

HISTORY SECTION

THE FAMOUS ROCK OF GIBRALTAR

LIKE a reclining lion dozing in the southern sun, the great rock of Gibraltar looks sleepily across the 12 miles of water which separate this southernmost point of Spain from Ceuta, on the African side of the strait leading into the Mediterranean. But in case of need this peaceful-seeming rock can leap into thunder and flame from powerful cannon which lie hid in many a waterside or rock-hewn battery.

Gibraltar for 237 years has been an impregnable fortification of Great Britain. During that time it has been a British garrison and crown colony, and is the chief British naval base on the Mediterranean route to India.

When the famous Rock of Gibraltar was discovered, or by whom, is not known. The

Phoenicians founded the city now called Cadiz which lies beyond the Rock on the Coast of Spain about 1100 years B. C. No doubt the Phoenician sailors first saw the Rock centuries before that time. It has been a familiar object, therefore, more than thirty centuries. During those three thousand years it has belonged to one seagoing nation after another. The Phoenicians, the Carthaginians, the Greeks, the Romans, the Moors, the Spaniards, and the British are chief among those who have claimed it.

Gibraltar with its opposite African cape (where lies the town of Ceuta) was called by the Greeks the "Pillars of Hercules" and was once thought to be the western limit of the world. Gibraltar takes its name (Jebel-al-Tarik, "hill of Tarik") from the Mohammedan chief who led his troops across the straits in 711 A.D., captured it, and built a fortress there, and a fortress it has been ever since, a period of more than 1200 years.

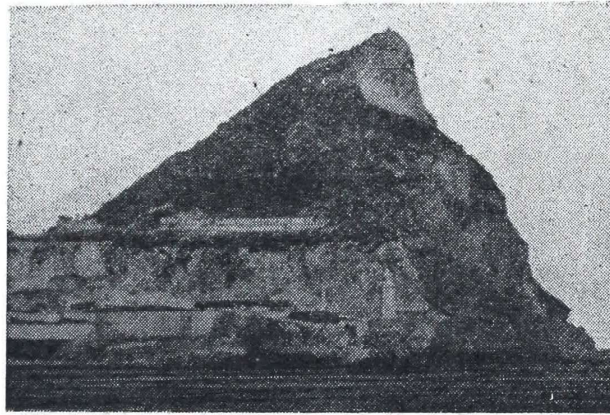
The Rock of Gibraltar has been besieged fourteen times, and scores of naval

battles have resounded in its waters. The first siege was in 1308-09; the last in 1779-83. In 1704 it was captured from the Spaniards by the British, and has remained in their possession ever since.

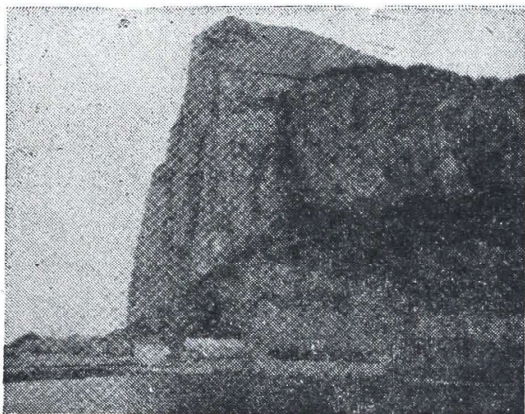
During the great siege of

1779-83 the garrison held out against a joint besieging force of French and Spaniards. This is regarded as one of the most memorable sieges of history. Finally in September, 1782, there was a great attack by a fleet especially equipped with massive wooden armor. Every attacking ship was finally blown up or burnt to the water's edge by cannon-balls heated red hot and fired from the Gibraltar batteries.

Always a key point in the mastery of the European seas, its importance looms again today as rival nations struggle for



The Famous Rock of Gibraltar which looms above the narrow western entrance of the Mediterranean Sea.



The Rock of Gibraltar has been impregnable for 237 years.

the control of the Mediterranean. Already bombers have blasted at its grim sides. The only results, so far as the world knows, were resounding echoes across the blue waters that have swept the base of this mighty rock for ages.

What modern defenses the British have there can only be imagined; what strategy its foes have planned can only be guessed. The Rock keeps its secrets. Surrounded by mists of the sea, glorified in the legends of poets, symbol of permanence and indestructibility, the Rock of Gibraltar has been castle, prison, convent, garden, and fortress. It is one of man's most famous links with the past; it is one of the strategic points, perhaps, around which the future, whatever it will be, will be built.

