

Prise de Sfax
La Presse, July 15, 1881

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Affairs in Tunisia

We receive from our private correspondent the following dispatches:

Tunis, July 13, 7:00, evening.

The armoured squadron made up of six ships arrived at Sfax with the sloop *Desaux*. Some of these warships will undoubtedly go in Gabes, and another portion will cruise the coasts of Tunisia and Tripoli.

We await from Mateur 2,500 troops. We are still unaware whether these troops will remain in Mauouba or be embarked for Sfax; but we believe that their presence close to the capital is necessary.

The dispatches from Sousse say that the city and the surroundings are still quiet, but that a certain agitation reigns among the tribes. The bey has decided, so as to avoid disorders on occasion of the French activities on the feast day of July 14, that tomorrow the Tunisian troops will not be allowed to go to the city. The police will be made up of gendarmes known as *zaptiès*, on which we can count.

Activity in the European district is great because of the festival. All the French illuminate and rejoice. A splendid fireworks display, prepared by the artillerymen of the bey and on his orders, will be held tomorrow evening in front of the residence of the minister of France.

Tunis, July 14, 10:00, morning.

At nine hours _____ reception of the French colony by the resident minister. The speech of the first deputy praised Mr. Roustan whose constantly firm attitude has prevented disorders and has maintained positive relations among the colony. The deputy hopes that soon Tunisia will be completely pacified, thanks to the army. The minister presents the excuses from General Logerot, who could not come to the reception because of his important activities relating to military operations in court.

One shouted: Long live the Republic! Long live army and navy! The crowd was enormous and extraordinarily lively in the European district. The bey deployed a great activity to prevent brawls and disorders. Many troops circulate with Tunisian officers and gendarmes.

The decoration of the marine promenade is very successful.

A minister, general Si Azzis, replacing Prime Minister Mustapha, came to greet Mr. Roustan, in the name of the bey and to congratulate France. Mr. Roustan invited the colony to pass the evening in the living rooms and gardens of the residence.

Tunis. 14 July. 8:00, evening,

The day passed peacefully, in spite of the sinister predictions. Many patrols maintained everywhere in the city an perfect order all day. Some seditious placards, some graffiti on French houses are only stains in the middle of a great calm. These inscriptions are in Italian, which indicates the source of where they come from. Here is the translation: Death to those that oppress weak populations! Down with France! Long live Italy! Long live the Sicilian Vespers!

At this moment, the illuminations shine, music plays on the marine promenade, opposite the residence of the minister. A firework display, given by the bey, will be given in one hour, after which the minister will receive the colony in his living rooms, illuminated *à giorno* (for the holiday), and his guests will walk in the garden, illuminated with taste. There is an enormous crowd in the European district. The enthusiasm, of the French colony is at the highest pitch. Never in Tunis has there been a similar national festival. It was necessary for us to affirm ourselves here. Its effect will be salutary and impress the imagination of the natives. Let us hope as a complement to receive news of Sfax as soon as possible

