

**ADVENTURES AND
OBSERVATIONS ON THE
WEST COAST OF
AFRICA, AND ITS ISLANDS**

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Adventures and observations on the west coast of Africa, and its islands by Chas. W. Thomas

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CHAS. W. THOMAS

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ON THE

WEST COAST OF AFRICA,

AND ITS ISLANDS.

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE SKETCHES OF MADEIRA, CANARY,
AND CAPE VERD ISLANDS; THEIR CLIMATES, INHABITANTS,
AND PRODUCTIONS; ACCOUNTS OF PLACES, PEOPLES,
CUSTOMS, TRADE, ETC., ETC., ETC.

BY

REV. CHAS. W. THOMAS, M.A.,
CHAPLAIN TO THE AFRICAN SQUADRON IN 1835, 1836, AND 1837.

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1864
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The Right Honourable
THE COUNTESS OF DUNRAVEN.

MADAM,

It devolves upon me to carry out the intention of my brother, and dedicate this, the English edition of his work, to your Ladyship.

Your Ladyship will remember that my brother's adventurous spirit led him abroad early in life; and while yet a mere boy, he determined to make his home amongst the gentle, warm-hearted—and, as events prove, brave-spirited—people of the Southern (now Confederate) States of America. He graduated at a Southern University, and a few years afterwards accepted the chaplaincy of a squadron about to cruise off the coast of Africa. On his return, he published a book of "Adventures and Observations," which passed through many editions in America—this volume is an abridgment of that work.

My brother's residence, if he still lives, is in the State of Georgia. With his country beleaguered, society broken up, and men fighting or fleeing for their lives, it is not to be wondered at that I receive but few letters from him. He desires me to edit and republish his work, and to dedicate it to your Ladyship, who has kindly allowed him that honour.

He alludes to the time when he and I, as boys, received so many proofs of your Ladyship's goodness of heart at Dunraven Castle previously to his leaving his native land—perhaps for ever,—and assures me that the remembrance of your Ladyship's gentle bearing, and constant endeavours to do good in the Sunday School, the Church choir, and wherever influence and example could reach, has helped to keep warm his heart to the Church of his childhood while he sojourned in foreign lands and among strange folds.

For my own part, I trust your Ladyship will not scan the work—to question whether it quite deserve to be inscribed to your Ladyship—but that you will accept the dedication of it as the offering of a grateful heart.

I have to add that pressure of clerical duties has delayed the performance of my editorial task, and

I have the honour to remain,

MADAM,

Your Ladyship's most obedient

And very humble Servant,

W. MATHEW THOMAS.

ERON COTTAGE, MICKLEY, RIPON,

December 1, 1864.

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ADVENTURES AND OBSERVATIONS
ON THE
WEST COAST OF AFRICA.

CHAPTER I.—TANGIER.

"Shadows, clouds, and darkness rest upon it."

Morocco—Obscure History—Indomitable—Unchanging—Romance of the Moorish Character—Beating up for Gibraltar—Bay and City of Tangier—American Consul—Moorish Boats and Sailors—Moorish Guides—Hamed—The Mosque—Market—Jews—Moorish Women—Camp Outside the Wall—Make an Acquaintance—Prepare for a Row—Saluting the Flag of Morocco—A Cheerful Company—Shopping in Tangier—Jewish Women—Civil and Social Condition of the Jews—Moorish Soldiers—Palace of the Bashaw—A Disappointment—A Caravan, Moorish Muskets, and Wheat—Taming a young Camel.

It may not be expected that Sketches of the West Coast of Africa will contain descriptions of places and life on the Atlantic shores of Morocco; yet a chapter of notes, historical and descriptive, of the ancient and classic city of Tangier and its people, may not be unacceptable to the reader.

Few empires, ancient or modern, have exerted so great an influence over the destinies of civilized man, as the half-civilized empire of Morocco; and of none, since the decline of Rome, has the influence been so long and so generally felt. Commanding many leagues of coast

on the shores of the Mediterranean and Atlantic, her daring pirates have for centuries infested those waters in pursuit of blood or treasure, bringing the commerce of all nations under contribution; and to this day, the proudest nations of Europe, England and France, buy exemption from her depredations by annual contributions of black mail. Defended by the dangerous rocks and shoals which line her seaward borders, she is safe from the attacks of naval forces. Secure in the fastnesses of her vast deserts, where the fleet barb and the unequalled horseman can tire the strength, and, by slow hunting warfare, waste the spirit and the numbers of disciplined armies, she is beyond the reach of punishment, and may be approached only on her own terms. Spain, Portugal, England, France, have at various times possessed themselves of her accessible sea-coast towns; but they found them profitless possessions, and too dear at the price of constant warfare. The relinquishment has been speedy, and the indomitable children of the soil have returned to their natural possessions, like the locusts of their own deserts, refreshed by the sleep of the plains, and increased in numbers.

Situated, geographically, where her mountains have looked for ages into the very lap of civilization and advancement, she is herself unchanged. Even Christianity, after eighteen centuries, has not a single temple in her towns; and the Pillars of Hercules may mark to-day, as they are said to have marked thousands of years ago, the limits of civilization in that direction.

But though known for three thousand years under the names Ethiopians, Mauri, Barbarians, Mauritanians and Moors, the inhabitants of Morocco are perhaps less