DESERET EVENING NEWS: SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1901.



'A Moorish Household-Superstitions of African Jews. 

It is hard to believe that during the early centuries of its existence-hundreds of years before America was discovered-this now dilapidated and poverty stricken city ranked as one of the richest and greatest in Islam. History says that in the tenth century it had nearly a million inhabitants, incalculable wealth, and an extraordinary degree of learning, as education was rated in those days. Now its extremely mixed and turbulent population numbering fifty thousand or so, appear to devote their mental energies mostly to the gentle arts of robbery and murder, and crimes of violence and of hourly occurrence. Were it not for an exceptional beauty of situation-at just the right elevation in the semi-

that-the aroma and tas'e of the ita-to which they object and take extra-ordinary trouble to destroy. At a "swell" Moorish dinner of the highest class, there are regular courses of ite. Impregnated with various flavors, as we serve wines in America. First comes a course of plain tea, so besugared that the Chinaman who grew it would never recognize his own herb. In the second course, parhage snearching is being ourse, perhaps, spearmint is introduced a horrible decoction; then an infusion f tea and iron-wood, nitter as gall. Then tea flavored strongly with lemon or berbena; then combined with citron property to the value of a million dollars, and whose great chapel serves as an asylum and almshouse. There are still schools in Morocco, but the fa-mous colleges of long ago exist but in readition. A Moorish school is a simor some other fruit; and more rarely-as a most expensive luxury, too costly for every day-a little ambergets is scraped into the tea and can be seen floating upon the surface like greasy green paint. While drinking the tea, le affair-no seats, no desks, no books, for beginners, boards about the size you are expected to make a lou I smackof a sheet of foolscup, whitened on both ing of the lips, to indicate your appre-ciation of the luxury; to omit which custom, or to be faint-heartetd in it, sides with clay, are used, and on them texts from the Koran are enscribed. Though reading and a little writing are taught by the Moorish "doctors," as redagogues are designated, comparawould sorely grieve, if not insult your entertainers. Each course of tea is taken separately-that is, without any kind of food; and the effect upon the perves of a fashionable banquet, at tively few of the pupils arrive at the sitch of perfection necessary to fudit-ing a respectable letter. Therefore which are eight or ten courses of strong decoctions of tea, can be better imag-ined than described. The household snake is liable to be as many times multiplied as though you had been inthere is plenty of employment for dis numerous brood of scribes and notaries; as well as for the scroll-writers, whose venerable profession is that of tracing sacred passages from the Koran upon dulging in Carolina tangle-foot.

erg shells, or upon strips of silk to be Another odd thing in the City of Morworn as amulets, to protect the owner from the bateful influence of the evil tropics to secure perfection of climate, surrounded by luxuriant groves and gardens, and within full sight of the

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of today would be about the most wretche," place on earth to live in. Words cannot picture the squalor and decay encountered at every step-the foul odors that salute you in its incon-ceivably dirty streets, the pit falls and cesspools in the most frequented thoroughfares, and the eternal vigilance required to potect your belongings from the tricks and wiles of professional thieves. It would never do for the stranger to be abroad after nightfall; and even at noonday, in the most crowded thoroughfares, he would better avoid dim doorways and shadowy corners, where assassins may lurk. The very walls that encompass the town, once thirty feet high, eight feet thick and with Immense square towers at frequent intervals, speak of the desolaion within. They are now so dilapidated that in many places both foot-passengers and horsemen make nothing of clambering over the fallen bricks and through the breaches, ignoring the gates, which are yet as religiously guarded as if they were of any use. There are not half a dozen structures worth visiting in the town, and not one building of stone, except the tower of Kutubia mosque, and an archway which was brought from Spain in sections. Even bricks are very little used, though the native manufacture is said to be excellent. The universal building material is tappia, or tabiya, as here called-which is mud, hardene in a frame, akin to the betin of Al-geria, and the adobe of Mexico-than which nothing could be drearier in architectural effect

Of course you hie at once to the Ku-tubia tower, the solitary showplace of the town. It is not only a wonder in itself, but about the only memorial of the constructive genius of the carly Moors that is left in the empire of Morocco-outside of Fez, the Holy City where the far-famed beauties of the Alhambra, San Sophia even the Taj Hahal of India, are outdone in hundreds of mosques, minarets, arches and doorways. This Kutubia tower is almost identical with that of Hassan at Rabat, and both are after the pattern of the Giralda, at Seville-for the simple reason that the three were designed by the same architect, one Abdulla Jabir, who went his way to the Mos-lem's paradlse, some eight or nine cen-turies ago. The mosque to which Kutubla tower belongs is remarkable only for a forest of marble pillars. Its entire crypt is occupied by a vast, mysentire crypt is occulined by a vast, mys-terious cistern, said to have been ex-cavated by Mansur himself for what purpose, may be Allah knows. There are nineteen other mosques in the City of Morocco, among which the most notable are Ab Vin Suf All Monmost notable are Ab Yu Suf, Al-Men-sur and Al-Moizz. From their lofty minarets, at the brst glimmer of dawn the muzzin cry resounds over the sleep ing city. Pitched in a clear, high kay more penetrating than the sound of silver bells, the confession of faith w schoed from tower to tower. "Is italt il Al-lah iwa Mohammed er-rascool Ai-Again at sunset the same cry resounds; and at hourly intervals dur-

magnificent Atlas mountains-the city or corner partially sheltered from | ing but charms and amulets galore af jostling elbows. He writes upon his left knee, the arphances of his trade spread out before him-ink, paper, read pens, sand box, and a ruling-board with strings stretched across it at regular intervals, upon which the paper 18 pressed to indicate lines.

