

MULAI ABD-EL-AZIZ

BEHIND THE SCENES WITH THE YOUNG SULTAN OF MOROCCO.

(Special Correspondence of the Deseret News by Frank G. Carpenter.)

TANGIER, Morocco.—Come behind the scenes and take a look at Mula Abd-el-Aziz, the sultan of Morocco. He is the ruler of the best part of northwestern Africa, and his empire is almost one-twelfth the size of the whole United States. More than 10,000,000 Berbers and Moors look upon him with reverence, and the great powers of Europe are courting him with a desire to get hold of his country and trade.

THE SULTAN IN 1907.
The latest photograph of the young monarch now lies before me. It represents a tall athletic young man, clad in a long white burnous, the garment worn by the gentlemen of Morocco. By means of his officials and some Euro-peans I can piece out the picture. The sultan is just 25 years of age, and he has all the strength of full-blooded youth. He has a muddy white complexion and his face, which is slightly pitted, bears the marks of smallpox, which he had years ago. He has a long straight nose, a large mouth, a long upper lip and a chin which slightly recedes. Like all his people, he never shaves his face, but his full beard of curly black hair is so thin that it does not show much in the picture. He has rather a handsome air, and in ordinary conversation wears a bored look. He seems to have sucked the orange of luxury and luxury life, and has a good time taking his ease. Indeed, I understand that he would be glad to leave the throne and that he thinks the same of governing a country as turbulent as this is



THE SULTAN,
From His Latest Photograph Given to Me by Frank G. Carpenter.

not worth the candle. He is fast losing prestige with his own people by consorting with foreigners, and were it not for his position as regards the Mohammedan religion he would have to step down and out.

RELATED TO MOHAMMED:
All the rest of the Mohammedans of the world acknowledge some kind of allegiance to the sultan of Turkey. This is so of our Moors and of the 600 million Mussulmans of India, and also of the lesser number in Turkey and Egypt. These Moors will not let that sultan send a representative here. They acknowledge no allegiance to him, and they consider that only the family of the young man has the right to the title of commander and ruler of the faith.

Indeed, Mula Abd-el-Aziz is about the most blue-blooded monarch on earth. He is the thirty-sixth lineal descendant of the prophet Mohammed, and he is the fifteenth monarch in his own dynasty. His father was the famed Mula Hassan, who was sultan for 21 years during which he ruled with an iron hand. When about to die he chose this son to be his successor, although he had other and older brothers. Mula's mother was a Circassian slave imported from Turkey.

A RELIGIOUS HEAD.
The sultan of Morocco is the high priest of the religion of this country as well as its chief executive. He is called the great imam, and is like the emperor of China in that he prays for all. He is also somewhat like the czar of Russia, who is head of both church and state.

One of the sultan's chief elements of strength is the power of conferring blessings which has come down to him from Mohammed. He is supposed to have this direct from God, and if any

other man of his family could make the people believe that he had this power to a greater degree, he could easily raise a rebellion and oust Mula Abd-el-Aziz from the throne.

This was attempted by Bu Hamara, the so-called son of the She-Asa who, falsely claimed to be an elder brother of the sultan, and who, by sleight-of-hand tricks, made the people think he was performing miracles. He got up a revolution, and the soldiers broke out into an insurrection, notwithstanding their officers gave them a flogging and dusted out their mouths with red pepper for speaking against his majesty. This Bu Hamara was eventually put down. I understand, however, that the rebellion was quelled by a compromise, and that the son of the She-Asa has, since then, been bribed with a fat office, and that he is now ruling a large section of country. This would seem to be a premium on a second rebellion.

SACRIFICES FOR HIS PEOPLE.
The emperor of China has a number of days when he goes out in Pekin to the Altar of Heaven and performs sacrifices for the whole Chinese nation. The young sultan does the same by killing a sheep on every Balram, or Mohammedan easter. At this time every good Moorish family is supposed to offer up sacrifices, and it is estimated that as many as 30,000 sheep are killed on that day in the city of Fez. The sheep are brought in from the surrounding country, and a good fat ram or ewe will bring \$50. If it were so in America the market would surely be cornered.

The sheep killing is started by the sultan, surrounded by a large concourse of people. One of the holy preachers first sings out a sermon, after which the sheep is handed over to his majesty. He cuts its throat, and as the blood gushes forth the bands play and the cannons thunder. The news is sent out all over the city and thereupon the sacrificial begins, extending to all parts of Morocco.

Balram is the great festival occasion of all the year. The Moors then come out in their good clothes, the soldiers have new uniforms, and the people who, like good Mohammedans, have been fasting throughout Ramadan, which is their Lent, give themselves up to rejoicing. The chief of the various tribes are then supposed to send presents to the sultan, and in the past vast sums have been so received. Some tribes bring money often running into the thousands of dollars, and some horses, and some slaves, a negro being a common gift.