A writer in the *New York Times* says: "For this achievement (victory) Hitler must first obtain complete mastery of the Mediterranean—which Gibraltar alone can give him. Never was Gibraltar so important to a conqueror and its loss so fatally decisive to an imperial possessor."

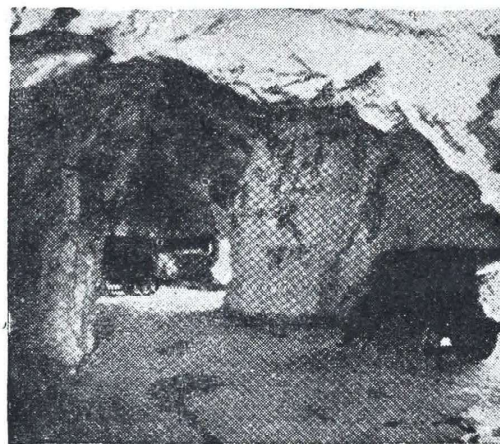
Gibraltar lies at the end of a low, sandy peninsula, about three miles long and half a mile in average width. The Rock itself rises to a height of 1,408 feet.

Its western side is washed by the Bay of Gibraltar, where at the foot of the Rock lies the city of Gibraltar with a population of about 25,000. Foreigners are not allowed to live in Gibraltar without a special permit from the British authorities, and every effort is made to prevent the increase of population. A foreigner must come with recommendations from known and accredited persons, and is told how long he can remain. Even in peace time only British subjects may visit the gun galleries.

The Rock rises abruptly in an almost straight wall that faces the north. In this wall of rock long tunnels are cut, one above another, close enough to the face of the rock so that portholes like the windows of a ship enable its defenders, protected in the tunnels, to look out over the sandy plain far below them and fire upon any enemies who might approach the fortress by land. Storming the Rock with troops from the sandy plain would be a dangerous business. From the land side, military men say the fortress could not be taken.

The east side of the Rock rises almost perpendicularly out of the water. It is

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A Gun Gallery in the Rock of Gibraltar.

ROCK OF GIBRALTAR

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almost impossible to land on the south side. Over the bay other portholes yawn from the solid rock, out of which huge guns may show-er ships with high explosives.

The Rock is of limestone and in it are many natural caverns and galleries. These caverns are two or three miles in length and some of them are wide enough for wagons or other means of underground transportation with which communication can be maintained and supplies can be carried from one side of the Rock to another.

Deep down in these caverns are the perfect "bomb-proofs" of the fortress, and in them are stored munitions, food, and other supplies sufficient to last for months or even years. Through these natural caverns and others which have been cut during the centuries, soldiers of the garrison may pass in safety from one part of the fortress to another. Those who hold it today have learned some important lessons from history.

REVIEW

1. Get a map of Europe, find Spain in the southwestern part, and locate the

SANDWICHES

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butter, one tablespoonful of vinegar.

Place the yolk in a small bowl and crumble it. Put the butter into it and mix it smooth with a spoon. Then add the salt, pepper, mustard, and cheese, mixing each well. Then put in the proper thickness. If the vinegar is not desired, use cold water instead. Spread the mixture between slices of bread.

Rock of Gibraltar at the western entrance to the Mediterranean sea.

2. Tell the history of the Rock of Gibraltar.

3. What is located at the Rock of Gibraltar?

4. What nation owns it?

5. Why is it important at present?

6. Describe the Rock.

7. Why has the Rock of Gibraltar been "an impregnable fortress" for 237 years?

8. Why is this fortress so carefully guarded?

9. Do you think it will ever be besieged again? Why?

10. Would you like to see this famous Rock?

11. Read more about Gibraltar in the encyclopedia; then tell what you have read.

ART APPRECIATION

(Continued from page 179)

Our teacher says that making these booklets helps us in our English work, gives us study in art appreciation, and helps develop good penmanship.

VACATION CONCERTS

(Continued from page 179)

played at that concert.

At the next concert which I attended Mr. A. Buenaventura was presented with a prize for his musical composition "By the Hillside" which the orchestra played.

I enjoyed these concerts very much.

THE AQUARIUM

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gators, lizards, and others.

When you are in Manila you should go to see the Aquarium. It is very interesting and you will learn many things when you look at it.

The place where the Aquarium is located is interesting, too. It is in a part of the old wall which was built around Manila hundreds of years ago. The glass tanks containing fishes are in the rooms inside of the old wall. Outside are some of the plants which grow only in the tropics.