The interior of a Moorish house-of the middle class, to choose an average sample—is simplicity itself, but a study in color. It is usually one-storied, containing a single apartment, very long and lofty, with peaked doorway so low that a grown person must bend his back to pass through it. The only other apertures for the admission only other apertures for the admission of light and air are narrow slits high up in the walls, glazed windows being considered inventions of the devil, through which to cast Evil Eyes and other perilous things upon true be-hevers. The bed of husband and wife is placed at one end of the long room; and at the other end a sort of raised couch, or platform is provided for the couch, or platform, is provided for the children's sleeping place; the space be-tween being tolerably well filled up with charcoal, various culinary uten-sils, gourds for holding water and goats milk, sacks of corn, dogs, fowis and perhaps a pet lion or leopard. There is also a big snake or two about the premises, kept as we do cats, to sub-due the domestic plague of rats, mice and roaches. To be sure his snakeship endangers the lives of the chickens, and is unpleasantly prone to pre-empt the slooping quarters of the family on chilly nights, but his presence is thought to be indispensible in every well-regulated household. Notwith-standing these primitive arrangetents, there is somehow a pleasing air of "the eternnal fitness" about the menange-even an appearance of dec-prative finish, the latter probably bur-rowed from the brightly-colored mouldug, and the beautifully shaped potterysuspended from the walls. Nowhere in homes of this class do you see the article of furniture which we know as a table, and seldom a chair. At meal times the family squats on its heels around a huge pot, or platter of stew, placed in the middle of the floor, and fingers-more or less dirty-do duty as knives and forks. It is about the same way in Moorish restaurants, except that they are so small you cannot get inside to sit on the floor, but must stand outside, in mud, or rain, or scorching sun-shine, or reach over the heads of the

passing crowd to the "counter," on which are placed your eggs,bread,small bits of meat, roasted on a stick over charcoal, coffee and asses' milk. Once in a great while, if food of a liquid nature is to be eaten, you may secure the momentary loan of a wooden ladle, or brass spoon; but as a rule the "ten servants," according to the Koran, (ingers) with which Allah has provided you, must suffice. There are still humbler cooking places in which those economically inclined may dine. Those economically included may drive. You go to market and buy eggs, meat, whatever you desire, and take them raw to the cook shops, where they are prepared for a pittance. As everybody knows, coffee is the beverage in which most Mohanimedans

fording them any comfort or safety Among a thousand dark beliefs in the power of the evil, mysterious in their We show an immense line. Also a beautiful line of odd Cha'rs and Settees. origin and senseless as those entertain ed by the lowest African tribes, the ascribe a fatal power to the numbers . and 5-as some of us fear the number This week we are selling a beautiful five-piece suit similar to cut, for the 13. Even in the leat of bargaining, a Moor will never say "five;" he gets little price of \$21.50. around the dangerous word by saying "four and one." He shrinks also from saying anything about death in conver-

sation, but uses flowery substitutes such as "Allah hath withdrawn his soul into paradise." if he wishes to give his neighbor mortal offense, he paints the semblance of five fingers over his door; and however rudely the fatal symbol may be drawn, it is regarded with staring eyeballs and chattering teach as a gues and a with bodos teeth, as a sure and awful hoodoo Every Jewish house in the City of Morbeeo has a charm against scorpions af fixed to its door-post, without which, it is believed, they would be over run by those pestilential insects. The charm-prepared by a rabbi, at considerable expense to the recipient, is a bit of paper, on which is a more or less correct representation of two or three scorons, done in charcoal. Above them in Hebrew characters, is an array of mystical words, which remind you of the once-famed abracadabra; and be low is inscribed a solemn imprecation To be effective, it must be written unler certain conditions. The rabbi mus do it only on the first night of Sivan near Pentacost; he must previous's immerse himself three times in a bath and also cut his nails. When trans lated, the cabalistic inscription reads 'Oh scorpion, daughter of a scorpion be thou accursed by the strength of every power that exis's. From the mouth of the prophet Joshua, the son of Nun; from the mouth of the high priest Judah Bar Ezekiel; so that you may not pass the threshold of this door, nor hurt any Israelite, or son of an Israelite, now and for vermore. This is by command of the high prior, Simor Bar Yuli. Amen. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain-for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters

cover the sea." It must be that in these parts the abhorred reptiles can rend, because it is frequently asserted that scorpions have been seen advancing to the door of a room, and then, seeing the blessed pla-card-or rather the reverse of blessed zed, and either dying on the spot, or turning tall for some other house not thus powerfully protected. FANNIE B. WARD.

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