traders, under the protection of our flag.

Upon this defenceless colony, as soon as the now hated sails of the English fleet had disappeared, the dey of Algiers, with all the wayward folly of a child, poured out his pent up indignation. His soldiers laid waste the town, massacred many of the inhabitants and enslaved the remainder; and, failing there, wreaked their vengeance upon the English flags, which they tore to ribands and dragged through the mire in insane triumph.

The commotion excited in England by this burst of foolish fury may easily be imagined. It had at least the effect of silencing those disposed to advocate conciliatory measures with the pirates, and Lord Exmouth set off again for the Mediterranean with the full determination not to be again deceived by his highness.

On arriving at Gibraltar, Lord Exmouth was joined by the Dutch admiral Van Cappellen, who had been ordered by his government to co-operate with the British commander, and the combined fleet set forward in company for the coast of Barbary. The dey now felt that he must throw away the scabbard; and on a frigate appearing in the port of Algiers to take off the English consul, Mr. Macdonald, he placed that gentleman in chains, and hearing to his vexation that his wife and daughter had effected their escape in the dresses of midshipmen, he ordered two boats belonging to the frigate which happened to be in the harbor to be detained with their crews. When these fresh misdemeanors were reported by the fair fugitives on their arrival on board the fleet, they of course added new fuel to the general indignation,

and on the 17th of August, Lord Exmouth anchored his fleet, which consisted of twenty-five English and five Dutch vessels, three or four leagues from Algiers, in no mood to digest any further coquetry on the part of the dey.

His lordship's interpreter, M. Saleme, was immediately despatched with a letter containing the ultimatum of the English admiral. His demands were brief and stern; though not more so than the conduct of his highness fully justified. In addition to our previous requisitions, they comprised stipulations for the immediate delivery of all Christian slaves without ransom; for the settlement of the grievances of the Sardinian, Sicilian and Dutch governments; and for ample satisfaction for insults offered to our own. Three hours were all that was to be allowed the dey for deliberation, and M. Saleme was directed to return at the expiration of that time if no answer was previously given.

At the expiration of the appointed time, Saleme returned without any reply from his highness, and at the same instant a light breeze springing up, Lord Exmouth gave the signal for advance. Turning the head of his own ship towards the shore he ran across the range of all the batteries without firing a shot, and lashed her to the main-mast of an Algerine brig which lay about eighty yards from the mole that enclosed the inner harbor. The other vessels followed in the wake of the Queen Charlotte, and took up their allotted stations with admirable precision.

A dead silence prevailed during these evolutions; the Algerines were taken by surprise, and their guns were not shotted, so that a brief interval elapsed during which the scene must have been one of the most thrilling interest.

This frightful repose was soon broken. The Algerines took the initiative, and a gun fired athwart the poop of the admiral's vessel began the battle. A furious cannonade on both sides continued for several hours without intermission. The bomb-boats belonging to our fleet pressed forward close under the batteries, and caused immense havoc among the troops which crowded the mole; and, when at last the enemy's fire became more slack, an explosion ship which had been kept in reserve was brought forward close under the walls, and the devastating effects it produced completed their confusion.

The total cessation of the enemy's fire toward's the close of the evening convinced Lord Exmouth that his victory was complete, and he therefore drew off his vessels out of gun-shot, and early the next day despatched Saleme with a second note to the dey, reiterating the demands which had been treated so disdainfully the preceding morning. At the same time preparations were made for renewing the bombardment, but they were unnecessary. The haughty Algerine was effectually humbled. The greatest part of his capital was reduced to ashes, and his very palace at the mercy of our troops: his ships were burnt or taken, and his numerical loss was very great. Under these circumstances no alternative remained to him. A gun was fired in token of his acceptance of the terms offered, and an officer was sent on shore to superintend the embarkation of the liberated slaves, and the restoration of the immense sums the dey had from time to time exacted from the Sardinian and Neapolitan governments as ransom for their captured subjects. The demeanor of his highness on this trying occasion was very entertaining. The most bitter pill appears to have been the apology, which we required on behalf of our consul. Seated cross-legged on his divan, the dey sulkily gave the requisite orders for the freedom of the slaves, and even the delivery of the treasure; but when Saleme hinted that now was the proper time to ask pardon of Mr. Macdonald for the insults to which he had been exposed, his highness shook his head, and puffed his chibouque in all the bitterness of wounded pride. But the English officer was inexorable, and Omar at length muttered, that M. Saleme might say for him what he pleased. 'This is not sufficient,' was the answer, 'you must dictate to the interpreter what you intend to express.' And the dey at last complied. More than a thousand slaves on this occasion were restored to liberty, and as they embarked on board the vessels employed to convey them to Europe, they exclaimed in grateful chorus, "Viva il Re d' Inghilterra, il padre eterno! è il ammiraglio Inglese che ci ha liberato di questa secondo Inferno!" Among them were inhabitants from almost every state of Europe, but singularly enough not a single Englishman.

\* The coral fisheries of Bona are mentioned by Aboulfeda, who flourished about the year 700 of the Hejira, in his 'Description du Pays du Magreb.'