During the present year the gifts were few, and the horses poor. This was the result of the recent rebellions, and was brought about by the association of the sultan with Europeans and the jealousy and distrust with which his people regard him.

THE SULTAN AND THE CHRISTIANS.

Indeed, the sultan's tastes seem to be Christian rather than Mohammedan. He is fond of western methods, and he would, if he could, introduce them into his empire. He has made some attempts to do so, but his people object, and this is one cause of his unpopularity. He is, notwithstanding, an independent young man and persists in courting the favor of the foreigners. He is said to spend a part of every day with Europeans, and that he is not at all exclusive in his selection of them. One high class Moor complains to me that his majesty allows certain Christians and other tradesmen to come to the palace, and others tell me that he has spent millions of dollars on all sorts of foreign nicknacks, and that some of his Christian friends have begged him to buy.

HIS GOLD CAMERA.
One of his extravagances is a camera of solid gold, which cost him \$10,000. At the same time he bought \$23,000 worth of printing paper and \$32,000 worth of other supplies. His photographic outfit, in addition to the camera, cost him all told \$35,000, a large part of which went, as a matter of course, into the pockets of those who ordered it.

Another extravagance is a bedstead of crystal mirrors and pendants like a chandelier. I understand that he sees three images of himself whenever he crawls into bed, and that the pendants jingle when he turns over.

The sultan has bicycles made of aluminum, and he delights in playing bicycle polo with his friends. He learns all sorts of games easily, and can do no end of bicycle tricks. He will ride up a steep bank and down again, and in his polo games he has ruined several fine wheels by crashing into the walls.

The sultan has a number of automobiles, a London hansom and a coach of state. There are no roads in this country, and these things are practically useless. His gold coach, which cost many thousands of dollars, now lies outside the palace at the mercy of the weather.

IN DEBT ON MILLIONS A YEAR.

In the meantime the sultan's foreign friends who have ordered these things for him are making fat fortunes, and they are working the young man for all he is worth. Every foreign thing he subscribes to costs

How This Boy Mohammedan Monarch Looks, Acts and Rules—He Favors Christian Ways and is Loving Caste With His People—He has a Solid Gold Camera, an Aluminum Bicycle and a Bedstead of Crystal Mirrors—A Peep into his Harem and at his Slave Girls and Wives—The Sultan's Religious Character—How he Kills a Sheep for the Nation—His Government and his Officials Who Bleed the People.



THE WALLS OF FEZ, CHIEF CAPITAL OF THE SULTAN.

him 10 times what it is worth, and his minister and foreign friends absorb the profits. They are already rolling in luxury, and every one about him steals both from him and his people.

I am told that the whole income of Morocco has gone into extravagant expenditures. The empire pays something like \$5,000,000 a year and is now several hundred thousand dollars in debt.

One of the Europeans here tells me he thinks that the sultan has sated down a pretty penny of this for a rainy day, and another courtier says that he is strange to say, almost mean in the expenditures which come out of his own immediate treasury. He will quibble about an outfit of \$100, if the money is to be paid down on the nail, and, at the same time, will dash off, without thinking, an order for one of his custom houses to pay a sum of \$10,000 or more.

THE MOORS DISGUSTED.

Any one who understands the jealousy and hatred which these Moors have for Christians can easily see how unpopular such actions on the part of their sultan must be. The better classes are no fools, and it is hard for them to respect even a sultan who does such foolish and irreligious things. They are opposed on Mohammedan grounds to pictures and photographs, and it is almost impossible to get them to pose before the camera. With this view the sultan's golden kodak is in striking contrast, and the fact that he is really a good photographer does not better the matter. They do not approve of his buying a yacht, and having it carried inland to Fez to be played with on the little river near there, and they are angry at the crown he ordered at a cost of \$100,000 or so. It is against the Mohammedan religion for the sultan to wear a crown, and his people especially objected to his coronation coach.

THE SULTAN'S HAREM.

A Moor's home life is not supposed to be known outside of his immediate family, and no European has ever seen the sultan's harem. I doubt whether any Mohammedan man except his own establishment has ever crossed its threshold and it would be very improper to ask his majesty as to the health of the multitudinous ladies of his household. Nevertheless gossip gets out in one way or another, and I am able to give you some pictures of Mula's harem.

By the Mohammedan religion he has the right to four wives, and no end of concubines. His palaces are large and the sultan himself lives on the first floor, in a suite of big rooms, at the four corners of which his wives have their apartments. Each wife has her own establishment, but all are subject to the rule of certain slave women called arifas, negro concubines who were especially favored by Mula Hassan, this sultan's father. The sultan's real wives must be chosen from the different branches of the royal family, so that the sultan is forced to marry his cousins. This

is not so bad as is the case in Siam, where the king marries his sisters.

