

III.—FIELD OF MONTHLY SURVEY.

Russia,* Turkish Empire,† North Africa, Persia,‡ Mohammedanism,§ Greek Church,||

MOROCCO AND MISSIONARY WORK.

BY REV. N. H. PATRICK, MOROCCO.

Morocco is only four days' journey from London, and some thirty miles from Gibraltar, but the change is marvellous, for on landing in Africa one soon discovers that he has left the light of Christianity and entered into the darkness of Mohammedanism.

The inhabitants of Morocco from the earliest times were the Berbers, who, being subdued by the Arabs in the seventh century, forsook Christianity and accepted the religion of their conquerors.

In the year 713 Arabs and Berbers crossed to Spain, where they established a magnificent kingdom with a regular government. They were called by the people of the country "Moros" or Moors. Their principal city, Cordova, stood on the banks of the Guadalquivir. It was twenty-four miles in length and six in breadth, and was studded with beautiful public buildings and gardens. It had a population of from 700,000 to 800,000. Granada nearly equalled it in prosperity, and surpassed it in beauty.

In nearly all their towns there were public libraries and colleges. Students flocked to their schools from all parts of Europe. Their professors were unequalled in their knowledge of medicine and surgery, botany and chemistry, astronomy and agriculture.

What their architecture was like can still be seen in the grand mosque of Cordova with its thousand pillars of marble, and in the glorious palace of the Alhambra in Granada.

They made vast tracts of country fertile by irrigation, they planted the sugar-cane, introduced cotton to Eu-

rope, reared the silkworm, and attained great skill in the art of silk-weaving.

They were industrious, enterprising, brave, and powerful. All Christendom envied their learning and feared their power.

But in 1492 they were expelled from Spain, and since then fanaticism, tyranny, and sloth have wrought an awful change, and it is hard to imagine a darker spot than the Morocco of to-day.

Its population is between five and eight millions. It is governed by a Sultan, but, while retaining a nominal independence, has no political power. The late Sultan said that "his country was like the virtue of a fair woman, which is only saved by the multitude of her lovers." The country is divided into thirty-three districts, each of which is under the superintendence of a kaid. Many of the hill tribes do not acknowledge the authority of the Sultan.

Generally speaking, the climate of Morocco is healthy, but in some parts malaria fever is prevalent, and Europeans suffer rather heavily from typhoid, this being caused by bad sanitation.

Few of the men and none of the women can read or write. They do not possess many books, and have no public libraries. The art of printing is unknown, and is, I believe, prohibited by law.

The country that might be so fertile and fruitful is almost uncultivated. One journeys over vast and well-watered but barren plains. The people are afraid to put their money into the land. If they sow, they "sow in tears;" for those in authority may seize their harvest, or the Sultan, who is continually moving about the country with his army of from 20,000 to 40,000 undisciplined and starving men, may come their way and "cut up" their crops.

There are neither roads nor railroads,

* See pp. 11 (January), 201 (March), 755, 778 (present issue).

† See pp. 140 (February), 290 (April), 383 (May), 441 (June), 784 (present issue).

‡ See pp. 362 (May), 451 (June), 529 (July).

§ See p. 721 (present issue).

|| See pp. 447 (June), 597, 621 (August).