SULTAN'S SECONDARY WIVES.

The customs of this country as regards the monarch are much the same as those of several principalities of the far east. The king of Siam can call any woman in the country to serve in his palace, no matter if she be wife, mother or daughter; and the emperor of China selects his wives from the daughters of the Manchu nobles, who are sent into the palace to be picked over. I was present in Pekin when the present emperor married three wives, the old empress dowager making the selection. The sultan of Morocco is frequently presented with second wives or concubines by his tribal chiefs. The girls are often sent up for his approval, and especially at Balram, and he can select such for his household establishment as may take his fancy. In addition to this he has a large number of coal black negroes who have been purchased from time to time in the local slave markets, and also other women imported from the orient.

INSIDE THE PALACE.

The sultan has many palaces. He has quarters in nearly every town in his dominion and the governor's establishment here in Tangier belongs to him. He has three different capitals; one in southern Morocco, one in central Morocco and another at Fez. The latter is the largest, and everything there is managed on a vast scale. The palace is surrounded by walls. It is in the Dar-el-Makhzen, where all the government officials live. The buildings con-

tain no end of bed rooms and living rooms, as well as a large kitchen and dairy. They swarm with servants, both male and female. The kitchens are managed by negro cooks and among the other men servants are the "men of the bath," "men of the tea" and "men of the water." There are also "men of the bed" and "men of the mat." The bath men have to do with the imperial chamber, the tea men make the imperial tea, using the best of the green leaves and scenting them with mint. The bed men have charge of the sultan's tent when he camps, and the mat men bring his prayer rug and spread it out for him when his times for prayer come. In addition to these there are negro men slaves who take charge of the sultan's horses and mules; there are others who walk behind him when he goes out for an airing to flick off the flies, and a third set who carry the imperial parapet to shut out the rays of the sun.

WAITED UPON BY WOMEN.

In the harem itself, or rather in his own private apartments, the sultan is attended by women only. His servants are concubines and slaves. Like the men servants, they are organized into classes, and each slave has her special job. He has "girls of the wash basin," "girls of the soap" and "girls of the towel." There is one set of females who help him at his bath, and another whose business it is to serve his meals. His majesty now eats alone, although, as long as his mother was alive, he took his meals with her. He eats with his fingers, and I doubt not in so doing considers himself more cleanly than

you or I. The Mohammedans have a saying that every one knows whether he has washed his fingers, but no one can tell who has washed the knives and forks.

Before eating the sultan laves his hands in scented warm water, and he repeats this custom at the close of his meal. His food is so cooked that it can be easily broken, and much of his meat is served in small bits. His chief meal is at midday. He also takes something on rising, and a light supper in the evening.

A HARD-WORKED YOUNG MAN.

As far as I can learn the sultan has a soft snap. He works only in the morning, and devotes the afternoon to his foreign friends, to playing polo, billiards, bicycling or in any other amusement which may suit him, while his evenings are spent with his numerous family. He rises early, drinks a cup of coffee and then says his prayers. In doing the latter he faces Mecca, and goes through all the motions, according to the most rigid Mohammedan rules. He has a mosque in his palace grounds and goes to church every Friday.

At the close of his morning devotions his majesty goes from his palace to the great buildings where he holds his court, and where the various officials have their offices. Here he enters a small room which is off by itself and sends for such of his ministers as he desires to see. He leaves his work largely to his officials and does no more than he can help. At noon he stops and has dinner, after which he takes a smoke and a sleep, rising about 3 o'clock. He frequently has music in his palace and he is said to play well on the violin and guitar. He has more than 100 musicians and all sorts of instruments. He has a piano and he

drums upon this at times, his mother having taught him to play.

The sultan is well educated from a Moorish standpoint. He can recite a great part of the Koran and is well up in Mohammedan law. He gets papers from all parts of the world and has a clipping bureau, which furnishes him with extracts on all matters relating to Morocco.

FAST LOSING HIS POWER.

The sultan has a cabinet, consisting of a grand vizier, a secretary of state, a secretary of the interior and a secretary of war. He has also a chief chamberlain, a chief treasurer and a chief administrator of customs. He has had an army of 10,000 or 15,000 men, and at times as many as 20,000 troops in different parts of Morocco. I understand that the soldiers are armed with good weapons and that they have a few batteries of field guns.

Within the past year the army seems to have grown weaker and weaker. The rebellion of Bu Hamara, the capture of Perdicaris and the enforced ransom on a part of the sultan by Hallsul, together with the foreign complications, have made his majesty so unpopular that his support is drifting away from him. His power is, indeed, on the wane, and it remains to be seen whether or in time he will not have a successor.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.

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